

Calling in the Big Guns: Desire for Military Intervention in Politics

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Bio:

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Abstract:

Previous studies have explored the meaning of legitimacy, various reasons for military intervention, and how legitimacy and military intervention relate at the extreme in the form of coups d'état, but they have failed to capture the individual-level mechanism that links a low perception of legitimacy to the desire for military intervention. This study argues that legitimacy plays a significant role in the desire for military intervention. The empirical analysis of survey data will test the notion that when the perception of legitimacy is lower, the desire for military intervention will be higher. A mixed effects ordered logistic regression of the World Values Survey containing 87 countries and over 256,000 individual responses from 1981-2009 will be used to examine the relationship between legitimacy and the desire for military intervention. Of the five established dimensions of legitimacy (political community, regime principles, regime institutions, regime performance, and political actors), two (political community and regime principles) were negative and significant as expected. However, the remaining three (regime institutions, regime performance, and political actors) were significant but positive. The empirical findings indicate that when these two dimensions of legitimacy are lower, the desire for military intervention will be higher. The unexpected results regarding the latter three dimensions overturn conventional scholarly thinking regarding legitimacy and military intervention.

Introduction

During the Cold War era, the most common form of military intervention was the violent overthrow of executive leaders in the form of a coup d'état. While that form of intervention is on the decline, military leaders are still heavily involved in politics. It is important to examine what motivates citizens to support military leaders in place of civilian leaders in politics. This shift in support can indicate deep-seated instability as the populace questions the fitness of civilians to rule. Additionally, an increased role of the military in politics can indicate a threat to the functioning of a civilian-led democracy.

One example of a military engaging in politics is the behavior of the Egyptian military both during and after the Arab Spring. Protests demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak resulted in the Supreme Council for the Armed Forces governing the country prior to elections (Silverman 2012). The Council was then suspected of attempting to tamper with the elections in order to retain power and favor in Egypt (Silverman 2010). This is a matter of concern, because it provides an example of a military attempting to block the installation of democracy through properly contested elections. During the Arab Spring in Egypt, the army appeared to be an agent responsive to the demands of the public. Its continued involvement in politics indicates that the military can be an independent political actor with myriad motivations when it comes to political involvement.

Additionally, a later wave of popular protests calling for the resignation of President Mohamed Morsi resulted in a military coup d'état. Prior to his ouster, Morsi clung to his role as president, insisting that he was a legitimate leader. The interaction

between his claims of legitimacy, his legitimacy in the eyes of the people, and the basis upon which the military thrust itself into politics is worth examining, given that this scenario may be an endemic problem for Egypt as it attempts to democratize.

Another example of potentially dangerous military involvement in politics is that of the economically and politically powerful military in Thailand (Chambers 2010). The monarchy and Privy Council must essentially “buy off” the military during internal crises, such as that of the pro-democracy protests in 1991, in order for it to restore internal order (Chambers 2010). One of the military’s primary functions is to maintain internal stability, but the fact that the military in Thailand uses a lack of enforcement as a bargaining tool indicates that it possesses a great deal of political clout independent of other ordained authorities within the state. Given its prodigious power, the military could easily act independently of orders from the monarchy or the Privy Council. It could, and does, prevent movement toward democracy with its undue influence in politics.

Previous literature has debated the role of legitimacy as a potential explanatory factor for military involvement in politics. Many studies assert that legitimacy plays a significant role, while some argue that it does not sufficiently explain the occurrence of all military interventions. This literature provides a thorough debate regarding the definition of legitimacy, but often does not address military intervention. When it does discuss military intervention, only coups d’état, an extreme form of military intervention, are considered. The definitions issue translates into poorly operationalized measures for both military intervention and legitimacy, among other methodological problems. Beyond consideration of the occurrence or support for coups d’état, studies examining regime legitimacy and military intervention do not discuss the possibility that concerns

regarding legitimacy may translate into the desire for military involvement in politics. Therefore, this study will seek to examine how levels of perceived legitimacy may relate to the desire for military involvement in politics.

Literature Review

The Legitimacy Debate

The wide-ranging definitions of legitimacy seem to agree on one point: that it is largely a psychological evaluation of the government. Scholars' interpretations of legitimacy include the voluntary cooperation of citizens in the implementation of government policies and "trust in public officials and belief that the government is fair, responsive, and useful" (Sutter 1999; Useem and Useem 1979) as qualifications for legitimacy. Scholars also agree that the evaluation of government performance is an essential part of the concept of legitimacy (Seligson 2002; Norris 1999; Klingemann 1998; Weatherford 1987).

Further definition is debated, however. For example, Easton (1975) examines the concept of legitimacy by exploring the popular support upon which it rests. He differentiates between the objects of support, such as the political community, the regime, and the incumbents, from the types of support. The types of support are diffuse, which constitutes a general feeling toward the governmental system, and specific, which refers to support for individual political actors. He does not provide an explanation as to how these differences can be measured, however. Klingemann (1998) builds on Easton's definitions but focuses on three particular components: the identification of the individual with the political community, the approval of democracy as a form of government, and

the approval of the regime's performance. This is a democracy-centered approach, however, that ignores how non-democratic regimes may obtain or supplement legitimacy.

Norris (1999) devotes the greatest attention to the specification of the meaning of legitimacy. She retains the aforementioned concepts of political community, regime performance, and political actors, but appends two additional dimensions: approval for regime principles and approval for regime institutions. Norris' (1999) measures for approval for regime institutions best captures Easton's concept of "diffuse" support, while her dimensions of actors and performance capture the "specific" elements. In sum, Norris uses the following five dimensions of legitimacy: political community, regime principles, regime performance, regime institutions, and political actors. This is the most comprehensive and easily operationalized definition of legitimacy, and therefore the one used in this study. Booth and Seligson (2009) add a sixth dimension to Norris's framework: support for local government. However, this dimension isn't necessary for capturing legitimacy, since it is essentially a hybrid concept of support for regime institutions and support for political actors, as local government is the manifestation of regime institutions on a more immediate and accessible level.

Another debate within the legitimacy literature concerns the causal forces behind regimes that become illegitimate. Kpowosa and Jenkins (1993) refer to a legitimate regime as one that can handle the grievances of its populace while meeting their expectations of responsiveness and adequate performance. A breakdown in legitimacy is therefore a result of "participatory overload" and a consequence of uneven political development (Kpowosa & Jenkins 1993). In other words, the institutional capacity of the state cannot keep up with the rising expectations of its citizenry. This "participatory

overload” concept captures a tipping point in which legitimacy is rendered void due to faulty and underdeveloped political institutions. Therefore, legitimacy crises can largely be accounted for by the presence of transitional or democratizing regimes.

On the other hand, Seligson (2002) extended the work of Thompson (1975) with his conceptualization of legitimacy as “credit” that a regime builds up over time by satisfying its citizens. This approach asserts that legitimacy is not simply present or absent, but may be built up into a “reservoir” to be tapped during times of crisis when the citizens become generally dissatisfied. Therefore, military intervention only occurs when a government exhausts its line of credit. While the “participatory overload” study (Kpowosa and Jenkins 1993) did not provide empirical support for their theory, Seligson (2002) does provide empirical evidence for his reservoir conception of legitimacy. Therefore, this concept of legitimacy seems to be a more convincing account for the mechanism that precipitates legitimacy crises.

The Gap

Legitimacy-Focused Literature. The shortcoming in the debate over the meaning and function of legitimacy is that it largely excludes a discussion of military intervention. Studies that fail to address military intervention instead exhibit a preoccupation with democratic stability. Other studies that focus on legitimacy but not the military examine factors such as how economic performance affects the perception of legitimacy.

Seligson (2002) and Klingemann (1998) seek to provide evidence for why democracies are successful overall, despite the fact that popular support for governments has been on a general downward trend. The authors argue that this growing disapproval is

not so severe as to warrant an authoritarian reversal of democratization on a global scale. Booth and Seligson (2009) explain this phenomenon with the fact that diffuse or general support for government can be maintained even if specific support for certain political institutions or actors dips. This means that the ebb and flow of public support will not necessarily lead to the failure of democracy or regime collapse. Likewise, as long as the public indicates support for the regime principles and institutions, it will not revert to non-democratic means of political change (Booth and Seligson 2009). While these studies focus on regime type and the maintenance of democratic stability, they do not directly discuss what this balancing act of legitimacy would mean for the desire for military involvement.

Weatherford (1987) branches out from conventional studies of legitimacy by testing the impact of economic performance on the perception of legitimacy. In comparison to other studies that attempt to capture Easton's elusive types of support, this piece more directly measures factors that may have a significant impact on regime and actor performance. Like Seligson (2002) and Klingemann (1998), however, he does not explore the potential interaction between legitimacy and the desire for military leadership due to his focus on economic causal forces. Nevertheless, Weatherford is the first scholar to treat legitimacy as a measurable, practical concern rather than simply an aspect of a philosophical debate. Booth and Seligson (2009) likewise discuss dimensions of legitimacy as being inclusive of regime effectiveness and performance, but fail to test it in the way Weatherford (1987) does with economic performance.

Legitimacy and Coup-Focused Intervention

When scholars do address the potential for military intervention in cases of waning regime legitimacy, they typically focus on the extreme case: a coup d'état. While Norris (1999) labels coups as one of many outcomes of low legitimacy, she fails to explore the other potential outcomes. Belkin and Schofer (2003) discuss the concept of coup risk, including low legitimacy as a potential cause. Booth and Seligson (2009) and Thompson (1975) also discuss the interaction between legitimacy and the risk or actual occurrence of coups d'état. However, all of these studies neglect to measure more subtle shifts in the perception of legitimacy and how they might provoke a desire for military intervention. The measure of desire for military intervention may provide a valuable intermediate link illustrating the relationship between legitimacy and actual military intervention.

Military-Focused Literature

Some studies focus solely on the role of the military and its fitness for politics. S.E. Finer (1962) glorifies the military as an uncorrupt institution that may respond to latent or overt crises by stepping in to rescue the people from an unfit government. He does not, however, discuss the role of legitimacy as a driving force behind these interventions. While he does assert that a “decline in confidence in the politicians and civil processes is liable to enhance the popularity of the military,” he never used the term “legitimacy” nor measured this relationship (Finer 1962: 82). Sutter (1999) also largely focuses on the push and pull factors that may spur military intervention, but regards legitimacy as an insufficient explanatory factor. Instead, Sutter (1999) argues that the military could not be convinced to intervene solely due to a legitimacy crisis, given that they would not be any better at ameliorating the conditions or convincing the public to

accept their rule. In addition, these military-focused studies fail to view the relationship between military intervention and legitimacy on a continuum. To the contrary, they argue that a total absence of legitimacy is required for military intervention. These studies also focus solely upon actual military intervention rather than the desire for military intervention in response to a legitimacy crisis. Since the dissatisfaction of the citizenry does not always lead to actual military intervention, there remains much to be understood regarding legitimacy and lower levels of military intervention.

Measurement Issues

The existing literature on legitimacy and military involvement suffers from numerous methodological problems, including inaccurate or imprecise operationalization of legitimacy, measures of only the most extreme events, and a limited scope in the number of cases examined. The operationalization problem stems from the very debate over the meaning of legitimacy and what it comprises. Due to the fact that Belkin and Schofer (2003) acknowledge that legitimacy is a reservoir that must be accumulated over time, the age of the political system is included. No survey data to measure the perception of legitimacy is used in their study; the age of the regime is the only measure used. This provides us with very little insight into the perceptive aspect of legitimacy. Further, age may be a poor proxy for legitimacy, as older regimes can also suffer from a dissatisfied public that questions its legitimacy. Belkin and Schofer (2003) bring up a valid point, however, in their operationalization: legitimacy takes time to form.

Lindberg and Clark's study (2008) is the most flawed of studies concerning the relationship between legitimacy and military intervention. They argue that a military intervention in the form of a coup d'état would not occur without a crisis of legitimacy,

and therefore, they measure legitimacy as the presence or absence of a coup. Not only is this a very indirect measure, but the argument is also tautological in nature. It is unclear how anything can be gleaned from this method of examining the relationship between legitimacy and coups d'état, as coups d'état can occur without popular disapproval for the regime. These two studies are indicative of the problems surrounding the operationalization of legitimacy. In order to correct the absence of perceptive measures in the operationalization of legitimacy in previous studies, it would be advantageous to ask the populace directly how they feel about the dimensions that contribute to the overall concept of legitimacy. Therefore, a global, cross-sectional survey data such as the World Values Survey is the most direct route to ascertaining the perceived legitimacy of a regime (Klingemann 1998; Booth and Seligson 2009).

The military-focused literature also fails to gauge citizens' desire for military involvement in politics. Kpawosa and Jenkins (1993) use an index of coup attempt, success, and failure while Useem and Useem (1979) measure actual protest events; however, public sentiment indicating desire for the military to become involved is not captured in these studies. Useem and Useem (1979) do employ survey data to measure the perception of legitimacy, but restrict their study to the United States. Indirect measures of legitimacy, the use of event data instead of survey data, and a restricted scope (i.e., exclusive to the United States) are various problems that plague previous attempts at examining the relationship between the perception of regime legitimacy and the desire for military involvement in politics.

Theory

The legitimacy of a regime in the eyes of the public is an important determinant in the level of desire for military involvement in a state. This is due to the fact that perceived legitimacy is tied to the relative stability of a state. In a legitimacy crisis, the people question the authority of the state and its ability to maintain internal order and stability. One role of the military in society is to maintain internal order, which it does with its capacity to use force in an organized manner. Due to this role of the military in the state, its involvement within politics can be seen as a stabilizing factor in such crises.

As previously discussed, legitimacy is defined as a psychological evaluation by the public affirming the regime's fitness to govern. "Fitness" is indicated by the citizens' willingness to comply with the law and belief that the government is fair and responsive (Useem and Useem 1979). Thus, legitimacy is essentially the implicit understanding that a certain regime is the clear possessor of political authority. The maintenance of legitimacy and acceptance of the regime's authority over time indicates that the public is satisfied with the regime and sees no utility in seeking an alternative authority. On the other hand, if the citizenry becomes dissatisfied with the regime, they may question its authority. By refusing to accept the authority of the regime, the public can seriously compromise the stability of the state by failing to abide by laws and potentially creating political turmoil through protests, rioting, and other forms of civil unrest. Therefore, when legitimacy is compromised, so is the stability of the state.

In such times of instability, the military is often called upon to restore order. In this way, the army is at the crux of major political disputes between the public and the governing regime. Indeed, the maintenance of "internal order" is part of a military's function in a society (Geddes 1999). However, the military has little reason to intervene

on behalf of the people if no such threat to stability is occurring. Therefore, military intervention of this nature would most likely occur when there is a perceived threat to the stability of the state.

While more extreme cases of the interaction between legitimacy and military involvement occur in the form of violent protests and coups d'état, smaller drops in the perception of legitimacy without an immediately apparent impact are more common. Likewise, military involvement is not experienced solely in the form of repression of protesters or a coup d'état to depose the current regime. Military officials can also be elected to office or come to hold informal political or economic power in a state. These lesser forms of increased involvement of the military can be seen as partly driven by a discontented public and therefore indicative of internal problems persisting within the state.

The reason why citizens may desire military involvement in politics is the same in these less extreme cases: the military is perceived to be an uncorrupt, highly organized force (Finer 1962). This level of organization contributes to their professionalism and ability to counteract whatever abuses may be occurring under the current regime (Finer 1962). The military therefore can be considered useful due to their disciplined, purposeful, and extra-political nature. A well-organized authority that has experience protecting and defending the interests of the state and providing internal stability is thus seen to be ideal. To a disenchanted public questioning the legitimacy of the current regime and fearing for the stability of the state, military involvement can be seen as a desirable remedy.

Taking into account the assumption that a legitimate regime contributes to a stable environment, the questioning of legitimacy also indicates an unstable political climate.

Given the perception and role of the military, its involvement in such crises can be seen as desirable to citizens. This line of reasoning leads to the first hypothesis:

H1: The lower the perception of legitimacy for a given regime, the greater the desire for military involvement in politics.

A potentially mitigating factor in isolating the relationship between legitimacy and the desire for military intervention would be the level of militarization in the current regime. Both democratic and authoritarian regimes require some support in order to function (Geddes 1999, Seligson 2002, Klingemann 1998). Even subtypes of authoritarian regimes require some degree of legitimacy, as this allows for regimes to persist over time and for political systems to survive changes in leadership (Geddes 1999). What may affect the relationship between legitimacy and military involvement, however, is the level of militarization of the state. That is, the level of current military involvement in politics may influence the desire for military involvement independent of a legitimacy crisis. Examining the level of militarization may more accurately pinpoint the relationship between legitimacy and military involvement than one rooted in regime type (democratic, authoritarian, etc.) alone.

Military regimes are less welcome during periods of economic downturn, which has been used as a proxy for analysis of regime performance (Geddes 1999, Weatherford 1987). The military is thus more likely to negotiate for a new regime to take over under those circumstances (Geddes 1999). Military regimes also react to crises differently than less militarized or civilian regimes; they are more likely to split when there are major problems or policy disagreements (Geddes 1999). All of these behavioral characteristics

of military-dominated regimes can negatively impact how they are perceived and to what degree the public may desire their continued involvement.

Regardless of the level of involvement of the military in a regime, it can run adrift of the perception of being apolitical and incorrupt once in power. Allegations of corruption in these cases can be accounted for through consideration of the military's alternative motives. While the military can be motivated by its role in maintaining internal order, this is only one of its many potential concerns. The military is often motivated by concerns over autonomy from civilian control and the desire for a larger budget "sufficient to attract high-quality recruits and buy state-of-the-art weapons" (Geddes 1999). Military intervention into politics can easily be a function of the army acting in self-interest in order to maintain political independence or the funds necessary to purchase new "toys" (Chambers 2010).

Therefore, in cases of a highly militarized regime, the perception of legitimacy is likely to be low due to these suspicions of corruption and self-serving behavior. Because of this, the desire for military involvement is not likely to increase in states where the regime is already highly militarized. Therefore, we should observe that:

H2: The greater the degree of existing militarization in a regime, the lower the desire for military involvement in politics.

Research Design

In order to test these hypotheses, analyses will be conducted utilizing the aggregated set of the five waves of the World Values Survey (hereafter WVS), which includes 87 countries and over 256,000 interviews (WVS 2011). These waves span the period from 1981 to 2009, with waves occurring from 1981-1984, 1990-1994, 1995-1998,

2000-2004, and 2005-2009. Due to this project's use of the WVS, the unit of analysis will be individual per country year.

While the World Values Survey limits the scope of this study to the years 1981 to 2009 and 87 countries, it contains well-accepted measures for the perception of legitimacy (Klingemann 1998; Booth and Seligson 2009) and an appropriate measure of the desire for military involvement. The fact that WVS captures both the dependent variable (desire for military involvement) and the primary independent variable of interest (legitimacy) allows for meaningful causal inferences to be made, since answers to legitimacy questions and answers to military involvement questions can be drawn from the same individual at the same time. In short, using the World Values Survey allows controlling for a greater degree of potential variation within dependent and individual-level independent variables.

The dependent variable, desire for military involvement, is captured by responses to question E116 in the World Values Survey. The responses to this question indicate whether having the army rule would be a very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad way of governing the country. In order to have a higher number indicate a greater desire for military involvement, the responses were inverted such that: "very good" was recoded as a 4 to indicate highest level of desire for military involvement, "fairly good" was recoded to 3, "fairly bad" was recoded as 2, and "very bad" was recoded as a 1 to indicate the lowest level of desire for military involvement. All other responses were left as missing.

The primary independent variables of interest capturing regime legitimacy will be operationalized via the framework of Norris's (1999) five dimensions: identification with

the political community, support for regime principles, support for regime institutions, satisfaction with regime performance, and support for political actors. Each of the five dimensions will be a separate variable. A list of questions from the World Values Survey used to capture each dimension of legitimacy can be found in the Appendix under List 1.

Description of Independent Variables of Interest

The *identification with the political community* concept will be captured by incorporating answers to questions regarding the willingness to fight for country and pride in nationality, according to precedent set forth by Klingemann (1998). The concept of *regime principles* will be measured by employing the answers to the importance of democracy question. *Evaluation of regime performance* will be captured by incorporating the answer to the perception of the extent of political corruption question. The assumption underlying this choice is that the responder will intertwine dissatisfaction with the performance of the regime with his or her evaluation of the extent of political corruption existent within it. Additionally, the *evaluation of regime performance* will include confidence in the government as a whole, since confidence in the government should wane when it is perceived to be performing badly. The *support for regime institutions* will be measured by the answers to each of the following: rating of the political system for governing the country, rating the political system as it was before, and a rating of the political system in how it will be in ten years. This acknowledges the concern that norms surrounding legitimacy take time to form (Belkin and Schofer 2003). The *support for political actors* will be measured by utilizing answers regarding the confidence in parliament and political parties question(s) and the satisfaction with the

people in national office questions. This gives us a closer approximation of the performance of individual actors within the political system.

Construction of Independent Variables

All of the answers detailed above must be aggregated within the dimension that it seeks to capture. For example, the values of the willingness to fight for country and national pride questions will be added together to get an aggregated measure of *political community*. Likewise, the variable for the *regime institutions* dimension of legitimacy will be formed from an aggregate of three responses rating how the individual feels about the current political system, the political system in the past, and how they feel the system will be in 10 years. Therefore, in forming the five variables reflective of the five dimensions of legitimacy, I simply added the values of the responses to the questions within that dimension. The only exception to this is that the values of the answers to the extent of political corruption question must be inverted such that a higher degree of political corruption (originally a value of 4) will reflect a lower value for belief in legitimacy (now coded as a 1), with the intermediate values also switched to reflect this before they were factored into the aggregate measure.

From the raw aggregation of the responses along each dimension, I collapsed the higher values of each dimension into 1 to indicate a presence of that dimension of legitimacy and the lower values of each dimension into 0 to indicate an absence of that dimension of legitimacy (with “higher” and “lower” values cut such that approximately 50 percent of the responses lie below and 50 above the cutoff). Therefore, each of the five independent variables of interest reflected Norris’s dimensions of legitimacy (political community, regime principles, regime institutions, regime performance, and political

actors) as binary measures, with 1 indicating a presence of that dimension of legitimacy and 0 indicating an absence of that dimension. These ordinal responses were collapsed into a binary scale due to the decision that the levels of variance in the intermediate levels of legitimacy were less meaningful; therefore, we are most interested in the higher and lower values of legitimacy.

To control for the other conditions that may also influence the relationship between legitimacy and desire for military involvement, I will include the commonly used national-level controls of GDP per capita (World Bank), military expenditure as a percent of the budget of the central government (World Bank), and level of democracy (from polity2 variable of Polity IV dataset). I will also use demographic individual-level controls such as gender, age, marital status, and employment status from within the World Values Survey. These are common controls for other factors that may influence the relationship of the legitimacy variables with the desire for military intervention.

Among my controls are two important factors: regime type (from the Polity IV dataset) and level of militarization (measured by military expenditure from the World Bank) due to the fact that they may exhibit a relationship with citizens' desire for military involvement independent of shifts in legitimacy within the state. Military expenditure is used as a proxy for level of militarization as defense budgets can be indicative of to what degree the state values and how often it uses the military. Likewise, it can indicate how active the military may be in "lobbying" for a larger budget, as has been observed in Thailand (Chambers 2010).

Due to the fact that the dependent variable is ordinal in nature, I will use mixed effects ordered logistic regression, complete with odds ratios. I will use an ordinal logit

model as the DV takes on 4 values. The test is also mixed effects due to the use of variables at multiple levels of analysis. I will use odds ratios to more directly identify the substantive effect of the independent variables upon the desire for military involvement.

Results

This study sought to examine the relationship between the perception of regime legitimacy and the desire for military intervention. The first expectation (H1) is that this relationship will be indirect or negative; that is, a lower level of legitimacy will result in a higher level of desire for military involvement in politics. This relationship could be impacted by another factor: the level of militarization of the regime. The relationship between the level of militarization and the desire for military involvement is also expected to be indirect or negative: that is, the higher level of militarization, the lower the desire for military involvement (H2). The thought behind this is that in cases where the government is permeated with military influence, the desire for further involvement is not likely to be high. The results from the mixed effects ordered logistic analysis, using militarization (military expenditure) as a control, is as shown in Table 1.

As can be seen in the table above, all dimensions of regime legitimacy, as well as military expenditure, are significant at the $P < .001$ level. Two of the legitimacy dimensions, political community and regime principles, are in the expected direction (negative). That is, as these dimensions of legitimacy increase, the desire for military involvement decreases. Therefore, the presence of the identification with the political community and approval for regime principles has a pacifying effect on the desire for military involvement. As long as the public is satisfied with the sense of political community and support regime principles, they will have a lower desire for military intervention into politics. The fact that these two dimensions are negative and significant lends support for H1. Additionally, military expenditure is negative and significant, indicating that, for a higher level of militarization in a regime, the lower the desire for military intervention in politics. This lends support for H2.

The three remaining dimensions behave counter to expectations; they have a positive coefficient where a negative relationship would be expected. In other words, a higher level of desire for military involvement exists despite legitimacy present in the factors of approval of regime performance, approval for regime institutions, and approval of political actors. Prior literature indicates that poor regime performance as well as disapproval for political actors would spur desire for military intervention (Finer 1962). However, these results indicate that those notions may not be entirely correct. As these findings contradict prior literature, they also do not support my hypothesis (H1), since I built upon previous expectations to form this hypothesis. In short, we expected the presence of these dimensions of legitimacy to also have a pacifying effect on the desire for military involvement. For any one of the following dimensions – dissatisfaction with

regime performance, declining trust in political institutions, or greater disdain for specific national political actors, we would expect an increase in desire for military involvement in politics. However, our results found the opposite to be true, so conventional thought regarding legitimacy and desire for military involvement is either incorrect or other factors, such as omitted variable bias, are driving this unexpected statistical finding.

Odds Ratios

The examination of odds ratios for this model helps to determine which components of legitimacy have the greatest impact on the desire for military involvement. Because the test was a mixed effects ordered logit, the coefficient cannot be used to directly infer the substantive effect of each independent variable, but odds ratios assist in such comparison. The odds ratios are contained in Table 2.

While these odds ratios allow us to compare the substantive effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable, they are all within less than a 1-point range. Therefore, it does not seem that any one of these factors has an overwhelming explanatory effect on the desire for military intervention. That being said, some factors do appear to have more of a substantive effect than others. The graphical display in Figure 1 below shows the various levels of substantive effect.

These odds ratios are interpreted based on a baseline of 1. For example, the odds ratio for *political actors* is 1.417. This indicates that there is approximately a 41 percent likelihood of getting the highest value of desire for military intervention (4) over the lesser values of desire for military intervention (3, 2, and 1) combined. From the table and the graph above, the *regime institutions*, *regime performance*, and *political actors* variables all surprisingly have an increased likelihood of obtaining the highest level of

desire for military intervention. This means that these variables in particular have the greatest substantive effect on the relationship between the perception of legitimacy and the desire for military intervention.

Implications

This study utilized a cross-sectional time series dataset to capture five accepted dimensions of legitimacy and examined how they relate to the desire for military intervention into politics. By using five separate dimensions of legitimacy, we were able to parse out the most salient dimensions of legitimacy that influence the desire for military intervention into politics. Our findings indicate that how integrated an individual feels into the political community and how greatly he or she approves of the core principles of the regime are the two factors of legitimacy that are inversely related to the desire for military intervention.

These findings easily lend themselves to meaningful policy implications, particularly for governments that seek to curb the desire for military intervention. Common to “coup-proofing” literature (Belkin and Schofer 2003), acts of military intervention in politics are seen as something to avoid, particularly for democratic or democratizing regimes, since military intervention into politics is largely viewed as anti-democratic. Our findings imply that if a government regime does not want the public to desire military intervention, it should increase the ability of the citizenry to identify with the political community. That is, a government wishing to curb the desire for military intervention into politics should foster nationalist feelings by discouraging internal divisions according to identity, such as ethnic or religious divisions, within the state. This

increase in national pride, often called a “rally around the flag” effect, should allow the citizenry to identify more easily with the political community at large within the state.

The second dimension that possesses an inverse relationship with the desire for military intervention was the approval for regime principles. The behavior of this variable indicates that if a government wishes to curb desire for military intervention into politics, it should espouse widely popular regime principles. This can likely be done in myriad ways—from announcing broad policy initiatives to the use of symbols and phrases to represent these principles. Given my operationalization of regime principles via a question regarding the importance of democracy in that country, the espoused regime principles should be democratic. This variable indicated that for those individuals who placed greater value on the importance of democracy in that state, the lower their desire for military intervention. Therefore, if a regime follows citizens’ desires for democracy in their state, it can better curb the desire for the military to become involved in politics. This appears to be applicable across regime type, given that we controlled for polity.

These findings are most applicable to the problem of recurrent coups d’état in Egypt. While the former President Morsi insisted that he was a legitimate leader due to the democratic institutions that placed him in power, popular calls for his ouster questioned his legitimacy as a political actor. Rioting in Tahrir Square was likely both a way of engaging in a political community with fellow discontents in Egypt and an expression of the desire for regime change. Therefore, a future government desiring stability, legitimacy, and peaceful regime change can supplant this method of political expression by instilling confidence in the government’s ability to both provide this sense of communal pride and establish and defend democratic principles.

Avenues for Future Research

On the other hand, three dimensions of legitimacy were found to behave contrary to the expectations of this study and conventional notions of the manner in which legitimacy and military intervention relate (Finer 1962). The support for *regime institutions*, evaluation of *regime performance*, and support for *political actors* were found to be positive and significant in relation to the desire for military intervention. This means that the greater the support for regime institutions, the better the performance of the regime, or the more the individual supports the current political actors, the more they are likely to desire military intervention. Conventional literature has viewed military intervention as a reaction to poor regime performance or extreme dissatisfaction with current political actors. However, this study found that that is not the case. This can be for many reasons, two of which are readily apparent: an alternative theoretical explanation or methodological issues.

One potential explanation for the fact that three dimensions of legitimacy contribute to the desire for military intervention is the interdependence of perceptions. Depending on the government system, age, and other factors, the military may be perceived as intertwined with regime institutions. For example, in the United States, the Pentagon is the center of the military command that exists under the umbrella of the U.S. Government. Therefore, the evaluation of institutions and government performance may be influenced by the fact that the military is a part of the government. Thus, the relative approval of the government may be due to the individual's approval of the way the military is behaving as an organization under the government. This explanation may fall

short on the dimension of current political actors, however, since the explicit involvement of the military in politics varies widely from state to state.

The likely explanation for the fact that three of the five dimensions of legitimacy were opposite of expectation is a measurement issue. All factors of legitimacy were tested for correlation and had low correlation with one another, even their respective dimension. They were combined to form the dimension variables and in creating a binary variable for each dimension, a great deal of variation in the independent variables was lost. The performance of these measures of legitimacy would likely be different if they were to be aggregated in a different manner. This study created variables and tested the hypotheses in such a way that yielded the best model, but another method may be more telling of the true nature of the relationship of these dimensions of legitimacy with the desire for military intervention.

Regardless of why these three dimensions of legitimacy did not support the hypotheses, this study has produced meaningful results. These findings have either uncovered the fact that prior literature is no longer applicable to the relationship between legitimacy and the desire for military intervention or exposed a glaring need for further methodological exploration. Either way, this study has paved the way for future research on this subject.

Conclusion

This study sought to examine the relationship between legitimacy and the desire for military intervention. Previous literature examined only facets of legitimacy, cases of military intervention, or the intersection of these two concepts only at the extreme, such as a coup d'état. Previous studies also focused solely on actual military intervention,

rather than the public support for military intervention during times of questionable regime legitimacy.

This study contributed to the field of literature by examining the relationship between five dimensions of legitimacy and the desire for military intervention. Our findings provided support for an inverse or negative relationship for two dimensions of legitimacy, but an unexpectedly positive relationship for the three dimensions that have been previously asserted as the predominant indicators for imminent military intervention. The two findings that confirm the hypotheses presented here can be extended into policy implications for states undergoing legitimacy crises or that feel threatened with intrusion of the military into politics. The three findings that did not confirm hypotheses presented here provide avenues for future research to determine the true relationship between these dimensions of legitimacy and the desire for military intervention.

Appendix

List 1 – World Values Survey Questions Used To Build Legitimacy Variables

Political Community

E012: Willingness to fight for country

G006: How proud of nationality

Regime Principles

E235: Importance of democracy

Regime Performance

E196: Extent of political corruption

E069_11: Confidence: The Government

Regime Institutions

E111: Rate political system for governing country

E112: Rate political system as it was before

E113: Rate political system in ten years

Political Actors

E069_07: Confidence: Parliament

E069_12: Confidence: The Political Parties

E125: Satisfaction with the people in national office

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Table 1. Level of Militarization by Desire for Military Involvement Controlled for Military Expenditure

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Z	P > z
Political Community	-.156	.029	-5.25	0.000***
Regime Principles	-.135	.030	-4.48	0.000***
Regime Performance	.211	.028	7.46	0.000***
Regime Institutions	.263	.023	11.33	0.000***
Political Actors	.349	.023	15.35	0.000***
Polity	-.044	.001	-30.33	0.000***
GDP/cap (logged)	-.300	.006	-53.27	0.000***
Military Expenditure	-.010	.001	-9.18	0.000***
Age	-.003	.000	-5.69	0.000***
Gender	-.006	.014	-0.40	0.691
Marital Status	-.005	.003	-1.52	0.129
Employment Status	.001	.003	0.44	0.661

*** = significance at P < .001

Table 2. Impact of Components of Legitimacy on Desire for Military Involvement

Variable	Odds Ratio	Standard Error	Z	P > z
Political Community	.856	.025	-5.25	0.000***
Regime Principles	.874	.026	-4.48	0.000***
Regime Performance	1.234	.035	7.46	0.000***
Regime Institutions	1.301	.030	11.33	0.000***
Political Actors	1.418	.032	15.35	0.000***
Polity	.957	.001	-30.33	0.000***
GDP/cap (logged)	.741	.004	-53.27	0.000***
Military Expenditure	.989	.001	-9.18	0.000***
Age	.997	.000	-5.69	0.000***
Gender	.994	.014	-0.40	0.691
Marital Status	.995	.003	-1.52	0.129
Employment Status	1.001	.003	0.44	0.661

*** = significance at P < .001

Figure 1. Effect of Various Factors on Desire for Military Intervention

