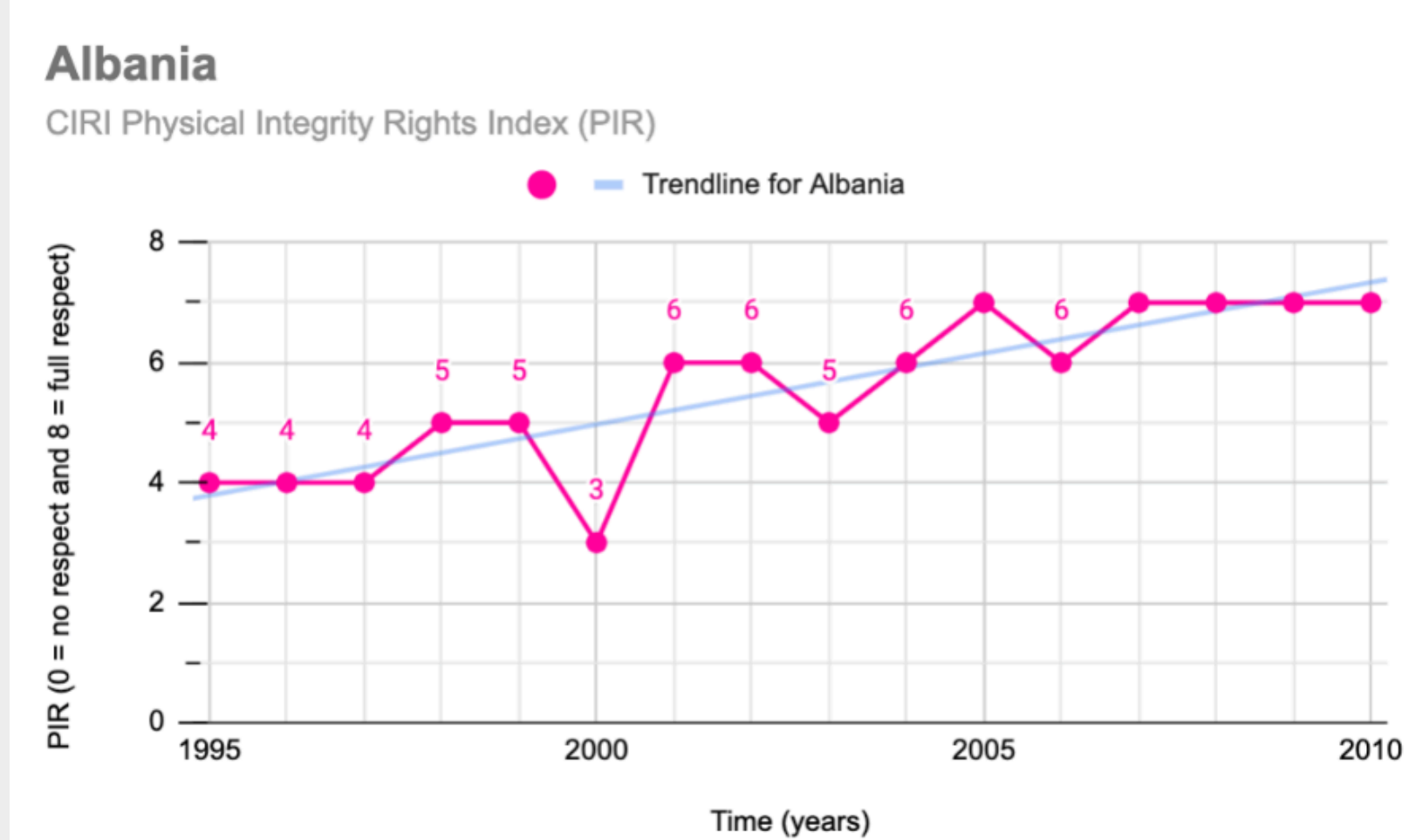


By: Elliot Savin | Supervised by: Professor David Zarnett

WHAT POLITICAL, LEGAL OR SOCIAL FACTORS WITHIN A COUNTRY PROMOTE GOVERNMENTAL RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS?

Introduction

Especially with so many different organizations, collectives and societies focused on enforcing respect for human rights, the questions stand as to why different states respect human rights more than others and what factors are in place that promote or dissuade governmental respect for human rights. Three hypotheses will be tested to determine what can make a difference in influencing governmental respect for human rights. The International Criminal Court, domestic civil society and conflict severity are going to be analyzed within the context of Albania and Israel to determine whether they can explain the differing Physical Integrity Rights index in the countries of Albania and Israel. Given that both countries have different human rights scores and yet are similar when it comes to many political and historical factors; there must be a reason that explains the differing scores.



Methodology

The case selection of this research relies on the discoveries of Poe and Tate in their article *Repression of Human Rights to Personal Integrity in the 1980s: A Global Analysis*. Through empirical testing, they found that the factors that most significantly affected human rights in a country were democracy and participation in civil or international war. The question remained however whether these factors would still be demonstrative of modern cases and if there was anything else that could significantly contribute to government respect for human rights. Indeed, in looking at the countries of Israel and Albania, who are similar when it comes to presence of democracy and participation in conflict, that they still have human rights scores that differ significantly.

In looking at the Physical Integrity Rights index of each country between the years of 1995–2010, three hypotheses are going to be tested to determine if they could explain the differing human rights scores in Albania and Israel. The International Criminal Court, domestic civil society and NGOs as well as conflict severity will be analyzed.

The goal of this paper is to investigate human rights in a previously unexamined context in order to offer insight as to how to proceed in the fight to uphold respect for human rights internationally.



Conclusion

International Criminal Court hypothesis:

International Criminal Court does not have as big of an effect on governmental respect for human rights as was hypothesized. The ICC has the potential to deter individuals from committing crimes but when it comes to the practical application of the Rome Statute laws, there is no evidence that it has a significant effect on human rights scores.

Civil society and NGO hypothesis:

Similarly, civil society and NGOs did not have as big of an effect on government respect for human rights as hypothesized. For Albania, the impact was not as significant because of widespread corruption within the legal and political systems of the country. For Israel, NGOs and domestic civil society could not have as big of an impact because of an existing bias within Israeli authorities that disfavoured any NGO or foreign influence that acted against their agenda.

Conflict severity hypothesis:

The level of conflict severity within a country had an impact on the level of respect a government has for the human rights of its own people, and those it is in conflict with. While violent conflict was present in both cases, it was abundantly clear that the conflict in Israel was of a different magnitude than that of Albania which caused the Israeli government to have a lower respect for human rights and which contributed to the country's worse Physical Integrity Rights score.

The findings are not all encompassing and are meant only to speak of a very specific situation.