The influence of political elites on varieties of democracy in Latin America*

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Abstract

For long time literature has emphasized the importance of elites in transitions and consolidation of democracy, although there are few empirical studies. This paper aims to analyze the relationship between the political attitudes of legislative elites, support for democracy and radicalism, with the different varieties of democracy in Latin America. The HJ-Biplot technique identifies the relationship between variables, such as varieties of democracy, political elites, inequality, party system institutionalization, and also the specific situation of every country. Results confirm the influence of political attitudes of legislators: lower levels of radicalism and high support for democracy promote liberal, electoral and deliberative varieties, and there is a positive effect of radicalism on egalitarian democracy, and also on participatory, but weaker.

Keywords: political elite, varieties of democracy, Latin America

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