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Does Preeminence in Emerging and Military Technologies Matter for International Status and Prestige? Experimental Study

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International relations literature on status and prestige demonstrates that states tend to seek technological capabilities and premier weapon systems to shape and improve their international status and prestige. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on whether such efforts are worthwhile and serve the purpose of enhancing status and prestige. I attempt to address this question through a conjoint survey experiment conducted with a representative sample of 1,000 American nationals. I use artificial intelligence, uncrewed and autonomous systems, and aircraft carriers as attributes for emerging and military technologies, alongside other factors that are shown to be relevant to a state's status and prestige. Through a conjoint design, I aim to explore whether the level of advancement in AI and possession of such technologies improve status and prestige in international politics. Besides, I also intend to test several other hypotheses regarding the source of technology possession and also, based on attitudinal factors such as familiarity with AI, confidence in defense and military AI, and techno-skepticism. Moreover, my design differentiates status and prestige as distinct concepts, which allows a more nuanced understanding of each phenomenon and its interaction with technology. Findings will contribute to a better understanding of the role played by emerging and military technologies in status- and prestige-seeking efforts, informing the respective literature in IR and security studies.

What discipline or branch of humanities or social sciences do you identify yourself with?

International Relations

If you are submitting an Open Panel proposal, have you included all four abstracts in attachment?

Yes, I have included all required information (see below).

Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?

Yes

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