

Process vs. Outcome?
How to evaluate the effects of participatory processes on legitimacy perceptions

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Information on methodology of the empirical studies

Stimulus material Experiment 1

Vignette text (spoken as voice over in the movie)

Part 1

“Imagine the following scenario:

In your municipality an important decision has to be taken. To accommodate refugees in the Netherlands, reception centers are opened in several municipalities. Also in your municipality there is a plan to open such a reception center for asylum seekers. Specifically, this would mean that 150 refugees from Syria could stay in this home until they receive a residence permit or are denied asylum. This center would host refugees of all age groups as well as families. Similar centers have been installed in other municipalities in the Netherlands.

The question if such a center should be opened leads to a heated discussion among politicians and among the citizens in your municipality. You also discuss this topic with your friends and family. What is your preference? “

//preference question//

Part 2

The way in which this decision needs to be taken leads to discussion. Some opinion-makers and inhabitants propose to let the inhabitants decide themselves by organizing a citizen forum. Such citizen forum has already been used in for instance Leiden, Haarlem and Amersfoort. In such a citizen forum a randomly chosen selection of the inhabitants of the municipality is invited by an independent organization to talk about the plans. Subsequently the municipality implements the plan that receives most support from the participants after this day of intense discussion. Other opinion-makers and inhabitants do not think this is a good idea and want the council of mayor and councilors to decide themselves which of the two plans should be implemented.

Involvement condition

The municipality decides to organize a citizen forum for this decision. 40 inhabitants of your municipality are selected by chance. Subsequently, the participants go to the city hall and get the chance to explain which project they prefer. After an extensive discussion between all participants, it is clear the majority of participants prefers to open the reception center for Syrian refugees.

Subsequently, the council of mayor and councilors open a reception center for Syrian refugees.

No involvement condition

The municipality decides not to organize a citizen forum for this decision. The council of mayor and councilors takes the decision themselves.

The council gathers to discuss the plans. After an extensive discussion between all members, it is clear that the council prefers to open the reception center for Syrian refugees. Subsequently, the council of major and councilors open a reception center for Syrian refugees.

Stimulus material Experiment 2

Part 1

“Imagine the following scenario:

In your municipality an important decision has to be taken: there are two projects that the municipality wants to realize but there is only sufficient budget for one of these plans.

The first plan aims to increase the safety in your municipality. Therefore, extra police officers would be hired who would walk through the neighborhood during both the day and at night to help people in need and protect neighborhoods better against crime such as burglaries. In other municipalities the project has been implemented and has indeed increased the security.

The second plan aims to increase the equality in chances in education in your municipality. Therefore, extra social workers would be hired who would help children in schools with their homework. Children with a difficult situation at home in particular would receive more support and attention from these extra social workers. Also this project has been implemented in other municipalities and has indeed led to more equal opportunities for children.

Only one of these two plan can be financed: the safety plan or the plan for equality in education. This choice leads to heated discussions in the council of the Mayor and councilors and between inhabitants of your neighborhood. Also you discuss these plans frequently with your friends and family and you discuss which plan should be chosen. Which plan do you prefer?

//preference question//

Part 2 like in E1 (with adapted outcomes)

Stimulus material Experiment 3

Part 1

“Imagine the following scenario:

In your municipality an important decision has to be taken: Due to budget constraints, expenses must be cut in the city. There are two options to reduce spending. One possibility is to cut down on safety expenditures in your municipality. This means in practice that less policemen would be employed to control the neighborhoods at night. Other municipalities have already made similar cuts to their local police force. The second option is to cut expenditures on education equality in your municipality. This would mean that less social workers would be employed to help children with their homework that have a difficult situation at home. Also this kind of budget cut has already been implemented in other municipalities.

The budget must be cut in one of these two areas: Less policemen or less social workers. The choice leads to a heated discussion among politicians and among the citizens in your municipality. You also discuss this topic with your friends and family. What is your preference?

// preference question//

Part 2 like in E1 (with adapted outcomes)

Figure A1. Example visuals of the cartoon movie



Links to example videos in Dutch

1. Intro (Experiment 3): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS8Ey5o_y2g&feature=youtu.be
2. Treatment (Experiment 3: city council, more social workers): <https://youtu.be/T7OrFLkA9xc>
3. Treatment (Experiment 1, citizen forum, opening of the asylum seeker center):
<https://youtu.be/XENU4mypP4A>

Study 4-12

Information on the experimental treatments for the studies 4-12, that have been collected by Peter Esaiasson and colleagues are retrieved directly from their paper (Esaiasson et al, 2019).

In the vignette studies, participants were asked to read a short text in which the decision-making procedure was described. For instance for the vignette on banning religious symbols, the text read:

“The decision of whether to ban religious symbols in the schools in your municipality can be made in several different ways: One possibility is that the decision is made by expert administrators at the local school agency. Another possibility is that the decision is made by the politicians in the local council. A third possibility is that the decision is made by the citizens via referendum.

Now that the time has come for your municipality to make the decision, the pros and cons of a ban have been debated in the media. Following the public debate, politicians in the local council // expert administrators at the local school agency // citizens in a referendum // make the final decision that religious symbols // should be banned // should not be banned // from the schools in your municipality.” (p. 7)

“In the field experiments, we provided a large number of high school classes with a substantial sum of money (on average, the equivalent of \$290), and asked each class to decide whether to donate it to Doctors Without Borders or to keep it for a joint celebration. The objective arrangements for reaching a decision were designed by us to replicate, on a small scale, decision making in large-scale democracies, and were randomly distributed across classes”(p.7).

Measurement of the dependent variable: Fairness perceptions

A1. Fairness perceptions study 1 and study 3

Item	Wording	Answer options
	“Think about the process by which the decision was taken.”	
FP_1	To what extent do you think the decision making process was fair?	– 1 very unfair/bad... – 2
FP_2*	To what extent do you think the decision making process was good?	– 3 – 4
FP_3*	To what extent do you think the decision making process was just?	– 5 – 6
FP_4*	To what extent do you think the decision making process was appropriate?	– 7 very fair/good...

*used for robustness check in Table B2. Main analysis was conducted using FP_1

A2. Fairness perceptions study 2

Item	Wording	Answer options
	“Think about the process by which the decision was taken. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”	
FP_1	The process was fair	– 1 Completely Disagree – 2
FP_2*	The process fulfills my moral expectations	– 3
FP_3*	People like me could influence the decision	– 4 – 5
FP_4*	People like me could state their opinions	– 6 – 7 Completely agree

*used for robustness check in Table B2. The main analysis uses only FP_1

A3. Fairness perceptions study 4-12 (Esaiasson et al., 2019)

Item	Wording	Answer options
FP_1	How fair do you think matters were when the decision was made?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1 very unfair – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 very fair

Credibility and compliance check study 1-3

Participants complied well in terms of paying attention to the treatment. Almost all participants were able to recall the decision options (S1: 98.43%; S2: 91.44%; S3: 97.58%). Non-compliance was evenly distributed across the conditions as there were no significant difference across conditions in the correct recall, the sound check and the time people spent watching the movies. Respondents were also asked how likely it was the described scenario would happen in their municipality. The participatory procedures were perceived slightly less likely to happen than the representative procedures. This is not odd as participatory procedures are less frequently used than a purely representative process. Yet the differences are small and overall all scenarios were perceived as plausible across the conditions (Scale 1-7; E1: $M= 4.17$, $SD= 1.70$; E2: $M= 4.20$, $SD= 1.56$; E3: $M= 4.08$, $SD= 1.64$).

Table A4. Overview of sampling strategy and demographic composition across studies

	Type	Recruitment	Gender (% female)	age	N	country
1	Vignette	Survey company (PanelClix), stratified sampling	51%	52	796	NL
2	Vignette	Survey company (PanelClix), stratified sampling	46%	53	765	NL
3	Vignette	Survey company (PanelClix), stratified sampling	48%	50	915	NL
4	Vignette	At train station	51%	39,5	456	SE
5	Vignette	During seminar for teachers and school personnel	79%	47,1	288	SE
6	Vignette	High schools	56%	17,5	399	SE

7	Vignette	During lectures at Gothenburg and Lundt University	53%	23,2	139	SE
8	Vignette	Schools	53%	16,8	274	SE
9	Vignette	High schools	48%	17,0	200	SE
10	Field	High schools	71%	17,0	603	SE
11	Field	High schools	71%	17,0	214	SE
12	Vignette	Survey company (Novus), probability sampling	50%	46,6	1001	SE

Appendix B

Additional analyses

Table B1. Regression of fairness perceptions on participatory processes and outcome favorability

	S2			S3			S4					
	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE
treatment: participatory process	.09	.000	.02	.24	.000	.02	.07	.000	.01	.19	.000	.03
treatment: winning	.13	.000	.02	.04	.033	.02	.09	.000	.01	.19	.000	.02
R2	.11			.16			.07			.19		
N	796			760			915			456		

	S5			S6			S7			S8		
	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE
treatment: participatory process	.09	.055	.05	.18	.000	.03	.24	.000	.05	.24	.000	.04
treatment: winning	.26	.000	.04	.34	.000	.03	.14	.004	.05	.25	.000	.04
R2	.20			.29			.17			.24		
N	222			399			139			272		

	S9			S10			S11			S12		
	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE
treatment: participatory process	.19	.002	.06	.15	.000	.03	.27	.000	.05	.12	.000	.02
treatment: winning	.38	.000	.06	.16	.000	.03	.24	.000	.08	.26	.000	.02
R2	.33			.13			.26			.20		
N	99			603			214			1001		

Note: OLS with Clustered Robust Standard Errors for S7 and S8 (clustered in classes); OLS regressions for all other studies. Unstandardized coefficients are presented, fairness perceptions range from 0-1

Table B2: Explaining fairness perceptions with the index measure for study 1-3

	S1						S2						S3					
	all			losers			all			losers			all			losers		
	coef	p	SE	coef	p	SE	coef	p	SE	coef	p	SE	coef	p	SE	coef	p	SE
treatment: pp	.07	.000	.01	.09	.000	.02	.18	.000	.02	.19	.000	.03	.06	.000	.01	.08	.000	.02
R ²	.03			.04			.12			.12			.03			.04		
N	791			399			760			384			912			453		

Note: Estimates are unstandardized coefficients, Study 1: opening an asylum seeker center. Study 2: gains (policemen or social workers), Study 3: losses (policemen or social workers)

Table B3. interactions between participatory decision-making and outcome favorability

	S1			S2			S3			S4		
	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE
treatment: participatory process	.09	.000	.02	.24	.000	.03	.09	.000	.02	.23	.000	.04
treatment: winning	.13	.000	.02	.04	.145	.03	.11	.000	.02	.22	.000	.03
interaction: pp x winning	.00	.890	.03	.01	.888	.04	-.04	.136	.03	-.08	.127	.05
R ²	.11			.16			.07			.20		
N	796			760			915			456		

	S5			S6			S7			S8		
	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE
treatment: participatory process	.20	.019	.08	.19	.000	.04	.26	.001	.08	.21	.000	.05
treatment: winning	.29	.000	.04	.34	.000	.04	.15	.007	.06	.23	.000	.04
interaction: pp x winning	-.16	.115	.10	-.01	.917	.06	-.05	.654	.11	.07	.375	.08
R ²	.21			.29			.17			.24		
N	222			399			139			272		

	S9			S10			S11			S12		
	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE	Coef	p	SE
treatment: participatory process	.22	.063	.12	.18	.000	.04	.18	.000	.04	.20	.000	.03
treatment: winning	.39	.000	.07	.17	.000	.03	.17	.000	.03	.33	.000	.03
interaction: pp x winning	-.04	.771	.14	-.04	.383	.04	-.04	.383	.04	-.14	.000	.04
R2	.33			.13			.13			.21		
N	99			603			603			1001		

Note: Estimates are unstandardized regression coefficients. OLS with Clustered Robust Standard Errors for S7 and S8 (clustered in classes); OLS regressions for all other studies.