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The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Issue and Ideological Congruence of Trump and Bolsonaro Administrations

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Abstract : Recent political developments and government control actions in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic draw attention to the contrast between the duties of government and the demands of democratic representation. Elected by mobilizing far-right issues, Trump and Bolsonaro moved away from the WHO guidelines but had to accommodate demands on the health and on the social protection system on the one hand and demands from the economic sector on the other. This study used the MARPOR Project method to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the issue and ideological congruence between the electoral and governmental arena in both the Trump and Bolsonaro Administrations. Findings reveal issue congruence between arenas in "National Way of Life: Positive", "Law and Order," and "Technology and Infrastructure" for Donald Trump, and "Welfare State Expansion" for Bolsonaro. Ideological estimation results show that Trump and Bolsonaro positioned to the right in their presidential elections, initially moved to the center-right. However, welfare policies actions at high frequency during the COVID-19 pandemic moved the ideological estimations of both governments to the center-left, despite their denial rhetoric.

Keywords : congruence, COVID-19, Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro
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