Strategic Missile Testing in Rogue States

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# Introduction

# Existing Theories

There exists a great deal of literature focusing on the strategic logic and potential outcomes of signaling, especially with regards to states that are engaging in asymmetric games with more powerful states (Gartzke et al., 2017; Handberg, 2016; Crawford, 1982; McManus, 2016).

One such method of signaling by so-called “rogue” states is missile testing; the firing or controlled explosion of rocket-propelled munitions. For states such as North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan, missile testing and launches fall under the bargaining model of war (Fearon, 1997) as “signaling to demonstrate resolve” (Gartzke et al., 2017). Though these states are perhaps less developed economically and militarily than their opponents, missile testing forces other states to acknowledge the rogue state’s capabilities and their potential to disrupt the international order.

# Hypotheses

Given the existing literature on signaling tactics exhibited by rogue states, a number of related hypotheses may be formulated.

H1: If a political event that directly addresses a rogue state occurs, that state is more likely to exhibit some form of weapons test in close temporal proximity.

Given the nature of the data that I collected, I separate my initial hypothesis into two sub-hypotheses (H1a and H1b). Initially I collected aggregate data on events, that is, I had one column that accounted for a wide range of events. I realized that this was ecological fallacy and would essentially mean that my X would almost always take the value of 1, as there is almost always a political event occurring each month. By disaggregating the event type, we may see that specific types of event exert more of an effect on a state’s likelihood to conduct a missile test. Given the time constraints of my data collection, I identify two types of event—United Nation Security Council Resolutions and heads of state visits—that I believe may provide explanation for rogue state missile testing, H1a and H1b.

H1a: If a United Nations Security Council Resolution passes that directly addresses a rogue state, that state is more likely to exhibit some form of weapons test in close temporal proximity.

H1b: If a either a head of state visits a rogue state, or the rogue state’s head of state visits another country, the rouge state is more likely to exhibit some form of weapons test in close temporal proximity.

As for our null hypothesis (H0), we can assume that there is no predictive ability of significant political events on a rogue state’s proclivity to conduct missile tests.

H0: There exists no discernable relationship between a political event and missile tests conducted by rogue states.

# The Data

# Methodology

# Discussion

# Limitations

# Conclusion

References

Last Name, F. M. (Year). Article Title. *Journal Title*, Pages From - To.

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Appendix