This is the accepted manuscript (post-print version) of the article. Contentwise, the post-print version is identical to the final published version, but there may be differences in typography and layout.

How to cite this publication
Please cite the final published version:


Publication metadata

Title: How Politicians’ Reelection Efforts Can Reduce Public Trust, Electoral Support, and Policy Approval
Author(s): Bøggild, T.
Journal: Political Psychology, 37: 901–919
DOI/Link: http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/pops.12303
Document version: Accepted manuscript (post-print)

General Rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognize and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.
How Politicians’ Reelection Efforts Can Reduce Public Trust, Electoral Support, and Policy Approval

Troels Bøggild
Department of Political Science
Aarhus University
Bartholins Allé 7, 8000, Denmark
E-mail: tboeggild@ps.au.dk
Phone: (+45) 8716 5368

Running head: Politicians’ Reelection Efforts

Keywords: procedural fairness, procedural justice, political trust, policy support, pork barrel spending

Accepted for publication in Political Psychology
Abstract:

Politicians’ desire for reelection motivates them to be responsive to voters’ policy preferences. In the traditional view, voters choose between candidates based on their delivery of favorable outcomes such as ideologically appealing policies or a prospering economy. However, research in psychology shows that, in addition to outcomes, people care about procedural fairness and, particularly, impartial decision-makers who make decisions without personal motives and interests. This, I argue, confronts politicians with a delicate task: Politicians must present voters with favorable policy outcomes but without appearing as if they pursue these policies based on a personal, vote-maximizing motive for reelection. In four survey experiments, I find support for this argument. Participants were significantly less inclined to trust and vote for politicians and support their policies when political decisions were described as motivated by reelection considerations than when no such motive was present. The findings advance our understanding of how citizens view political representation and have important implications for research on public opinion, legislative behavior, and democratic theory.

Introduction

Competitive elections are the foundation of every representative democracy. Elections allow citizens to hold political elites accountable and motivate politicians to compete for votes and strive for reelection by catering to the needs and wishes of the electorate (Dahl, 1971). A major enterprise for political scientists—political psychologists in particular—is to understand the content and underlying motivations of these needs and wishes and how voters judge politicians and their policies. The conventional wisdom in political science has largely been that politicians earn the trust and electoral support of voters by providing them with
favorable political decisions and outcomes such as ideologically appealing policies, a
prospering economy, and particularized benefits (Allen & Birch, 2014, pp. 3–4; Hibbing &
when arguing that voters care about “results and are generally ignorant of or indifferent about
the methods by which the results are achieved.” A variety of literatures, including work on
democratic theory, legislative behavior, and vote choice, prescribe that a successful strategy
for reelection-seeking politicians is simply to strive to give voters the policies and outcomes
they favor (Downs, 1957; Mayhew, 1974; Popkin, 1991; Schumpeter, 1943).

However, an increasing number of scholars in political science argue that politicians
face a more complicated task than previously assumed. Indeed, this perspective implies that
bestowing favorable political decisions upon voters in order to obtain reelection can in fact
have detrimental effects on the public’s trust in politicians, support for their policies, and
ultimately politicians’ chances of reelection. Specifically, political scientists have recently
turned to procedural fairness theory in social psychology, arguing that people care vigorously
about how decisions come about and that politicians adopt decisions in accordance with
certain procedural criteria or principles (Allen & Birch, 2014; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002,
2008; Ulbig, 2002). A key criterion in this framework, which has received little attention in
political science (but see Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002; Ulbig, 2002), is decision-maker
impartiality, meaning that a decision-maker cannot have a personal motive or vested interest
when introducing a decision (De Cremer, 2004; Leventhal, 1980). The attention of voters to
both outcomes and procedural fairness presents politicians with a delicate task: They must
provide voters with favorable political decisions while at the same time being careful to signal
impartiality by not having a personal, reelection motive in bringing these favorable conditions
about.
In this article I lay out this challenge facing politicians, arguing that if a political
decision-maker adopts a policy in order to secure votes and ultimately reelection, it activates a
deep-seated psychological aversion to partial decision-makers and depresses trust evaluations,
inclination to vote for the political actor, and policy evaluations among citizens. In four
original survey experiments, I test and substantiate the notion that people respond negatively
to the reelection efforts of politicians, even when such efforts are targeted at themselves and
provide them with favorable outcomes. These findings demonstrate how politicians face a
more complex task than previously assumed: Paradoxically, politicians who overtly engage in
reelection efforts by bestowing favorable policies upon voters, as prescribed by the existing
literature, lose out in the competition for public trust, support, and ultimately votes. These
findings also show that decision-maker impartiality is a central determinant of vote choice
and citizen support for public policy. The article provides a more nuanced understanding of
how citizens view political representation and has important implications not just for public
opinion research but also for research on legislative behavior and democratic theory.

**Procedural Fairness, Impartiality, and Public Opinion**

A rich literature on procedural fairness theory in social psychology has demonstrated how the
adherence of decision-makers to a set of seemingly generic and universal criteria for a “fair
process” can foster and maintain high levels of trust and support from group members
(Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Tyler, 1990). Much of the empirical research in
this psychological literature revolves around the voice criterion, demonstrating how group
members evaluate an authority and the decision it implements more favorably when they are
allowed to voice their opinion in the decision-making process (e.g., Tyler, 1990). Another
central criterion of the procedural fairness framework is decision-maker impartiality, which
rests on the basic principle that decision-makers cannot have a vested interest in the outcome
(De Cremer, 2004; Leventhal, 1980). This criterion implies that group members pay close attention to the motives, incentives, and potential self-serving bias that decision-makers hold when introducing decisions that apply to the group at large (Tyler, 1990, pp. 117–118, 135–136; Tyler & Degoeij, 1996). Research in behavioral economics substantiates this notion, showing how people are highly vigilant about potentially self-serving intentions and motives of transactional partners and decision-makers and draw inferences about actors and their decisions on this basis (Falk, Fehr & Fischbacher, 2008).

Political scientists have recently turned to this literature and considered the role of procedural fairness in a political context. So far, these studies have focused primarily on the role of voice, convincingly demonstrating that citizens evaluate politicians and government more favorably when being provided voice opportunities in the political decision-making process (Tyler, 1994; Ulbig, 2008; see also Allen & Birch, 2014; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002 on “process space”). Recently, however, scholars have urged public opinion research to expand its focus beyond issues of voice to a broader range of procedural criteria, in particular the motivations and self-serving dispositions of political decision-makers (Allen & Birch, 2014, p. 19; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002, pp. 227–228).

Despite the rich literature on the effects of decision-maker impartiality in other social science disciplines, the subject has received surprisingly little attention in political science. Research on political scandals has demonstrated that the personal missteps or illegal activities of politicians can damage their perceived integrity and political trust (e.g., Ulbig & Miller, 2012), but little research has systematically addressed the role of personal motives and vested interests of politicians when introducing political decisions. In their seminal book *Stealth Democracy*, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) advance the notion that mistrust in Congress stems from citizen perceptions of members’ self-interested demeanor when introducing decisions in terms of acquiring special privileges, affiliations with special interests, and
career-conducive behavior. Nevertheless, little research has subsequently tested these expectations systematically. Ulbig (2002) finds that people who view government officials as being “crooked” and too focused on “a few big interests” are less inclined to express trust in Congress. Other work has demonstrated that politicians are better able to generate public support when they explain their policies with reference to the interests of the community compared to their own personal convictions or concerns such as maintaining their public image (McGraw, Timpone, and Bruck 1993). Finally, in a one-on-one economic game, Hibbing and Alford (2004) have provided experimental evidence that respondents evaluate allocators and payoffs less favorably when the allocator intentionally (rather than coincidentally) keeps a large payoff for himself.

The limited attention to decision-maker impartiality in the political context is unfortunate, as it should play a particularly important role in terms of how politicians can earn the trust, policy support, and ultimately votes of citizens. The political context distinguishes itself from most social psychological settings (e.g., the courtroom, workplace, or classroom) in the sense that group leaders continually stand for election and are supposed to compete for office. Politicians are, by institutional design, motivated to behave in a manner that generates votes and is instrumental in allowing them to remain in parliament and office. This is the fundamental logic and implication of democratic elections.

This of course implies that politicians must compete over providing voters with the most favorable political decisions and outcomes such as ideologically appealing policies, a thriving economy, or particularized benefits for constituents (Downs, 1957; Mayhew, 1974; Popkin, 1991; Schumpeter, 1943). However, the insights from research on procedural fairness—and decision-maker impartiality in particular—suggest that politicians face a considerably more complicated task. A political actor introducing a decision favorable to voters with the ultimate goal of obtaining votes and personal reelection risks activating
voters’ deep-seated psychological aversion to partial decision-makers and, paradoxically, reduce public trust evaluations, policy support, and ultimately the reelection chances of the politician. This confronts politicians with the complicated task of bestowing favorable outcomes upon voters without appearing partial in terms of being motivated by obtaining votes and reelection. This leads to the first three hypotheses of the article.

**H1: Citizens will be less inclined to trust a political decision-maker who adopts a political decision motivated by winning reelection.**

**H2: Citizens will be less inclined to vote for a political decision-maker who adopts a political decision motivated by winning reelection.**

**H3: Citizens will be less inclined to support a political decision adopted by a political decision-maker motivated by winning reelection.**

One thing is that voters would prefer that politicians in general act impartially and without pursuing personal benefits. But perhaps voters are willing to tolerate or overlook reelection efforts of a politician when they themselves are at the receiving end and provided with the policy outcomes they want? In this case, politicians should worry less about appearing impartial and be able to concentrate on the simple task of providing their voters and constituents with favorable outcomes. The strong test of my argument is if voters punish politicians for being motivated by reelection independently of outcomes or if this effect gets crowded out as the outcome becomes favorable to the individual.

Some studies in social psychology have found that people do in fact tend to tolerate or overlook the use of unfair procedures when they benefit from such an arrangement such that
“when outcomes are unfair or have a negative valence, procedural justice is more likely to have a direct effect on individuals' reactions” (Brockner & Wiesenfeld 1996, p. 191; see also Tyler 1990, pp. 98–102). Other studies, however, have found no such effects (Lind 1990, pp. 59–60). In the political context in particular, we should expect procedural fairness to matter to voters independently of outcome favorability for two reasons. First, political attitudes are largely based on abstract symbols and principles of legitimacy and fair conduct, while outcome favorability, especially in the sense of narrow self-interest, plays a more limited role (Chong, 2013). Peffley and Hurwitz (2010), for example, demonstrate that the perceived fairness of treatment experienced through encounters with the police explains the perceived legitimacy of the criminal justice system, independently of the actual outcome of such encounters.

Second, the existing literature hints that political processes bring about intrinsic value or “procedural utility” for citizens. For example, scholars have demonstrated that political participation is largely motivated by “process incentives”, in which people derive an identity and general well-being from engaging in political activities such as voting, irrespective of the outcome (Frey & Stutzer, 2005). More generally, people attach high value to democratic rights “simply because they give them a sense of inclusion, identity and self-determination” (Benz, 2005, p. 3). These findings resonate with studies demonstrating a gradual increase in the prevalence of post-materialist values which, by definition, involve an intrinsic concern for procedural principles such as having a say in government decision-making (i.e. voice) (Inglehart, 2008). Hence, in a political context in particular we should expect procedural fairness to matter in a universal manner—both when outcomes are favorable and unfavorable.

**H4: Citizens will be less inclined to trust and vote for a political decision-maker and support their political decision when the decision-maker adopts the decision in order to win reelection**
independently of whether the outcome of the decision is favorable or unfavorable for the individual.

Study 1

Study 1 is based on a survey experiment manipulating the two independent variables of interest: decision-maker impartiality and outcome favorability (i.e., a 2×2 factorial design). The theoretical expectations are that citizens will be less inclined to trust and vote for a political decision-maker and support their political decision in the partial condition compared to the impartial condition (H1, H2 and H3), both when the decision outcome is favorable and unfavorable to the individual (H4).

Research Design and Data

Study 1 consists of data from a paper-and-pencil, between-subject survey experiment among Danish medical students conducted in September 2013 (N = 154). No contextual factors or political events should have affected the results in any specific direction. The survey was handed out to 196 subjects and 154 were fully completed and returned, resulting in a 78.6% response rate. The survey experiment presented respondents with a short text constructed for the occasion presented as a real news article from Politiken, a national Danish daily paper. The article described a fictitious policy initiative at the EU level investing additional resources in higher education. The initiative was a trial or experimental scheme, in which eight pilot member countries were chosen to test the effects of further investments in higher education.

Decision-maker impartiality was manipulated by offering two versions of how the trial member countries were chosen. The partial version stated that the chairman of the EU Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) had included his home country in the
experimental scheme in an attempt to increase his own popularity and “secure his reelection in the upcoming European Parliament election”. This version labelled the trial scheme a “clear charm offensive” by the chairman.

In the impartial version, the chairman drew the pilot countries randomly “to ensure that national or personal interests did not influence the choice of trial member countries”. Research in experimental economics and social psychology has demonstrated that an allocation mechanism based on randomness—rather than an intentional, self-serving calculus by the decision-maker (both resulting in the same outcome)—is perceived and evaluated as markedly more fair (Hibbing & Alford, 2004). Randomness serves as an analytically clean operationalization of decision-maker impartiality as it is, by definition, free of intent and beyond the influence of any personal agenda. The section elaborating on reelection efforts in the partial version was substituted with a section describing the commitment of the chairman to improving the EU educational standards, which served to highlight further that personal agendas did not dominate the process (see also Gangl, 2003). The outcome and substantial arguments related to the decision were thus held constant while the impartiality of the procedure or distribution mechanism through which the outcome was obtained varied.

Inspired by research in social psychology (e.g. Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) the favorability of the outcome was manipulated by varying whether the subjects’ own locality benefitted from the trial scheme. In the favorable condition, the chairman of CULT was a Danish EU representative, Ole Christensen, who (either randomly or intentionally, depending on the impartiality manipulation) selected the respondents’ own country (Denmark) to receive half a billion Danish kroner (app. 67 million Euro) to invest in higher education. The article stated that this outcome spurred “great enthusiasm among Danish politicians and experts.” In the unfavorable condition, the chairman was a Belgian EU representative, Phillipe de Backer, who selected Belgium as a trial member country and triggered “great disappointment among
Danish politicians and experts.” Belgium was chosen in the unfavorable condition because subjects should find it 1) geographically distant enough from Denmark to not expect the money to benefit them personally and 2) highly similar to Denmark on a range of other parameters (e.g., economy, quality of education system, and country size) that could otherwise confound the outcome favorability distinction. The full stimulus material is available in the online appendix.

Measures

The study posed two general questions about trust in the decision-maker on a 0–10 scale, 10 being the highest level of trust. Respondents were first asked as follows: “How much trust do you have in a politician like Ole Christensen [Phillipe De Backer]?” and, secondly: “To what extent do you perceive a politician like Ole Christensen [Phillipe de Backer] as trustworthy?” These items were collapsed into an additive index ($r = 0.82; M = 0.40; SD = 0.20$). To measure the inclination to vote for the decision-maker subjects were asked: “To what extent would you vote for a politician like Ole Christensen [Phillipe de Backer]?”

Support for the political decision was measured through an additive index including two items each ranging 0–10 ($r = 0.70; M = 0.58; SD = 0.20$): “To what extent do you agree with the EU politicians’ decision about an educational trial scheme?”; “How much sympathy do you have for the EU politicians’ decision about an educational trial scheme?”

Lastly, the survey included two items serving as manipulation checks for the two manipulations. The outcome favorability manipulation was assessed by asking respondents: “To what extent is the EU’s educational trial scheme favorable to Denmark?” on a 0–10 scale. The impartiality manipulation was assessed by asking the following: “How fair was the way
the pilot member countries were selected?” on a 0–10 scale. All variables are recoded from 0–1.¹

Results

Before addressing the theoretical expectations the two manipulation checks of the independent variables are reported. As expected, an allocation mechanism based on randomness is perceived as significantly more fair than a mechanism based on the reelection motives of the decision-maker ($M_{\text{impartial}} = .63, M_{\text{partial}} = .37, p<0.001$). Note also that while randomness is perceived as fair in relative terms, it only scores just above medium in absolute terms. Hence, while randomness serves as an analytically clean operationalization of decision-maker impartiality, it also limits the variation on the independent variable, which will result in a somewhat conservative test of the effects of decision-maker impartiality. Equally important, respondents also picked up on the outcome favorability manipulation, perceiving the political decision as significantly less favorable to their own country in the unfavorable condition than in the favorable condition ($M_{\text{HighOF}} = .64, M_{\text{LowOF}} = .40, p<0.001$).

TABLE I ABOUT HERE

Model I, Table I reveals that the decision-maker impartiality manipulation has a significant, 12.6 percentage point effect on trust in the decision-maker. In line with H1, a political decision-maker receives lower levels of public trust when adopting a political decision in an attempt at gaining votes and reelection relative to when no such motives are present. In contrast, the outcome favorability manipulation has no significant influence on trust in the decision-maker. Moreover, in support of H4, Model II shows no interaction effect

¹ The survey also measured the individual-level characteristics age, sex, ideology, party identification, and attitudes towards the EU. None of these moderated the effects of the two manipulations in any systematic manner in this or the three studies below.
between the decision-maker impartiality manipulation and the outcome favorability manipulation on trust in the decision-maker. As also depicted in Panel a, Figure 1 subjects respond to reelection efforts with lower levels of trust in the decision-maker even when such reelection efforts are directed at themselves and provide them with a favorable outcome.

Model III, Table I shows a significant 9.9 percentage point effect of the decision-maker impartiality manipulation on the inclination to vote for the decision-maker. In support of H2 subjects express a reduced willingness to vote for a politician adopting a political decision in order to win reelection than when no reelection motives are present. The outcome favorability manipulation does not yield a significant effect on the inclination to vote for the decision-maker. In support of H4, Model IV, Table I shows no significant interaction effect between the impartiality manipulation and the outcome favorability manipulation. This implies that reelection motives render subjects less inclined to vote for the decision-maker independently of whether they are at the receiving end of such pandering and provided with a favorable outcome. Panel b, Figure 1 shows that the effect does not reach statistical significance at conventional levels in the high outcome favorability condition, which could suggest a slight tendency for subjects to overlook or tolerate reelection efforts when they benefit from the decision. Model IV, Table I, however, shows that this trend is not close to significance.

**FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE**

Model V, Table I reports a significant 10.5 percentage point effect of decision-maker impartiality on support for the political decision. In accordance with H3, subjects become less inclined to support a political decision when a political decision-maker adopts the decision in order to win votes and reelection. This finding demonstrates how procedural fairness—and, more specifically, decision-maker impartiality—is a relevant determinant of citizen support
for public policy. In contrast, although the manipulation check reported above demonstrates that respondents did in fact perceive the low outcome favorability condition as markedly less favorable to their own country compared to the high outcome favorability condition, Model V shows that this does not translate into differences in policy support. This finding is somewhat surprising and, in line with the literature surveyed above, indicates that the role of self-interest in political attitude formation might be limited. Finally, in support of H4, Model VI and panel c, Figure 1 demonstrate that reelection motives depress support for the political decision among subjects even when the decision is favorable to them.

In sum, Study 1 demonstrates that reelection efforts of a politician can depress public trust evaluations, inclination to vote for the politician, and support for its political decision. Moreover, these voter reactions persist even when such reelection efforts are carried out by their own political representatives and provide them with favorable outcomes. This underlines how politicians face a more complicated task than hitherto assumed in terms of not only providing voters with favorable outcomes but also appearing impartial and disinterested in bringing such outcomes about.

**Study 2**

To replicate and extend the results of Study 1, Study 2 adopted a similar design but presented subjects with a policy decision at the national level adopted by the Danish national government. This shift to the national level was made in order to enhance the personal significance and perceived (un-)favorability of the outcome and, hence, further attempt to crowd out the effects of decision-maker impartiality. In addition, Study 2 tested which aspects or dimensions of political trust are affected by decision-maker impartiality. Could voters ultimately be less inclined to trust a reelection-seeking political actor due to concerns about their abilities and motivations to provide them with long-term favorable outcomes? If so, then
reelection motives should affect *pragmatic trust* concerning a decision-maker’s competence and motivation to generate favorable outcomes. In contrast, if reelection motives induce concerns about fairness independently of outcomes (as argued above), then we should see an effect on *moral trust* concerning a decision-maker’s integrity and ethicality (Tyler, 1990; Tyler & Degoey, 1996).

*Research Design and Data*

Study 2 consists of data from a paper-and-pencil, between-subject survey experiment among Danish law students from Aarhus University conducted in April 2013 (N = 515). No contextual factors or political events should have affected the results in any specific direction. The survey was distributed to 583 students, 515 of which were fully completed and returned, resulting in an 88.3% response rate. Subjects were again asked to read a short text presented as a real news article from the local newspaper *Aarhus Stiftstidende*. The article described a fictitious policy initiative passed by the current Danish government. The initiative was a trial or experimental scheme in which six pilot municipalities were chosen to test the long-term employment effects of creating new jobs for unemployed recent graduates.

The partial version stated that the pilot municipalities were chosen based on vote-maximizing, reelection motives of the government, while the municipalities were chosen randomly in the impartial version. Outcome favorability was manipulated by varying whether the respondents’ own municipality (Aarhus) was part of the experimental scheme, and, hence, granted new jobs for recent graduates or a distant municipality (Næstved) was chosen at the expense of the respondents’ municipality. Again, these municipalities were chosen specifically to keep as many factors constant as possible aside from whether the extra funds would benefit the subjects. The full stimulus material is available in the online appendix.

---

2 Research in political science has made similar distinctions between a moral and a pragmatic component in political trust (see Andersen, Nielsen, Thomsen & Westerståhl, 1992; Levi & Stoker, 2000, p. 476).
Measures

This study taps the moral and pragmatic dimensions of political trust by primarily following the question wording from national election studies and extant work on political trust (Craig, Niemi & Silver, 1990; Andersen et al., 1992). The moral trust index ($\alpha = 0.75; M = 0.37; SD = 0.20$) included the three items: “The government usually has its own rather than the citizens’ interests in mind (reverse coded),” “The government is only interested in my vote, not in my opinion (reverse coded),” and “The government usually has different intentions than it conveys to citizens (reverse coded).” The pragmatic trust index ($\alpha = 0.74; M = 0.43; SD = 0.21$) included the items: “The government consists of competent people who know what they’re doing”, “In general, you can trust that the government makes the right decisions for the country” and “The government is wasteful with the taxpayers’ money (reverse coded).” An exploratory factor analysis confirmed this two-dimensional structure in political trust (reported in the online appendix). The inclination to vote for the decision-maker was not measured in this study, precluding a test of H2.

Support for the political decision was measured using a two-item index, each ranging 0–10 ($r = 0.69; M = 0.58; SD = 0.19$): “To what extent do you agree with the government’s decision concerning a job scheme for recent graduates?” and “How much sympathy do you have for the government’s decision concerning a job scheme for recent graduates?” As in Study 1, all variables are recoded 0–1.3

The survey included a manipulation check of the decision-maker impartiality manipulation asking respondents: “To what extent has the government attended to the interests of society rather than its own interests in the decision-making process?” Responses on a 0-10 scale ranged from “To a very limited extent” to “To a very large extent”. The

3 The survey also measured general political trust prior to the experiment to test if subjects with low levels of political trust reacted more strongly to information on reelection motives; however, trust did not moderate responses to this information.
manipulation check validated that the impartiality manipulation did in fact change perceptions of the self-interest of the government (M_{impartial} = 5.33 vs. M_{partial} = 4.57, p<0.001).

**Results**

First, Figure 2 shows a significant effect of decision-maker impartiality on the moral dimension of political trust, lending support to H1 (M_{impartial} = .39 vs. M_{partial} = .35, p = 0.039). This effect is also reported in Model I, Table II. In contrast, decision-maker impartiality has no influence on pragmatic trust in decision-makers (M_{impartial} = .43 vs. M_{partial} = .43, p = 0.917). This further suggests that reelection motives raise concerns about fairness and not concerns about obtaining long-term favorable outcomes.

**FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE**

Compared to Study 1, the effect on moral trust is relatively modest amounting to about 4 percentage points. An explanation for this could be that the decision-maker is a well-known, high-profile political actor. Subjects should hold highly crystalized opinions and trust evaluations of the Danish government based on prior experiences and party affiliations and already hold precise convictions about its level of reelection efforts and fair conduct. This account resonates with existing work in social psychology demonstrating that the effects of procedural fairness are reduced when the trustworthiness of the decision-maker is certain and unambiguous (Van den Bos, Wilke, & Lind, 1998). Still, the findings demonstrate how reelection motives of politicians are important even in a realistic political setting involving well-known political decision-makers. Moreover, this is the effect of only one political decision and a number of subsequent decisions with similar procedural aspects could likely have a larger total impact on these overall trust evaluations.
In support of H4, Model II, Table II demonstrates that there is no significant interaction effect between decision-maker impartiality and outcome favorability on moral trust in government; that is, respondents were not more inclined to overlook or tolerate reelection efforts by the government when this benefitted their own municipality rather than a distant one. This result is further outlined in panel a, Figure 3. Since the sample size is cut in half when we evaluate the effects within each outcome favorability condition, the differences are not statistically significant. However, Table II demonstrates significant effects when analyzing the full sample.

In line with H3, Model III demonstrates significantly more support for the political decision in the impartial relative to the partial version. This difference is also seen in panel b, Figure 3. Again, the effect of about four percentage points is somewhat modest, which is likely because subjects hold rather clear and stable perceptions of the political actor introducing the decision. Finally, in line with H4, Model IV, Table II demonstrates that respondents were no more supportive of a policy based on the decision-maker’s reelection efforts when such efforts targeted them directly. This picture is repeated in panel b, Figure 3.

To sum up, Study 2 corroborates the findings of Study 1; even with a well-known decision-maker and a more targeted decision outcome, the reelection efforts of a decision-maker drive down trust evaluations and support for political decisions—also among the subjects benefitting from such a situation. Again, the results indicate that politicians face the
complicated task of bringing favorable outcomes about without acting in a partial and reelection-seeking manner.

**Study 3**

Research addressing the role of self-interest in political reasoning suggests that its effects could be limited to specific issues such as taxation that directly affect people’s pocket books (Chong, 2013). In another attempt at crowding out the effects of decision-maker impartiality, Study 3 tests whether people still react negatively to reelection efforts when the decision entails considerable, tangible personal economic benefits.

Moreover, Study 3 addresses two potential shortcomings of Studies 1 and 2. First, people might object more strongly to reelection motives when the political decision is an experimental scheme in which the primary objective should be to estimate the effects of policy initiatives and provide new knowledge rather than satisfying certain societal interests per se. Second, for many real-life political decisions, a decision-making process based on random allocation would simply not be feasible (or particularly “fair”). Hence, Study 3 offers a test of the hypotheses with a different operationalization of decision-maker impartiality.

**Research Design and Data**

Study 3 consists of data from a paper-and-pencil, between-subject survey experiment embedded in the same survey as Study 1. The experimental conditions across the two studies were completely randomized and the results reported below remain unchanged when controlling for the experimental manipulations of Study 1. The experiment used a vignette approach in which respondents were randomly assigned one of four scenarios (again a $2 \times 2$ factorial design). Respondents were asked to imagine a political party proposing a restructuring of taxes, levies, and municipal subsidies.
In the impartial version, the vignette read that the party adopted the proposition strictly in an attempt to stimulate “growth in society rather than winning votes among certain voter segments”. In the partial version, the proposition was “just as much about winning votes among certain voter segments by raising their income as it is about stimulating growth in society”. Outcome favorability was manipulated by informing that the proposal would result in a 500 DKK (app. 67 euros) monthly increase or decrease in income for a voter like the respondent. The full stimulus material is available in the online appendix.

**Measures**

Trust in the decision-maker was measured using a single item scaled 0–10, asking: “How much trust would you have in such a party?” The inclination to vote for the party was measured by asking: “To what extent would you consider voting for such a party?” Support for the political decision was measured through an additive index including two items ($r = 0.86; M = 0.46; SD = 0.27$): “To what extent do you agree with such a proposition of a growth package?” and “How much sympathy do you have for such a proposition of a growth package?” Again all variables are recoded 0–1.

**Results**

Model I, Table III reveals a familiar trend. In line with H1, the model indicates that the presence of reelection motives reduces trust in the decision-maker by almost 25 percentage points. The large effect is again in accordance with the theoretical expectations, since people have very little information about the trustworthiness of the decision-maker aside from the information about impartiality. The same pattern is depicted in Figure 4.

*TABLE III ABOUT HERE*
Model II, Table III demonstrates that there is no significant interaction effect between decision-maker impartiality and outcome favorability on trust in the decision-maker, which supports H4. As also portrayed in panel a, Figure 4 people do not tolerate decision-makers motivated by reelection even when they benefit financially from this arrangement.

In support of H2, Model III, Table III shows that the impartiality manipulation yields a significant effect on the inclination to vote for the decision-maker of 27.1 percentage points. Model IV shows that this effect exists independently of the favorability of the outcome, lending support to H4.

In line with H3, Model V, Table III demonstrates that the impartiality manipulation changes support for the political decision by 25.5 percentage points. In contrast, the model shows that outcome favorability has no influence on support for the political decision. Once again, the results indicate that people are relatively inattentive to tangible payoffs focusing instead on procedural aspects such as decision-maker impartiality. Finally, in line with H4, the insignificant interaction term in Model VI, Table III indicates that people are no more accepting of a political decision motivated by reelection when they stand to gain financially from the decision.

Thus, Study 3 corroborates the findings of Studies 1 and 2, but through a markedly different approach: The presence of reelection motives reduces politicians’ trust evaluations, support for their policies, and ultimately received votes—even among the voters they are attempting to appeal to.

**Study 4**
Study 4 serves to accommodate two potential shortcomings of Studies 1 and 2. First, rather than assuming that subjects prefer resources to flow in the direction of their own locality this study operationalizes outcome favorability based on respondents’ self-reported prior preferences. Second, while the other studies (in line with existing research in social psychology) operationalized outcome favorability in terms of material self-interest, public opinion research has demonstrated that people consider it much more important whether political decisions are consistent with their ideological outlook and political values (Chong, 2013). This study investigates if people still respond negatively to reelection efforts even when they are provided with ideologically favorable policies.

Research Design and Data

Study 4 was an online survey experiment conducted among Danish political science students in March 2015 (N=202). No contextual factors or political events should potentially affect the results in any specific direction. The procedure was highly similar to that of Study 1. Subjects were assigned to read one of four versions of a bogus article from Politiken describing an experimental scheme at the EU level introduced by the Danish politician Ole Christensen in which Denmark was included. Decision-maker impartiality was manipulated as in Studies 1 and 2.

To manipulate outcome favorability, the policy content of the trial scheme was manipulated. One version read that the extra funds from the trial scheme would be dedicated to improving environmentally friendly energy consumption by lowering taxes on biofuels and strengthening the requirements for energy consumption of businesses, which, however, could also damage the competitiveness of businesses and cost jobs (i.e., the environment condition). The other version read that the funds would improve the competitiveness of businesses and...
create jobs by lowering the taxes on fossil fuels and limiting the requirements for energy consumption of businesses but with the potential downside of increased environmental pollution (i.e., the business competitiveness condition). To insure that outcome favorability was assigned based on prior preferences respondents were asked to choose between two statements before reading the article: “We must continue the efforts to improve the environment, also if this happens at the expense of the competitiveness of businesses and costs jobs” versus “In the current situation we must prioritize to improve the competitiveness of businesses and create jobs, even if this is at the expense of the environment.” To operationalize outcome favorability, respondents prioritizing the environment over business competitiveness (N=135) were assigned the value 1 if subsequently assigned to the environment condition and 0 if assigned to the business competitiveness condition—and vice versa for respondents prioritizing business competitiveness over the environment (N=67).

**Measures**

Trust in the decision-maker ($r = 0.86; M = 0.45; SD = 0.23$) and support for the political decision ($r = 0.83; M = 0.50; SD = 0.28$) were measured in the same way as in Study 1, as was the inclination to vote for the decision-maker. All variables are recoded 0–1.

**Results**

Do subjects still respond negatively to reelection motives when the decision-maker is their own representative directing resources towards their own locality and for a purpose consistent with their own ideological outlook and political values? Yes. As shown in Model I, Table IV there is a significant effect of the impartiality manipulation on trust in the decision-maker amounting to 19.1 percentage points, supporting H1. Moreover, in line with H4, Model II
shows that this effect exists independently of whether subjects are assigned to an ideologically favorable or unfavorable outcome. Panel a, Figure 4 displays the same pattern graphically. Model I also reveals that outcome favorability, when operationalized in terms of ideological congruence rather than self-interest, has a significant 12 percentage point effect on trust in the decision-maker.

**TABLE IV ABOUT HERE**

In support of H2, Model III, Table IV reports a significant 11.6 percentage point effect of the impartiality manipulation on the inclination to vote for the decision-maker. Model IV demonstrates that this effect does not vary with outcome favorability, supporting H4. Panel b, Figure 5 presents this graphically. Model III also displays a significant effect of outcome favorability on the inclination to vote for the decision-maker.

In line with H3, Model V, Table IV shows that the impartiality manipulation has a significant 13.3 percentage point effect on support for the political decision, and Model VI confirms, in support of H4, that this effect does not vary with outcome favorability. Figure 5 demonstrates graphically how the effects of outcome favorability and decision-maker impartiality are clearly additive and not interactive. As we should expect, outcome favorability has a strong and significant impact on support for the trial scheme of 30.8 percentage points.

In sum, although the policy content of the trial scheme is clearly important to subjects they remain unwilling to tolerate or overlook reelection motives even when the policy content is consistent with their ideological outlook and benefits their own locality. Figure 5 clearly displays how politicians earn the trust, policy support, and votes of the electorate by providing them with the outcomes they favor and without appearing partial and motivated by reelection.
Discussion

In this article I challenge the widespread notion that politicians generate public trust, policy support, and electoral success by simply providing citizens with the outcomes they favor. In addition to outcomes, citizens care about procedural fairness and respond to the efforts of politicians to win personal reelection with reduced levels of trust, policy support, and ultimately electoral support. Importantly, these reactions extend even to voters who are at the receiving end of such reelection efforts and provided with favorable outcomes. Moreover, further analyses from Study 2 (not reported here) show that the negative reactions to reelection efforts of a political decision maker are equally strong across party supporters and opponents. This contrasts an extensive literature on motivated reasoning demonstrating that voters defend the actions of their party (Slothuus & de Vreese 2010; see also Doherty & Wolak 2012) and further underlines the reach and impact of citizen attention to procedural fairness. Altogether, the results demonstrate how politicians face the delicate task of providing citizens with favorable outcomes without exhibiting partiality and reelection-seeking motives in bringing such outcomes about. The results also provide a possible explanation for why previous studies have found that pork barrel spending may have no—or even a negative—influence on reelection chances of political representatives (Bickers, Evans & Stein, 2007; Feldman & Jondrow, 1984).

The findings have important implications at both the normative, theoretical, and practical levels. First, the results imply that representative democracy entails an inherent tension or trade-off between decision-maker impartiality and responsiveness. Competitive elections and the running struggle for votes and office secure accountability and an “electoral
connection” between politicians and their constituents (Downs, 1957; Mayhew, 1974; Schumpeter, 1943) but also induce career-conducive and self-interested motivations and behavior among political decision-makers with potentially negative effects on political trust and support for public policy among citizens. One way to reduce public concerns about self-interested decision-makers could be through institutional reform such as limiting term periods or reducing the salaries of representatives although such initiatives might also come at the expense of the quality and experience of the candidates running for office (for a discussion see Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002).

Second, the findings highlight the importance of considering the potential struggle between politicians and the media in framing the intentions and motivations of a political decision-maker and their policy. Across countries we have seen a gradual increase in how the media uses the “strategic game frame” which, in part, conveys “evidence about the self-interested nature of the political process and its players” (Aalberg, Strömbäck & de Vreese, 2011, p. 166). A defining factor in whether an incumbent politician secures public trust, support for their policy, and ultimately reelection could be whether the media covers the political decision through an issue frame or a strategic frame stressing the underlying vote-maximizing and reelection seeking motives involved. The results also emphasize how politicians must explain their decisions with reference to the interests of the community rather than individualistic concerns to uphold public support (cf. McGraw et al. 1993) and that stressing the reelection motives and career-conducive behavior of political opponents could be an effective communication strategy in candidate debates and negative campaigns.

Two potential limitations concerning the generalizability of the findings warrant mention. Firstly, the experiments were based on student samples and there is a risk that students are particularly concerned with procedural fairness and less concerned with outcome favorability. While this certainly is a potential pitfall, the political issues of Studies 1 and 2
(resources for higher education and employment efforts directed at recent graduates) were chosen specifically to increase the personal relevance and tangibility of the decision outcomes for this group and hence attempt to mitigate this problem. Still, both studies present subjects with unrealized gains rather than actual losses, and future work should consider if outcomes could trump process in special instances or among certain segments where the stakes are perceived as particularly high.

Second, the extent to which the findings travel beyond the Danish context remains uncertain. On the one hand, the findings could likely travel across different institutional and cultural settings as the aversion to partial decision-makers, according to social psychologists, should constitute a deep-seated, universal psychological mechanism. Indeed, much of the existing work on this subject is carried out in the US context (e.g., Tyler, 1990; Tyler & Degoey, 1996), which differs from the Danish setting on a range of parameters. On the other hand, pork barrel spending is by design a more integrated and common feature in some political systems, including the US (Lancaster, 1986), and may be more readily accepted in such contexts. Moreover, the Danish context distinguishes itself with relatively high levels of political trust, interest, participation, and post-materialist values, which could potentially induce attention to procedural fairness. Future work should consider the potential interplay between such psychological dispositions and country-specific cultural, political, and institutional features.

This article underlines the potential of procedural fairness—decision-maker impartiality in particular—to uphold political trust and citizen support for public policy. While the article investigates effects of single decision-making processes on trust in specific political actors, existing work has demonstrated that citizens’ general perceptions of procedural fairness (i.e. the accumulation of experienced decision-making processes) correlate strongly with general political and institutional trust (Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002; Ulbig, 2002). Importantly,
efforts to promote political trust and policy support by attending to public perceptions of procedural fairness (e.g., through institutional reform), in contrast to outcomes, represent a potential plus-sum game, accommodating both the winning and the losing team. Yet, at least one appeal to caution seems in order. While procedural fairness can foster political trust and policy support, a widely perceived fair decision-making process does not guarantee the quality of the subsequent decision per se. In this sense, procedural fairness could be a double-edged sword with the potential to raise political trust in decision-makers and support for policies that are not in the interests of society.

References


Figure 1. Effects of impartiality of decision-maker on Trust in decision-maker (panel a), Vote for decision-maker (panel b) and Policy support (panel c) by Outcome favorability (Study 1).
Figure 2. Effects of impartiality of decision-maker on moral and pragmatic trust in government (Study 2).
Figure 3. Effects of impartiality of decision-maker on Moral trust in government (panel a) and Policy support (panel b) by Outcome favorability (Study 2).
Figure 4. Effects of impartiality of decision-maker on Trust in decision-maker (panel a), Vote for decision-maker (panel b) and Policy support (panel c) by Outcome favorability (Study 3).
Figure 5. Effects of impartiality of decision-maker on Trust in decision-maker (panel a), Vote for decision-maker (panel b) and Policy support (panel c) by Outcome favorability (Study 4).
TABLE I. Effects of Impartiality of decision-maker, Outcome favorability and interaction between these two variables on Vote for decision-maker (Models I and II), Trust in decision-maker (Models III and IV), and Policy support (Models V and VI) (Study 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
<th>Model VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in</td>
<td>Trust in</td>
<td>Vote for</td>
<td>Vote for</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>decision-maker</td>
<td>decision-maker</td>
<td>decision-maker</td>
<td>decision-maker</td>
<td>support</td>
<td>support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.313***</td>
<td>0.320***</td>
<td>0.314***</td>
<td>0.300***</td>
<td>0.545***</td>
<td>0.535***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
<td>(0.033)</td>
<td>(0.025)</td>
<td>(0.028)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impartial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision-maker</td>
<td>0.126***</td>
<td>0.108*</td>
<td>0.099**</td>
<td>0.135*</td>
<td>0.105**</td>
<td>0.129**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IDM)</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.049)</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.052)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.044)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>favorability</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.046)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(OF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDM * OF</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>-0.066</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.065)</td>
<td>(0.070)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R²</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.061</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: OLS-regression with standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001. All tests are two-sided.
TABLE II. Effects of Impartiality of decision maker, Outcome favorability and interaction between these two variables on Moral trust in government (Models I and II), and Policy support (Models III and IV) (Study 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model I Moral trust in government</th>
<th>Model II Moral trust in government</th>
<th>Model III Policy support</th>
<th>Model IV Policy support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.354*** (0.015)</td>
<td>0.361*** (0.017)</td>
<td>0.567*** (0.015)</td>
<td>0.572*** (0.017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impartial decision-maker (IDM)</td>
<td>0.036* (0.017)</td>
<td>0.021 (0.024)</td>
<td>0.041* (0.017)</td>
<td>0.033 (0.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome favorability (OF)</td>
<td>-0.006 (0.017)</td>
<td>-0.020 (0.024)</td>
<td>-0.014 (0.017)</td>
<td>-0.023 (0.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDM * OF</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.030 (0.034)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.018 (0.034)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. $R^2$</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: OLS-regression with standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001. All tests are two-sided.
TABLE III. Effects of Impartiality of decision-maker, Outcome favorability and interaction between these two variables on Vote for decision-maker (Models I and II), Trust in decision-maker (Models III and IV), and Policy support (Models V and VI) (Study 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
<th>Model VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in decision-maker</td>
<td>Trust in decision-maker</td>
<td>Vote for decision-maker</td>
<td>Vote for decision-maker</td>
<td>Policy support</td>
<td>Policy support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.384***</td>
<td>0.355***</td>
<td>0.301***</td>
<td>0.275***</td>
<td>0.349***</td>
<td>0.325***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.037)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impartial decision-maker (IDM)</td>
<td>0.244***</td>
<td>0.304***</td>
<td>0.271***</td>
<td>0.325***</td>
<td>0.255***</td>
<td>0.304***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.052)</td>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.053)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome favorability (OF)</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.051)</td>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td>(0.056)</td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.052)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDM * OF</td>
<td>-0.125</td>
<td>-0.112</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.075)</td>
<td>(0.083)</td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R²</td>
<td>0.232</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.227</td>
<td>0.231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: OLS-regression with standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001. All tests are two-sided.
TABLE IV. Effects of Impartiality of decision-maker, Outcome favorability and interaction between these two variables on Vote for decision-maker (Models I and II), Trust in decision-maker (Models III and IV), and Policy support (Models V and VI) (Study 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
<th>Model III</th>
<th>Model IV</th>
<th>Model V</th>
<th>Model VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust in decision-maker</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.298***</td>
<td>0.283***</td>
<td>0.288***</td>
<td>0.300***</td>
<td>0.284***</td>
<td>0.284***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
<td>(0.033)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impartial decision-maker (IDM)</td>
<td>0.191***</td>
<td>0.220***</td>
<td>0.116**</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.133***</td>
<td>0.134**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
<td>(0.041)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.049)</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.046)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome favorability (OF)</td>
<td>0.120***</td>
<td>0.147***</td>
<td>0.226***</td>
<td>0.206***</td>
<td>0.308***</td>
<td>0.308***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
<td>(0.039)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.046)</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.044)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDM * OF</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R^2</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>0.320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: OLS-regression with standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001. All tests are two-sided.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to acknowledge the helpful guidance and advice from Michael Bang Petersen, Rune Slothuus, Thomas Leeper, Peter Dinesen, Patrick Fournier, Yphtach Lelkes, Jens Peter Frølund Thomsen, Lasse Laustsen, three anonymous reviewers and Editor Catarina Kinnvall.