Policy Congruence in a Competitive Authoritarian Regime: Learning from the Angolan Case

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Abstract

Building on the theoretical proposition that congruence is as much a property to be measured in authoritarian regimes as it is in democratic regimes, the aim of this article is to understand the phenomenon of ideological and political congruence in Angola. To carry out this analysis, we rely on two original surveys, conducted in 2012 with members of parliament (MPs) and college students (voters), covering equivalent policy issues. The results, to some extent exploratory, suggest moderate levels of congruence between MPs and voters. This article contributes to the existing scholarship through a case study that escapes a golden rule in this field – i.e., it is not a democracy. Moreover, it features congruence as a potentially relevant factor in understanding dominant parties' persistence in authoritarian settings.

Keywords

Policy congruence, authoritarian regimes, Angola, MPs, voters

Introduction

Miller and Stokes' (1963) pioneering article opened a tradition of studies in representation in which the measurement of congruence between the preferences of the representatives and those of the constituents emerges as the cornerstone. In this view, ideological and policy congruence are a way of expressing the extent to which representation is actually achieved via elections (see, for instance:

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