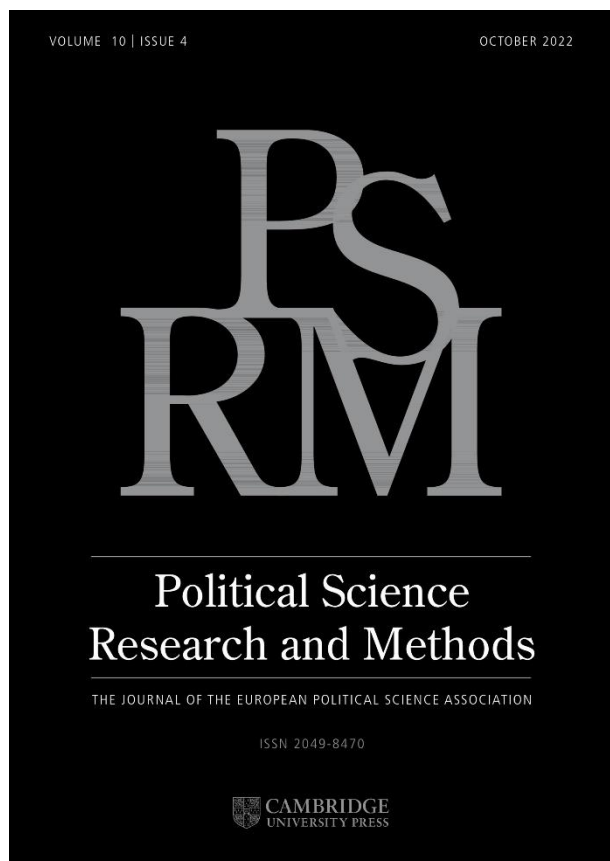


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ABSTRACT:

Do policy priorities that candidates emphasize during election campaigns predict their subsequent legislative activities? We study this question by assembling novel data on legislative leadership posts held by Japanese politicians and using a fine-tuned transformer-based machine learning model to classify policy areas in over 46,900 statements from 1270 candidate manifestos across five elections. We find that a higher emphasis on a policy issue increases the probability of securing a legislative post in the same area. This relationship remains consistent across multiple elections and persists even when accounting for candidates' previous legislative leadership roles. We also discover greater congruence in distributive policy areas. Our findings indicate that campaigns provide meaningful signals of policy priorities.

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