NR26 / Policy Processes in the Legislature: Insights from the Global South

Topic : Research

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Examining legislative dynamics is crucial to enhancing our understanding of the policymaking process, as legislatures are key institutions that enact policies and oversee their implementation. Despite the importance of legislatures (parliaments and state legislatures) in public policymaking, there is a dearth of studies on legislatures in the Global South. This literature is largely dominated by studies situated in the Global North, particularly the United States. The few existing studies on legislatures in the Global South have examined subjects such as the accountability mechanisms present in legislatures, the functioning of legislative plenaries and committees, party politics within the legislature, and the inclusiveness of legislative processes.

Studying Global South legislatures can expand the scope of policy process studies and contribute to theory-building on legislative processes. First, the diversity of legislatures in the Global South—ranging from older to newer legislatures, spanning various regime types (including democracies and authoritarian systems), and characterised by diverse deliberative cultures—merits elaboration and cross-national studies. Second, legislatures in the Global South operate in contexts marked by significant social and economic developmental deficits, presenting unique challenges that intensify the pressures on legislators to address people's concerns. Understanding how legislators cope with these pressures can offer valuable insights into how the content and process of legislative policymaking evolve in such settings. Finally, the legislatures of the Global South offer immense scope for sub-national comparisons of state legislatures. For instance, studying legislative innovations (such as rule changes) implemented in a few state legislatures but absent in others presents an opportunity to examine the causal effects of innovations on legislative processes and outcomes.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We invite studies that make theoretical, empirical, and contextual contributions to enhancing knowledge of the policy processes in the legislatures of the Global South. These studies may directly relate to the above topics or may introduce new areas for inquiry.