

How to Measure the Effects of Dialog-oriented Innovations on the Quality of Democracy?

A Micro, Meso and Macro Level Approach

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Abstract

Whereas the effects of democratic innovations on the quality of democracy are discussed extensively, there are surprisingly few debates regarding the measurability and the concrete measurement of these effects. There is often a lack of clear definition and it remains unclear which indicators are used. Operationalizations of what is meant by ‘effect of democratic innovations on democratic quality’ are not seldom vague. Moreover, investigations are mostly case studies on a limited number of cases looking at one or two effects.

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to explore how the effects of democratic innovations on the quality of democracy can be defined and measured comprehensively in comparative large-n case studies. The paper introduces an analytical framework for evaluation, developed and tested within a meta-analytical pilot study on effects of dialog-oriented procedures. The framework contains variables developed from various theoretical and empirical studies on citizen participation. To measure the effects of dialog-oriented procedures, we distinguish between three levels: micro, meso and macro. For every level we develop several indicators that allow to measure results of democratic innovations systematically and comprehensively. Finally we discuss our three-level framework in the context of quality-of-democracy research. Both research strands, quality-of-democracy and democratic-innovations research, have remained strictly in their respective scientific community and just recently took notice of each other. We consider both research strands in relation and highlight the relevance of our three-level framework for quality-of-democracy- as well as for democratic-innovations research.

Keywords: Democracy, Democratic Innovations, Established Democracies, Citizens, Evaluation, Concept, Deliberation, Deliberative Democracy

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Introduction

Whereas the effects of democratic innovations on the quality of democracy are discussed extensively, there are surprisingly few debates regarding the concrete measurement and the measurability of these effects. There is often a lack of clear definition and it remains unclear which indicators are used. Clear operationalizations of what is meant by ‘effect of democratic innovations on democratic quality’ are frequently missing. Moreover, research is mostly done in a case study format with a limited number of cases looking at one or two effects.

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to explore how effects of democratic innovations can be defined and measured comprehensively in comparative large-n case studies. In contrast to the wide-spread case study approach, our research project² is aiming at combining the scattered information. “Cumulating the Intellectual Gold of Case Study” (Jensen/Rodgers 2001) is the objective of our approach. In other words we are aiming at a meta-analysis of qualitative data. We are convinced that the patchy case-study-data must be accumulated, aggregated, and synthesized to reach generalizable conclusions.

The useful combination of information, however, is only possible, if this information is systemized within a common framework. Authors of case studies do hardly apply similar concepts and indicators. Whereas, for example, one author examines the knowledge gain of participants, labeling this phenomenon as ‘effectiveness’, another author might use the same term, ‘effectiveness’, as a term describing impacts on policy making. This chaos of labelling, meaning, and semantics impedes the aggregation of case studies’ data. A well thought out framework is required.

The paper introduces an analytical framework for evaluation, developed and tested within a meta-analytical pilot study on effects of dialog-oriented procedures. The framework contains variables extracted from various theoretical and empirical studies on democratic innovations. To measure the effects of participatory procedures, we distinguish between three levels: micro, meso and macro level. For every level we develop several indicators that allow to measure results of democratic innovations on quality of democracy systematically and comprehensively.

The paper is structured in the following manner: First, it discusses briefly the term democratic innovations. Then, we give a theory-based overview about the democratic functions of

² The pilot study investigates the impact of dialog-oriented forms of citizen participation (including participatory budgeting and local agenda 21 processes) at the local level in Germany. See for more information on the research project: <http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/53879646/metaanalyse>.

deliberation and dialog-oriented procedures as one example of democratic innovations. Next, the paper reviews the extant literature relevant for empirical measurements of democratic, especially dialog-oriented innovations' effects. Finally, the analytical framework of our meta-analytical pilot study, including selected indicators, is presented. The paper concludes with a discussion of ties between democratic-innovations and quality-of-democracy research and the relevance of our three-level framework for both research strands.

Democratic Innovations

The term 'innovation' is used mostly in technology and economics but is also attracting increasing interest in the context of politics. It is difficult to delineate the term 'innovation' with any precision. What makes the definition even more challenging is the fact, that innovations are often not invented, but reinvented or copied. In technology and economics, about 70-80 percent of what firms interpret as innovations are not really new for the sector, but are actually imitations. This is also true in the world of politics. An innovation can be new in one country, but widespread in another. Thus given the fact that, for example, direct democracy is common in Switzerland, direct democratic elements in other countries could be considered as imitation - or as an innovation in a different 'sector'.

We refer to participatory innovation as new procedures consciously and purposefully introduced with the aim of improving the quality of democracy (Geissel 2013; Smith 2009). These participatory procedures are considered as a complement to representative democracy. Via enhancing citizens' participation in political processes democratic quality will supposedly be improved. Similar political terms, such as 'strong democracy', 'deep democracy', and 'participatory democracy' refer to participatory innovations as well, but are often utilized as normative concepts portraying 'more participation' as a desirable project with many utopian features. In contrast, our research aims at evaluating existing participatory procedures empirically. However, before we discuss the framework for the empirical evaluation we will introduce theoretical expectations especially on dialog-oriented procedures.

Deliberative Theory: Expectations on Outcomes of Dialog-oriented Procedures

The core characteristic of deliberative/dialog-oriented procedures is deliberation among citizens. According to Habermas' well-known concept, deliberation is characterized as a particular form of communication, i.e. a so-called ideal speech situation. This ideal speech situation consists of certain prerequisites: "free access to deliberation, identity of meaning and saying (*Wahrhaftigkeit*), comprehensibility (*Verständlichkeit*) of speech acts, and elimination of all forms of power except the '*forceless force of the better argument*'" (Rucht 2012, 113). Whereas many European authors draw attention to these strict rules, most US scholars focus on less rigorous principles and regard almost every form of discussion as deliberation (Geissel 2013). In this paper, we follow the less strict comprehension of deliberation or being more precise "dialog-oriented procedures". Therefore we use the term "deliberation" or "deliberative procedure" only in the context of theoretical debate. When referring to 'really existing' procedures we apply the term "dialog-oriented" procedure (see for this debate also Talpin 2013).

In deliberative theory, several effects or functions of dialog-oriented procedures for democracy are emphasized (see for instance Geissel 2012; Michels 2011; Grönlund et al. 2010; Fishkin 2009; Delli Carpini et al. 2004; Gastil 2004, 2000; Price/Cappella 2000):

First, dialog-oriented procedures are expected to have educational effects on the *participants*. When participating in dialog-oriented processes, participants' knowledge on the discussed issue as well as their political knowledge improves. Participants become more informed, skilled and competent in understanding and discussing political problems. They also learn and understand the complexity of problem solving in politics. Moreover, these procedures are also expected to improve tolerance as well as feelings of being part of the community.³ As a result, participants would feel more responsible for their community.

Second, dialog-oriented procedures are expected to have effects on the discussing *group* itself. As for example Michels (2011, 287) points out, interactions between participants become more deliberative if arguments are exchanged, if participants are willing "to hear other points of view and to debate issues", i.e. the quality of deliberation is enhanced. Moreover, dialog-oriented procedures are expected to build up social capital by improving trust and network between participants.

³ In the words of Mansbridge (1995), participation makes citizens better in the sense of becoming better democrats.

Third, dialog-oriented procedures might under certain circumstances encourage also non-voters to become politically engaged, i.e. *political inclusiveness* can be improved. For example, referring to online deliberation procedures, Price and Cappella (2000) point out that political participation encourages electoral engagement as well as broader engagement in community also of former non-voters.

Fourth, dialog-oriented procedures are expected to improve *political decisions*⁴. Whereas direct democracy and co-governance processes mostly affect the decision-making bodies directly, dialog-oriented democratic innovations have no decision-making authority, but can offer advice to representative bodies which have the final say. By proposing recommendations based on debate of those affected, policy makers will be better informed about the interests and needs of their constituency.

Finally, dialog-oriented procedures are accepted to have positive effects on the entire *citizenry*. The opportunity to discuss, debate and question public decisions, can, for example, lead to improved perceived legitimacy within the entire citizenry (not just among participants of the procedure). Even citizens opposing the decision would be more willing to comply if they had the option to be engaged in the process of will-formation. Some authors even expect that citizens' trust in institutions of representative democracy and in politicians increases if dialog-oriented procedures are provided.

In sum, deliberative theory emphasizes that participation in dialog-oriented procedures has a number of positive effects on democracy, however mainly on participants and citizens. The following benefits are expected:

- 'Enhancement' of participants' political skills, attitudes, behavior (micro level)
- 'Enhancement' of deliberative quality and building of social capital (meso level)
- 'Enhancement' of political inclusion (meso level/macro level)
- 'Enhancement' of political decisions (macro level)
- 'Enhancement' of citizenry's political skills, attitudes, behavior (macro level).

⁴ Whereas effects of deliberation on participants' education are often reported in studies, the impact on policy-making is documented rarely. Pogrebinschi and Ryan (2014) describe effectiveness of deliberation as translation of citizens' preferences into policymaking. In this sense, dialog-oriented procedures are effective if they have an impact on at least one of the stages of the policy cycle: "agenda setting, policy formulation and decision-making, implementation, evaluation and termination" (Pogrebinschi and Ryan 2014, 7).

Empirical Measurements: Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures

Empirical research has started to investigate the actual effects of dialog-oriented procedures. We will first give an overview of crucial frameworks to be found in the field (Table 1). A summary of important findings is provided in the appendix (Appendix 1).⁵

Empirical measurements of democratic innovations apply rather divergent frameworks. Whereas participant-oriented approaches stress criteria regarding the participants, meso-effect approaches refer to group-specific results. In contrast, macro-effect approaches identify effects on policy-making and the entire community: Criteria representing *micro-effects* scrutinize primarily impacts on participants' political skills, attitudes and behavior; in words of Carnes et al. (1998) on the educational effects (Abelson/Gauvin 2006, 229). This includes for example improvements of participants' trust and confidence in politicians and political institutions (see Carnes et al. 1998) or enhanced capacity for "considered judgments" covering participants' knowledge as well as reflections on other citizens' views (Smith 2009). *Meso-effect* criteria focus on deliberation quality, social capital building and inclusiveness within the group of discussing citizens. As Geissel (2012, 406) indicates, participation aims at developing social trust and social networks as well as shared norms of reciprocity which are criteria to measure social capital. According to Rowe (2004, 540) and Rowe et al (2004, 93), inclusiveness of participatory procedures can be measured by focusing on the criterion 'representativeness' ("that participants are representative of the wider affected population") (also Papadopoulos/Warin 2007, 455). Criteria representing *macro-effects* cover the influence on political decision-making and on outcome as well as the change in the entire citizenry. Smith (2009, 172), for example, talks about "popular control over aspects of the decision-making process" (e.g. Rowe et al 2004; Geissel 2009, 404; Abelson/Gauvin 2006, 22). The following table gives an overview of the criteria applied in different evaluations of democratic innovations and especially dialog-oriented procedures.

⁵ Effects of dialog-oriented procedures depend highly on context. Delli Carpini et al. showed that the impact of deliberation "varies with the purpose of deliberation, the subject under discussion, who participates, the connection to authoritative decision makers, the rules governing interactions, the information provided, ..., and real-world conditions" (Delli Carpini et al. 2004, 336). See for more information on preconditions and causes of effects of deliberation the appendix of this paper (Appendix 2, 3, 4).

Table 1: Criteria Applied in Evaluation Studies on Democratic Innovations (exemplarily)

	Micro-effects (participant-oriented)	Meso-effects (group-oriented)	Macro-effects
Renn et al. 1995	(change of competence)		impact on policy
Moore 1996	change of acceptance		
Carnes et al. 1998	change of skills change of acceptance	inclusiveness	
Chess & Purcell 1999		inclusiveness	impact on policy
Beierle & Cayford 2002	change of skills		impact on policy
Rowe et al. 2004		inclusiveness	impact on policy
Rowe & Frewer 2004		inclusiveness	impact on policy
Abelson & Gauvin 2006	change of skills	quality of deliberation; inclusiveness	impact on policy; impact on entire citizenry
Dalton et al. 2006		inclusiveness	
Holtkamp et al. 2006		inclusiveness	
Papadopoulos & Warin 2007		quality of deliberation; inclusiveness	impact on policy
Fung 2008 ⁶			
Smith 2009	change of skills	inclusiveness	impact on policy
Geissel 2009	change of acceptance; change of skills	social capital	impact on policy
Michels 2011	change of skills	inclusiveness	impact on entire citizenry
Geissel 2012	change of skills	quality of deliberation	
Pogrebinschi 2013			impact on policy
Goldschmidt 2014	change of skills	quality of deliberation	

Most empirical studies focus merely on effects at two levels, e.g. on benefits for participants' knowledge and social capital. What is rare up to now is a study of dialog-oriented procedures focusing systematically on effects of dialog-oriented procedures at all three levels. Empirical studies applying a multi-dimensional framework are still rare. Our pilot project aims at closing this gap in research by focusing on individual (micro level) and group-related changes (meso level) as well as on changes of policies and impact on the entire citizenry (macro level).

⁶ Fung (2008) provides a theoretical, programmatic perspective and does not aim at an evaluation of democratic innovations. In this paper we discuss frameworks applied for empirical evaluation and therefore this publication will not be discussed.

Measuring the Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures on Three Levels: Framework for Evaluation

Based on this literature and with reference to our meta-analytical pilot study, we distinguish between micro, meso and macro level effects of dialog-oriented procedures (see table 2).

Table 2: Three-level Evaluation of Dialog-oriented Procedures

Effects at micro level	Effects at meso level	Effects at macro level
Change of participants' skills	Quality of deliberation among participants	Impact on policy (output) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accountability - Responsiveness
Change of participants' political attitudes	Social capital among participants	Outcome (e.g. sustainable development)
		Change within entire citizenry
Change of participants' political behavior	Political Inclusiveness : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Equal participation' within dialog-oriented procedure (meso level) - 'Equal participation' within entire citizenry (macro level) 	

This distinction allows us to develop a framework measuring democratic innovations which consists of a) theoretically driven, b) empirical useful and c) comprehensive criteria (see Geissel 2012, 167). In contrast to theoretical criteria which do not work in empirical research or do not fit to available data, the following indicators reflect the concept to be measured; they are comparable across different case studies and measurable according to available data (see table 3).

Table 3: Indicators for Measuring Three-level Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures, Examples

Indicators for micro level effects	Indicators for meso level effects	Indicators for macro level effects
Change of participants' skills: Political and issue knowledge, common good orientation, tolerance	Quality of deliberation: More respectful interactions, equal voice	Impact on policy (output): Accountability: Justification of policy-makers for decision Responsiveness: Impact on policy, Impact on outcome
Change of participants' attitudes: Acceptance of local political decisions, of democratic institutions	Social capital: Trust and network building between participants	Outcome: depending on goal of procedure Change within entire citizenry's skills, attitudes, behavior Improved perceived legitimacy, engagement, identification with municipality, etc.
Change of participants' political behavior: Engagement	Political Inclusiveness: Selection of participants, Participation by sex, age, education, employment situation, and of immigrants	

Micro level-results

Results on micro level are focusing on individual participants. Micro level results cover changes in participants' political skills, attitudes, and behavior. Indicators⁷ measure for example, whether participants' political and issue knowledge, acceptance of political institutions, external and internal efficacy (Vetter 1997, Grönlund et al. 2010), and tolerance improved or declined by joining the dialog-oriented process. To measure whether dialog-oriented processes improve, for example, perceived political legitimacy, we check whether participants' acceptance of local political decisions, of institutions of representative democracy (such as mayor and city council) and of politicians (such as mayor in person and city council members) increased or decreased.

⁷ All indicators within our three-level framework refer to hard facts or if hard facts are not available, they refer to the impression of studies' authors and their assessments.

Meso level-results

Results at meso level cover group-related effects. We emphasize, like most studies in this field, on ‘quality of deliberation’, ‘social capital among participants’ as well as ‘inclusiveness’. The dimension ‘quality of deliberation’ measures whether interactions in dialog-oriented processes change towards more respectful interactions with equal voice⁸ (see Bächtiger, Wyss 2013), towards more argumentative rather than rhetoric interactions, towards more objective information (factual) rather than subjective information (opinion, judgment, belief) (see Kolleck 2015), towards more “public-spirited view” (Mutz 2008: 530), and whether participants’ interactions change from monologue towards discussion (see Klinger 2014: 68). To measure how well dialog-oriented processes contribute to social capital building, we ask how trust and network was build up within the group.

The criterion ‘inclusiveness and representativeness’ is a tricky one. On the one hand it refers to the descriptive representativeness of the group, i.e. an equal distribution of gender, age, educational levels, income groups and so on. Descriptive representativeness depends mainly on the selection mechanism of participants.⁹ Self-selection mostly leads to severely biased participation, random selection or targeted recruitment enhance the change of descriptive representation. On the other hand, ‘inclusiveness and representativeness’ is in some publications not limited to group composition, but considered as a ‘macro level effect’. From this perspective ‘inclusiveness’ of the dialog-oriented procedure implies improved political inclusiveness at the macro level (entire citizenry) (integrative function, e.g. Michels 2011, 278).

Macro level-results

Results at macro level refer to policy-making (output), outcome, as well as the entire citizenry. The influence of dialog-oriented procedures on policy-making is measured with several indicators: Did dialog-oriented procedure make suggestions for policies? Did suggestions lead to a debate and/or a decision in representative bodies (responsiveness)? Did policy makers react to these suggestions (accountability)? Did the dialog-oriented procedure reach its goal considering the outcome, e.g. in the case of Local Agenda 21 sustainable development?

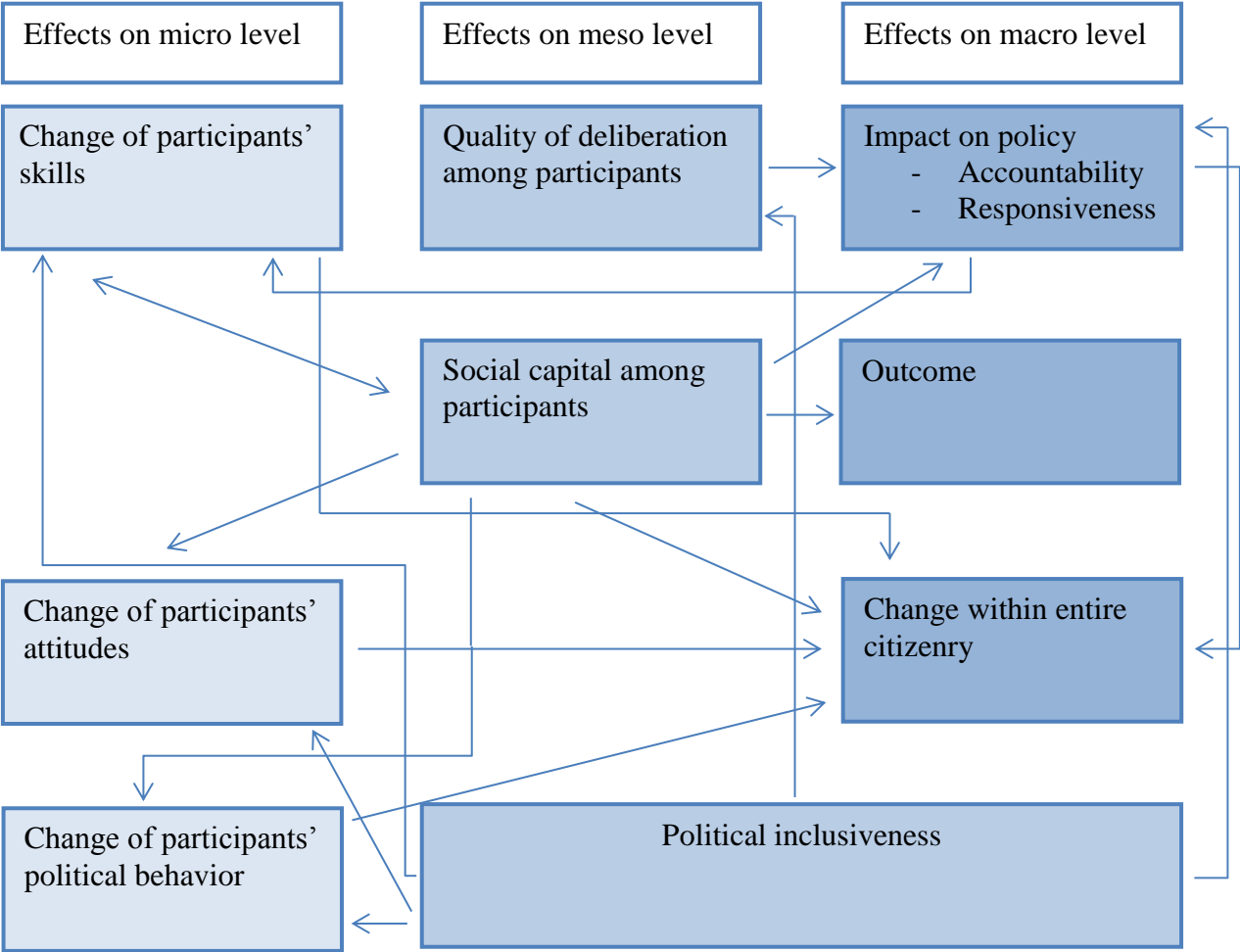
⁸ This refers to the equal opportunity of participants to express their views and to be heard (e.g. Smith 2009, 20f.).

⁹ Most authors share a normative view, e.g. Rowe et al. (2004, 93) claim that “participants should comprise a broadly representative sample of the affected population”. In Mendelberg and Oleske’s research on town meetings (2000), they point out that equality is a predisposed design effect.

The effects of dialog-oriented processes on the entire citizenry beyond participating citizens are measured with two indicators: ‘change of citizenry’s democratic skills’ and ‘change in citizenry’s political attitudes’. These indicators measure, for example, whether citizens’ identification with municipality, citizens’ perception of transparency, citizens’ interest in local politics, and citizens’ engagement improved or declined.

The results at micro, meso and macro level are most likely interconnected. Some examples will suffice here: changes at the micro level, especially improved tolerance, might strengthen the building of social capital among participants. And improved social capital within the deliberative procedure might inspire changes within the entire citizenry towards more networks and social trust. Inclusiveness within the dialog-oriented procedure might enhance participants’ tolerance and also the quality of deliberation due to diverse perspectives. Inclusiveness, i.e. involvement of people with different backgrounds, can also influence the suggestions of the procedure and finally has some impact on policies. An impact on policy is more likely, if the quality of deliberation was high and social capital was built up within the dialog-oriented procedure. However, these preliminary hypotheses are based mainly on anecdotal evidence up to now. Our research study will allow testing these hypotheses on evidence-based ground.

Graph 1: Connections between Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures on Three Levels (examples)



Discussion: Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures and the Quality of Democracy

When examining the effects of dialog-oriented procedures on democracy quality, we need to consider research on how to measure the quality of democracy itself. It is quite puzzling that up to now both research strands, research on the quality of democracy and research on democratic innovations, have hardly been connected. Although democratic-innovation studies often intend to investigate benefits (and pitfalls) of new participatory procedures for the quality of democracy, they seldom refer to quality-of-democracy indices. At the same time quality-of-democracy literature has little interest in democratic-innovations studies. Both research strands remained for a long time strictly within their respective scientific communities – although they talk about the same topic and even use the same terms.

In recent years research on how to measure quality of democracy has proliferated. For the purpose of our discussion we refer to Diamond and Morlino (2005), because they provide a clear theory-driven structure with multiple criteria whereas many quality-of-democracy indices merely include a limited number of aspects (e.g. Vanhanen, Freedom House, Polity). Diamond and Morlino (2005) identify eight dimensions of democratic quality: freedom, rule of law, vertical accountability, responsiveness, equality, participation, competition, and horizontal accountability. The assumption behind this measurement is that also established democracies can improve these aspects, i.e. that democracy is a continuous process able to constant enhancement. In the remainder of this chapter we want to discuss whether and how these aspects correspond with criteria provided by democratic-innovation research including our three-level framework explained above (see table 5 and 6).

Table 5 contrasts criteria of Diamonds and Morlino's quality-of-democracy approach with criteria of democratic-innovation studies. As shown in the table both research strands use quite different criteria to evaluate democratic quality. Freedom and rule of law are for example important criteria within the quality-of-democracy research, but democratic innovation studies do not touch these topics. However, both research strands consider for example responsiveness, equality or participation. Democratic-innovations research, however, refers to criteria not considered within the quality-of-democracy community, for instance, citizens' skills, quality of deliberation, or social capital.

Table 4: Criteria in Quality-of-Democracy and Democratic-Innovations Literature

Quality of democracy (according to Diamond & Morlino)	Democratic Innovation Literatures
Freedom	-
Rule of law	-
Vertical accountability	Accountability
Responsiveness	Responsiveness
Equality	Inclusiveness in procedure; equal participation in entire citizenry
Participation	Participation
Competition	-
Horizontal accountability	-
(-)	Citizen's skills, attitudes and behavior (participants, entire citizenry)
-	Quality of deliberation
-	Social capital
(-)	Outcome

Table 5: Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures along Quality of Democracy Criteria

Quality of democracy dimensions (according to Morlino)	Effects of dialog-oriented procedures
Freedom	Not applicable
Rule of law	Not applicable
Vertical accountability	(+) (may be)
Responsiveness	(+) (may be)
Equality	(+)/(-) (may be)
Participation	+++
Competition	Not applicable
Horizontal accountability	Not applicable

Not all aspects of democratic quality are likely to be improved via dialog-oriented procedures, e.g. rule of law will hardly be improved with this participatory tool. The most obvious improvement is participation. Diamond and Morlino's notion of participation covers "formal rights of political participation" as well as the ability to use these "formal rights to influence the decision-making process", especially by voting, organizing, assembling, protesting, and lobbying for interests (2005, xvi). Democratic innovations such as dialog-oriented procedures surely score in this field.¹⁰

In Diamond and Morlino's concept, responsiveness means translation of citizens' preferences into policies (2005, xxix). Responsiveness in the context of dialogue-oriented procedures is operationalized by the actual impact of their suggestions on policies and outcome. This definition is based on the assumption that suggestions of these procedures reflect not only the preferences of participating citizen, but the preferences of the community – an assumption which is still to be empirically investigated. Whether democratic innovations score in the field of responsiveness is contested. Most dialog-oriented procedures have little impact on policy-making processes. Although most scholars working on democratic innovations consider direct ("through the activity of the ... legislature or the public administration") or indirect influence ("when authorized by delegation") as crucial means to improve responsiveness, actual research in this field is rare (exception: Pogrebinschi/Ryan 2014, 7). Our research would like to shed some light on this question.

Equality as one criterion to measure quality of democracy covers "formal political equality of all citizen" (Diamond/Morlino (2005, xxvi). Also democratic innovations' scholars discuss equality, inclusiveness and representativeness. However, much more is known about descriptive representation within dialog-oriented procedures than about the question whether democratic actually improves "formal political equality of all citizens". Whereas equality might be improved within dialog-oriented procedures, there seem to be little evidence for any effects of democratic innovations on 'general equality'. Several scholars even claim that democratic innovations will have detrimental effects of equality, because these procedures attract especially well-off citizens (Papadopoulos/Warin 2007). Although some case studies show equality-promoting effects for the Brazilian case (Pogrebinschi 2013), the question about the effects of democratic innovations on equality is far from being answered.

¹⁰ However, research in democratic innovations is lately struggling with the question, whether and what participations actually improve (see our three-level framework). Our research project will try to fill this research gap.

The “obligation of elected political leaders to answer for their political decisions when asked by voters” (Diamond/Morlino 2005, xix) is characterized as vertical accountability. In dialog-oriented procedures, vertical accountability means mainly that policy-makers justify which proposals proposed by the dialog-oriented procedure were accepted or rejected (through e.g. accountability meetings or accountability reports).

All in all, using yardsticks put forward by the quality-of-democracy literature, dialog-oriented procedures enhance the quality of democracy at most in a very limited way. Many dimensions are not improved by dialog-oriented procedures. Many effects are disputed, e.g. effects on equality. The only improvement that can be considered as given is enhanced participation.

Conclusion

The main purpose of our paper was to explore how the effects of dialog-oriented innovations, as example for democratic innovations in general, on the quality of democracy can be defined and measured comprehensively in comparative large-n case studies. We introduced a comprehensive three-level framework for evaluating the effects of dialog-oriented procedures and compared this framework with quality-of-democracy measurements.

Interestingly research on dialog-oriented procedures covers a variety of topics, criteria and principles hardly mentioned in the quality-of-democracy-literature. Democratic-innovation literature often focusses on micro or meso level effects. However, quality-of-democracy research is mainly interested in macro level criteria. Democratic-innovation literature evaluates for example dialog-oriented procedures considering their effects on the citizens’ democratic skills. In contrast, quality-of-democracy research hardly takes citizens’ democratic skills into account and focuses mainly on institutions and structures. Although the quality-of-democracy as well as the democratic-innovations research work on similar topics both research strands just started to take notice of each other.

Our framework goes beyond quality-of-democracy and democratic-innovations research by applying and combining dimensions of both strands. We are convinced that all levels must be taken into consideration and our research project will show, whether and how the different levels are interconnected. This paper laid the conceptual foundation for our next step, the empirical examination of effect of dialog-oriented procedures on the quality of democracy.

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Appendix

1) Findings on Effects of Dialog-Oriented Procedures: A cursory Overview

In this paper we cannot give a comprehensive overview over all findings, but will just provide some of the most important findings. Most studies confirm that participants improve their political and issue-knowledge. However, most other effects seem to be less clear and rather ‘mixed bags’. Gastil (2000, 2004), for instance, identifies that participating in deliberation leads to more political internal efficacy of participants, but to a sense of actual lower political external efficacy. In other words, while engagement increases individuals’ internal efficacy, these individuals lose their confidence in the actual effectiveness of their actions, i.e. they come to the conclusion that the political activities are rather useless and without effect on policy-making. Also tolerance was not necessarily enhanced via dialog-oriented procedures. As Burnstein and Vinokur (1977) point out, they can also lead to polarized attitudes. This phenomenon is paraphrased as group polarization. Following Sunstein, group polarization arises when “members of a deliberating group move toward a more extreme point” (Sunstein 1999, 3f.).¹¹

Also ‘enhancement of political inclusion’ seemed to be achieved seldom. Mendelberg (2002) argues that deliberative processes are characterized by several inequalities regarding status, gender, race, information and expertise. Those who participate in deliberations are quite selective. For instance, well-educated people are likely to deliberate because they have learned how to argue and how to persuade other. And even if minorities take part, they experience their participation as less encouraging. Studying two town meetings on school desegregation in New Jersey in 1995, Mendelberg and Oleske (2000) observe that deliberation can frustrate and anger minority citizen who feel dominated by a majority group. In other words, discussion amongst subordinate and dominant groups does not help to establish a sense of community and social capital. Walsh’ (2007) investigations on several civic dialogue programs focusing on interracial relationships in the United States in 2000 show that exclusionary identities persists and race relations or bridging social capital did not improve. Other aspects that causes inequalities are gender – man tend to speak more in

¹¹ In group discussions, individuals tend to adopt arguments that follow the most persuasive position (persuasive argumentation). In this sense, merely convincing arguments matter. Moreover, individuals tend to adopt socially preferred arguments (social comparison). As experiments on group discussions (see e.g. Burnstein/Vinokur 1977, Sunstein 1999) have shown, individual arguments are adjusted in direction of arguments of other participants, which in the end leads to extreme positions.

dialog-oriented processes whereas women’s arguments tend to be “less important” – and race – white people have “more influence” on group discussions and decisions.

Finally, only few studies look at the effects of dialog-oriented procedures on actual policy-making and on changes within the whole citizenry. The results are rather frustrating up to now.

In sum, empirical findings provide a kind of a ‘mixed bag’:

- Within participants: Enhancement of knowledge and internal efficacy, but no necessarily increase of tolerance or community-commitment (micro level),
- Hardly any enhancement of political inclusion (between meso and macro level),
- No ‘enhancement of citizenry’ (macro level),
- Almost no influence on policy-making (macro level).

2.) Examples of Determinants and Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures on Micro Level

Independent variables→	context	stakeholders/actors	goals/problems	design of case
Dependent variables↓				
improved issue and political knowledge of participants, if ...	... participatory procedure/case is supported (financially, infrastructural) by the regional or state level	... administration supports the participatory procedure/case	... no polarization in community on problem	... information phase within the case
improved acceptance of local political decisions / institutions of representative democracy / politicians, if ...	...	... local politicians participated in the procedure/case	...	... tools to guarantee transparency provided (e.g. planned publication)
				... tools for deliberation provided (see Geissel 2008: 35)
				... participation of local politicians required
improved tolerance and common good orientation, if ...	...	...	... no polarization in community on problem	tools for deliberation AND sufficient information provided (see Bächtiger/Wyss 2013: 164)

3.) Examples of Determinants and Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures on Meso Level

Independent variables →	context	stakeholders/ actors	goals/problems	design of case
Dependent variables ↓				
improved social capital, if ...	... local participatory culture/tradition	... citizenry supports the participatory procedure/case	... no polarization in community on problem	... professional moderator provided
		... cooperative communication style between politicians, administration and citizenry		... particular participant recruitment addressing certain groups (see Geissel 2007: 35)
inclusive and representative, if ...	... small population in municipality	... citizenry is interested in dialogue-oriented, participatory procedures (see Font/Galais 2011: 943)	... citizen are directly affected (see Vetter 2008: 19)	... sufficient publicity about case planned
better quality of deliberation, if ...	... municipal experience with dialogue-oriented procedures	... citizenry is interested in dialogue-oriented, participatory procedures (see Font/Galais 2011: 943)	... no polarization in community on problem (see Vetter 2008: 19)	... professional moderator provided (see Bächtiger/Wyss 2013: 170 und Bingham 1986: xxii, 108f, 162ff)
		... cooperative communication style between politicians, administration and citizenry (see Rucht 2012: 127, <i>kooperativer Interaktionsmodus</i>)		... tools for deliberation provided

4.) Examples of Determinants and Effects of Dialog-oriented Procedures on Macro Level

Independent variables→	context	stakeholders/ actors	goals/problems	design of case
Dependent variables↓				
more policy influence, if ...	... participatory procedure/case is supported (financially, infrastructural) by the regional state level	... participatory procedure/case is supported by local politicians (see Ryan/Smith 2012: 10ff and Ryan 2013: 1)		... case is institutionalized
	... participatory concept plan/map (position paper) in municipality	... cooperative communication style between politicians, administration and citizenry (see Geissel 2005: 8)	... problem is a niche issue (problem is irrelevant)	... participation of local politicians is required (see Ryan 2013 and Bingham 1986: xxiv, 101ff)
		... participative leadership in municipality (see Geissel 2005: 8 and Ryan 2013: 16)	... problem is central for municipality (has been relevant for a long time)	
change of public opinion is more likely, if ...	...	...	...	... tools to guarantee transparency provided (e.g. planned publication)