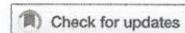


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Perceptions, identities and interests in South–South cooperation: the cases of Chile, Venezuela and Brazil

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ABSTRACT

The relevance acquired in recent years by South–South cooperation seems to be connected with deeper structural transformations occurring in the international system. However, the variety of cooperation models promoted by new providers in the South requires the identification of complementary factors to help explain current patterns. A set of socio-cognitive elements, related to each country's perceptions, identities and interests, can yield greater understanding of the variety of South–South cooperation models. Such an approach is here applied to the cases of Chile, Venezuela and Brazil – three important providers from the South – in order to explore their different cooperation models.

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Introduction

South–South cooperation (SSC) has emerged as a major factor of change in the current international system. Born in the context of the North–South asymmetries defined in the post-war international order, the emergence (and in some cases re-emergence) of SSC is an expression of the reconfiguration of that order.

Over the last two decades, an increasing number of developing countries, mostly included in the World Bank's 'middle-income' category, have promoted (or in some cases strengthened) their own international development policy. As a consequence, new models and procedures of development cooperation have emerged, challenging traditional Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) donors' practices and widening the available sources of international support for developing countries. Even if these countries' financial contribution to total development cooperation, with some exceptions as China, is small, the active presence of these new providers compels the reconsideration of prior commitments among donors and of the governance mechanisms of the international cooperation system, basically located within the OECD.¹

The existing literature has tended to identify SSC by way of features that set it apart from traditional North–South schemes. More precisely, it is supposed that SSC promotes more horizontal and balanced relationships among partners, rejects the application of policy

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