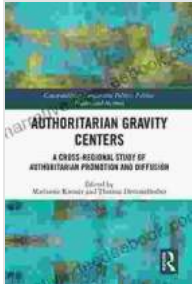


# Cross-Regional Study of Authoritarian Promotion and Diffusion: Conceptualizing and Measuring Authoritarian Influence



## Authoritarian Gravity Centers: A Cross-Regional Study of Authoritarian Promotion and Diffusion (Conceptualising Comparative Politics Book 11)

by Alberto Alemanno

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In an increasingly interconnected world, the spread of authoritarianism has become a pressing concern. Authoritarian regimes are actively seeking to promote their ideologies and practices, both within their own borders and abroad. This phenomenon, known as authoritarian promotion and diffusion, poses significant challenges to democratic values and institutions.

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of authoritarian promotion and diffusion, there is a lack of systematic research on this topic. This article aims to fill this gap by providing a conceptual framework and empirical measures for understanding the spread of authoritarianism across regions.

## Conceptualizing Authoritarian Promotion and Diffusion

Authoritarian promotion and diffusion can be conceptualized as a process through which authoritarian regimes seek to influence the political landscape of other countries or regions. This influence can take various forms, including:

- **Ideological promotion:** Authoritarian regimes may seek to promote their own ideologies and values through propaganda, media campaigns, and educational programs.
- **Institutional diffusion:** Authoritarian regimes may also seek to spread their own political institutions and practices, such as autocratic leadership, suppression of dissent, and control of the media.
- **Economic coercion:** Authoritarian regimes may use economic leverage to pressure other countries to adopt authoritarian policies.
- **Military intervention:** In extreme cases, authoritarian regimes may resort to military intervention to impose their will on other countries.

Authoritarian promotion and diffusion can be motivated by a variety of factors, including:

- **Ideological affinity:** Authoritarian regimes may seek to promote their ideologies to countries with similar political values.
- **Geopolitical interests:** Authoritarian regimes may seek to extend their influence in order to secure their borders or access resources.
- **Economic competition:** Authoritarian regimes may seek to undermine the economic and political stability of democratic countries.

- **Domestic legitimacy:** Authoritarian regimes may seek to promote their own ideologies and practices in order to consolidate their domestic power.

## Measuring Authoritarian Influence

Measuring authoritarian promotion and diffusion is a complex task. However, a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods can be used to assess the influence of authoritarian regimes on other countries or regions.

### Quantitative methods:

- **Content analysis:** Analyzing the content of speeches, articles, and other official statements can provide insights into the ideological promotion of authoritarian regimes.
- **Event data analysis:** Tracking the frequency and characteristics of events related to authoritarian promotion and diffusion can provide evidence of the spread of authoritarian influence.
- **Network analysis:** Mapping the connections between authoritarian regimes and other countries can reveal patterns of influence and diffusion.
- **Economic data:** Analyzing trade patterns and investment flows can provide evidence of economic coercion by authoritarian regimes.

### Qualitative methods:

- **Case studies:** In-depth studies of specific cases of authoritarian promotion and diffusion can provide detailed insights into the mechanisms and consequences of this phenomenon.

- **Interviews:** Interviews with policymakers, experts, and individuals in affected countries can provide valuable qualitative data on authoritarian influence.
- **Focus groups:** Focus groups can be used to explore the perceptions and experiences of individuals living in countries affected by authoritarian promotion and diffusion.

## **Empirical Evidence**

The empirical evidence on authoritarian promotion and diffusion is still relatively limited. However, a number of studies have provided evidence of the spread of authoritarian influence across regions.

For example, a study by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace found that authoritarian regimes have significantly increased their use of propaganda and other forms of ideological promotion in recent years. The study also found that authoritarian regimes are increasingly using economic leverage to pressure other countries to adopt authoritarian policies.

Another study by the Freedom House found that the number of countries experiencing a decline in political rights and civil liberties has increased significantly in recent years. The study also found that this decline is partly due to the spread of authoritarian influence from countries such as China and Russia.

## **Implications**

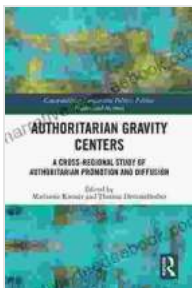
The spread of authoritarianism has serious implications for democratic values and institutions around the world.

**Threat to democracy:** Authoritarian promotion and diffusion can undermine democratic institutions and values. Authoritarian regimes may seek to suppress dissent, limit freedom of the press, and restrict political participation.

**Regional instability:** Authoritarian promotion and diffusion can also contribute to regional instability. Authoritarian regimes may seek to extend their influence in order to secure their borders or access resources. This can lead to tensions and conflict with other countries.

**Global security:** Authoritarian promotion and diffusion can also have implications for global security. Authoritarian regimes may be more likely to engage in aggressive behavior, such as military intervention. This can increase the risk of conflict and war.

Authoritarian promotion and diffusion is a serious challenge to democratic values and institutions around the world. It is important to understand the mechanisms through which authoritarian regimes seek to influence and shape the political landscape of other countries or regions. By developing conceptual frameworks and empirical measures, we can better assess the spread of authoritarianism and develop strategies to counter its effects.



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