This paper documents how distance from capitals creates information barriers that shape citizens' political behaviour. Remote areas have more positive opinions on national politics and country’s performance despite limited experience with state institutions, contributing to a broader literature on the disconnect between citizens' attitudes and government performance in developing countries.

Our findings show that internet expansion can disrupt these spatial patterns in political behaviour. It reduces information frictions that have isolated remote populations, but only in countries with state-controlled media and weak institutions. In these contexts, where traditional information channels are least reliable, internet access brings remote citizens' political assessments in line with the more critical views found near capitals.

While previous work highlights that state capacity declines with distance from the capital, with implications for state-citizen relationships and economic development, we demonstrate that internet can reshape spatial patterns in political behaviour by connecting remote citizens to national politics in countries with state-controlled media, suggesting that physical isolation need not permanently determine political attitudes.

Future research should investigate whether these effects persist over time, how they interact with other dimensions of state capacity, and whether similar patterns exist in other developing regions.