

Public Attitudes Towards Human Rights in Latin America

Francesca Parente

Christopher Newport University

Introduction

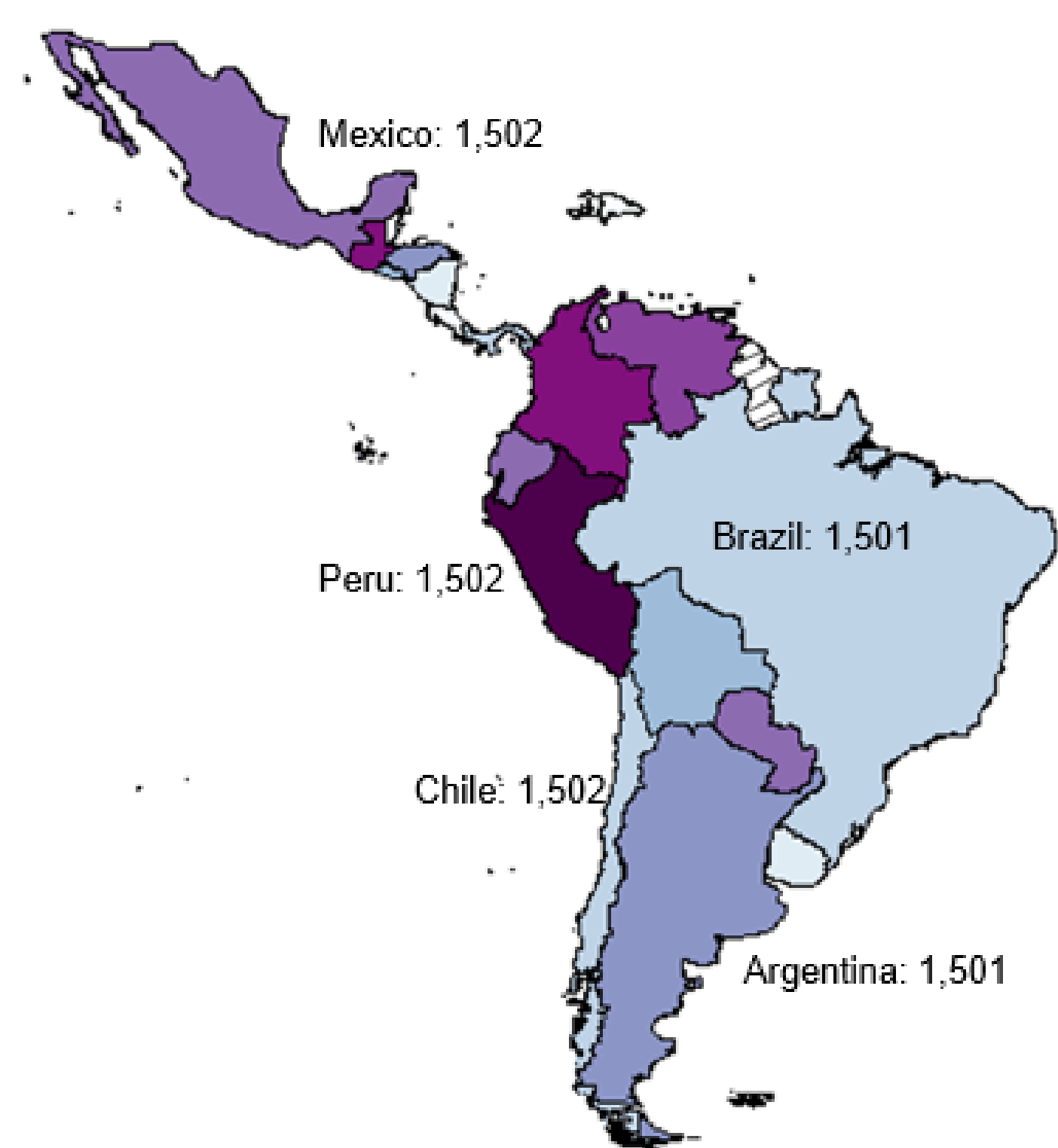
- Many prominent explanations for compliance with international law and courts suggest that the public has an important role to play in influencing leaders' compliance decisions (e.g. Simmons, 2009; Alter, 2014; Chilton, 2014; Dai, 2014; Putnam and Shapiro, 2017; Búzás, 2017, 2018).
- Growing literature has focused on how attitudes toward victims in human rights court cases can affect attitudes toward compliance (Búzás, 2017; Madsen et al., 2022)
- Parente (2023) argues general attitudes toward actors affect support for compliance when those actors are implicated, but does not test this link empirically

Research Question

How do attitudes toward perpetrators of human rights abuses affect attitudes toward compliance?

Research Context

- Online survey fielded on adults in five Latin American countries (see map) in July 2023 by NetQuest
- Survey administrated to NetQuest panels in native language (Spanish/Portuguese)
- Quotas ensure sample is representative along age and gender, compared to adult population



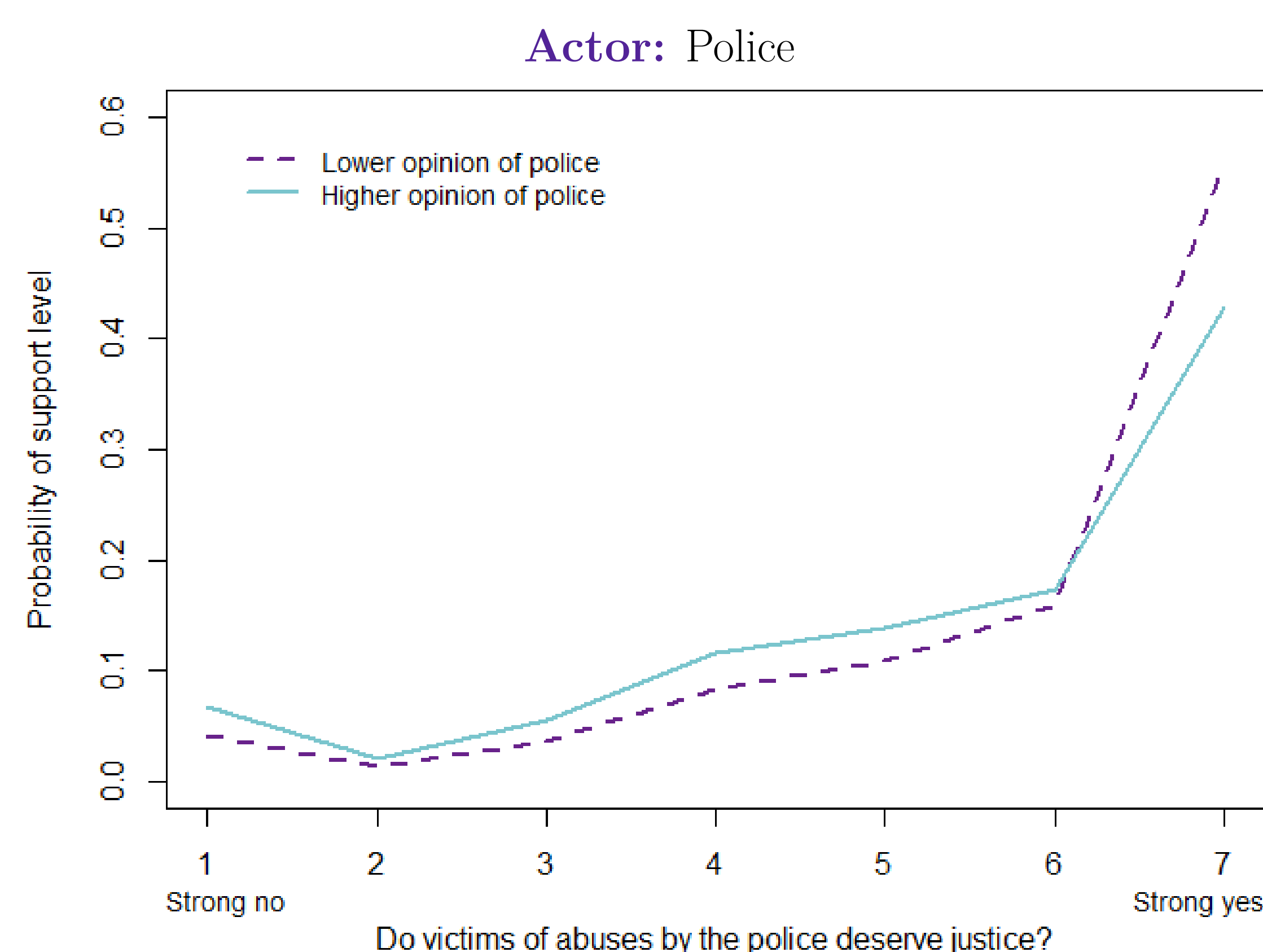
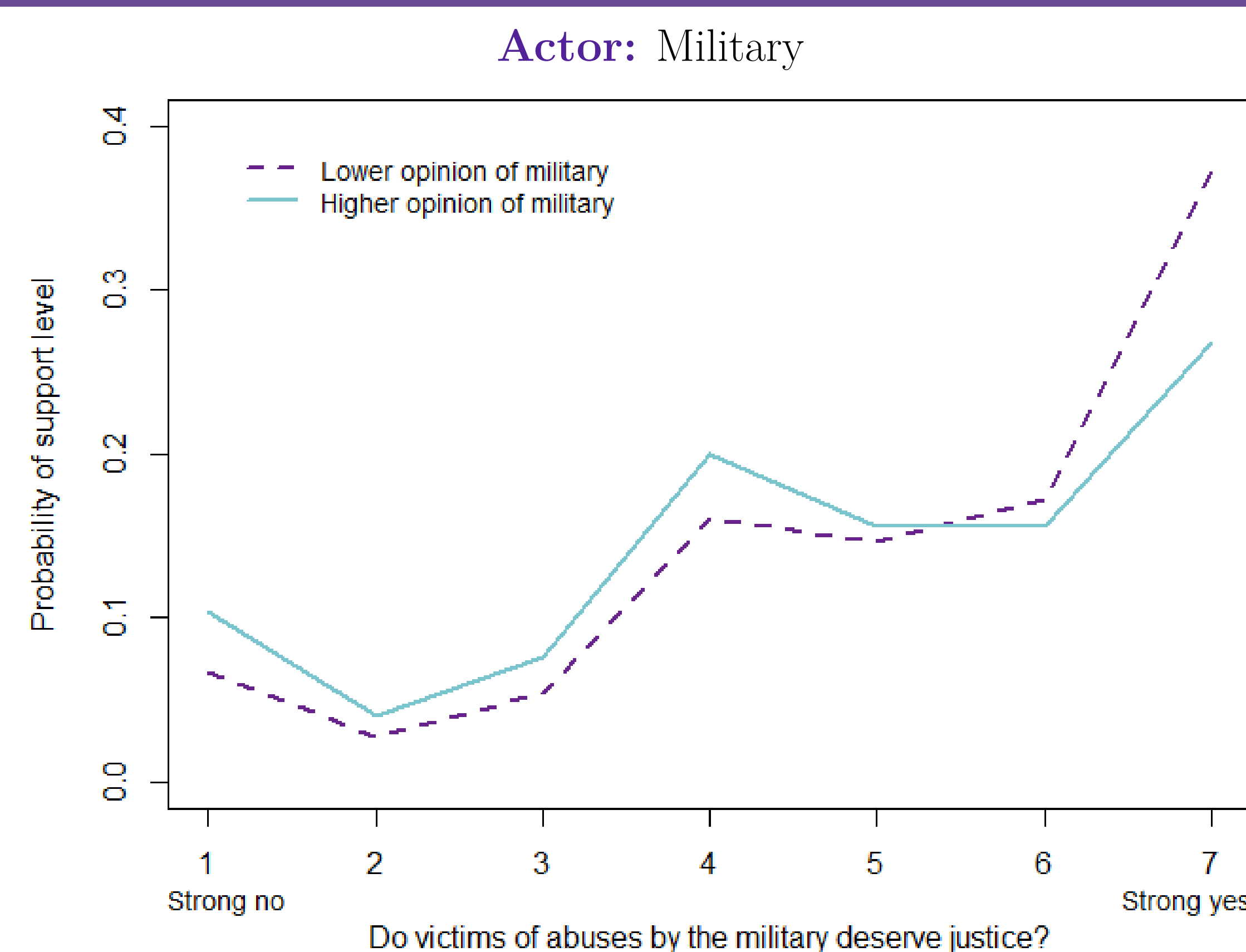
Countries shaded by number of compliance orders received from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Darker shades (purple) indicate more orders and lighter shades (blue) indicate fewer orders.

Research Design

- **Basic Vignette:** Imagine that a regional human rights court has found that [actor] committed grave human rights violations. Please indicate your level of support with each of the following statements using a scale from one (1) to seven (7) in which (1) indicates you strongly disagree and (7) indicates you strongly agree.
 - ▷ *Statement (justice):* The victims deserve justice.
 - ▷ *Statement (reparations):* [Respondent's country] should pay monetary reparations to the victims and/or their families, commensurate with the severity of the violation.
- **Dependent Variable:** Response to vignette (1-7 scale)
- **Explanatory Variable:** Attitude towards implicated actor (1-7 scale) compared to mean attitudes for all other actors
 - ▷ *Robust to cardinal measures of attitudes towards actor*

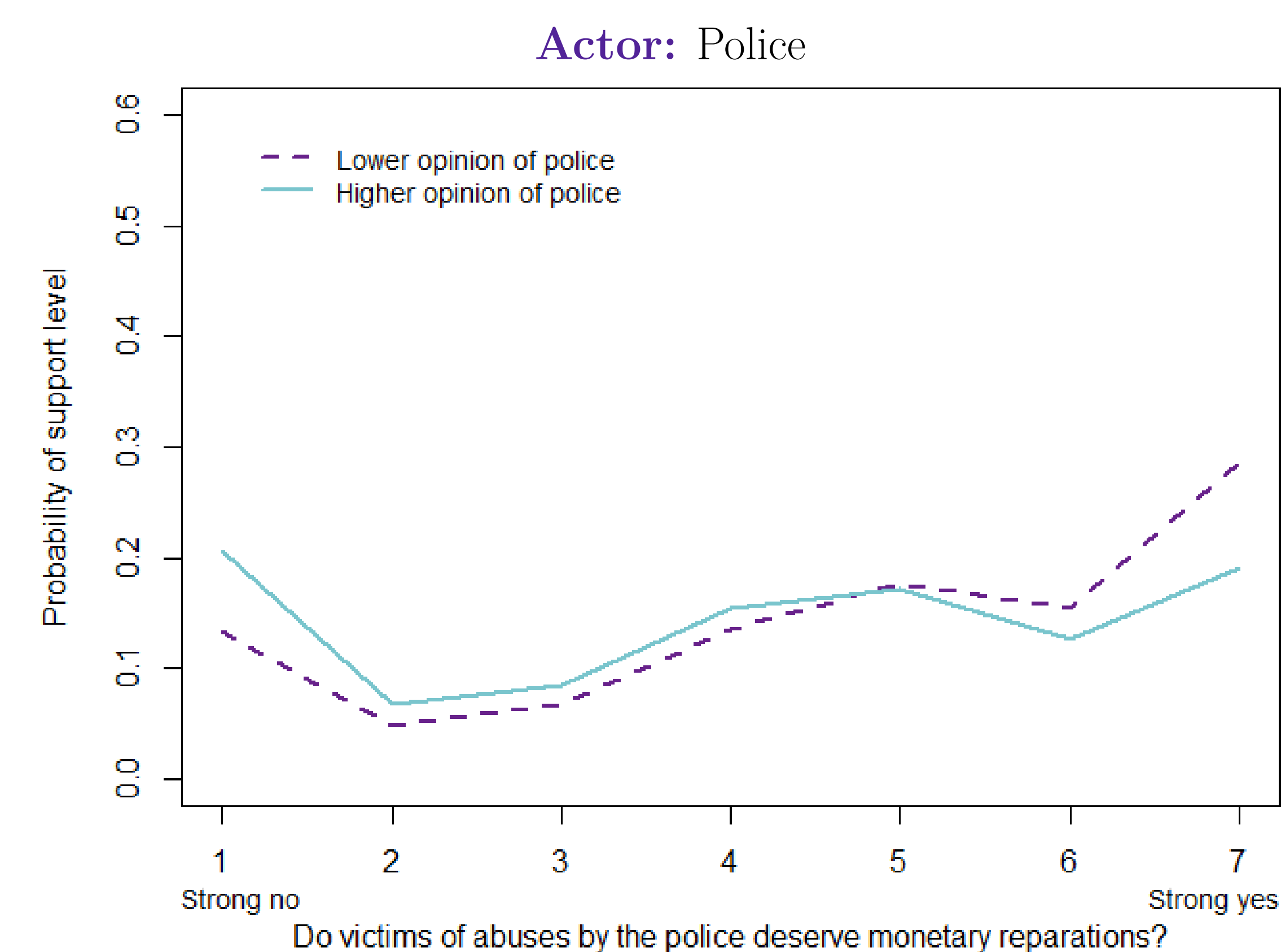
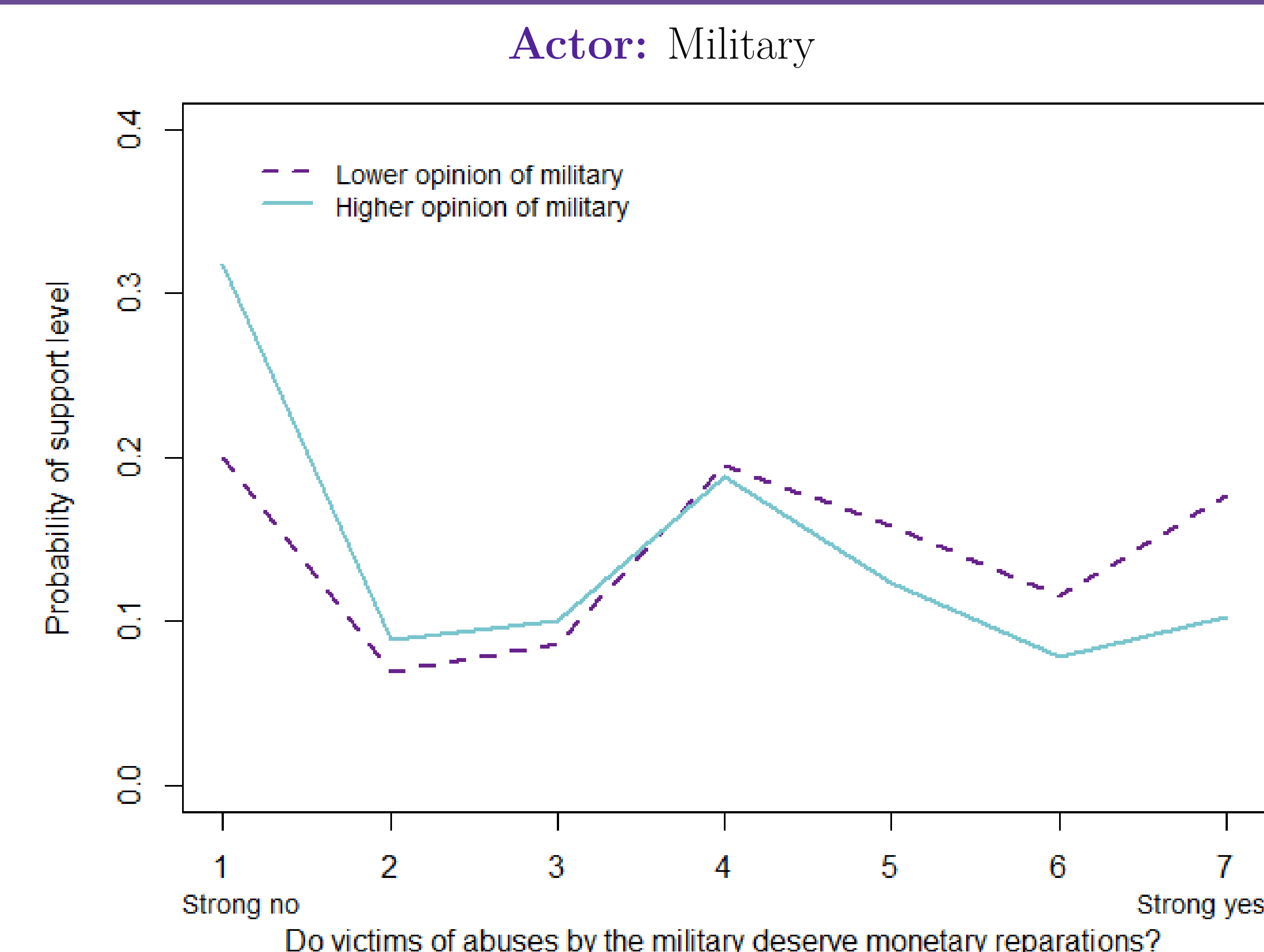
- **Model:** Ordinal logistic regression
- **Controls:** ideology (left/right), race, male, age bracket, human rights violations (forced disappearance and torture), right to life, country fixed effects
 - ▷ *Robust to individual country regressions without fixed effects*
- **Predicted probability plots:** Predicted probability of observing each level of support for a white male Argentinian respondent, aged 35–44, ideologically centrist, who does not believe that there is a right to life or that forced disappearance and torture are human rights violations
 - ▷ "Lower opinion" is one standard deviation below the mean
 - ▷ "Higher opinion" is one standard deviation above the mean

Do victims deserve justice?



Ordinal Logit Coefficients (standard error, t-value):
 Opinion of military: -0.152 (0.026; -5.748); Opinion of police: -0.158 (0.028, -5.591)

Do victims deserve monetary reparations?



Ordinal Logit Coefficients (standard error, t-value):
 Opinion of military: -0.197 (0.022; -8.908); Opinion of police: -0.163 (0.023, -7.145)