

Article

Engaging Citizen Participation—A Result of Trusting Governmental Institutions and Politicians in the Portuguese Democracy

Vanda Carreira ^{1,*}, João Reis Machado ^{1,2} and Lia Vasconcelos ¹

¹ Faculty of Sciences and Technology, New University of Lisbon (FCT-UNL), Quinta da Torre, Campus Universitário, 2829-516 Caparica, Portugal; jmachado@igeo.pt (J.R.M.); ltv@fct.unl.pt (L.V.)

² Geographical Institute of Lisbon, Rua da Artilharia, 1099-052 Lisboa, Portugal

* Correspondence: vanda.carreira@gmail.com; Tel.: +351-962-990-050

Academic Editor: Martin J. Bull

Received: 8 May 2016; Accepted: 27 July 2016; Published: 5 August 2016

Abstract: Public participation is a mainstay of democracy. However, the ways in which it can be understood inevitably influence the achievement of the goals that preside over any public policy. Literature argues that the drawbacks of citizen participation are directly related to the level of trust in governmental institutions and in politicians. The present study was carried out on a sample of 250 individuals and aimed to (1) describe citizens' opinions and trust in politicians and government institutions; and (2) demonstrate that healthy levels of citizen engagement in politics may be upheld as long as citizens trust their political institutions and leaders, through a case study of Portugal's democratic system. The current study found no statistically significant association between political participation and the study participant's perception that government representatives heard ($p = 0.769$) or considered ($p = 0.810$) their opinions. Similarities were found between the participants' assessments of the quality of life brought about by the decisions of those in power and the levels of citizen participation around land planning and land management ($p = 0.011$). Also, citizen assessments of life quality were influenced by their understanding of political decisions ($p = 0.014$). Effective communication between citizens and politicians will allow both to better understand the aims of political policy. When citizens believe that politicians are honest, show moral leadership and demonstrate integrity, and that these values are upheld by public institutions, a common aspiration can be realized: improving the quality of life.

Keywords: citizen's; public participation; trust; politicians; environmental; spatial planning

1. Introduction

Public participation is one of the major mainstays of democracy, and it inevitably influences the goals of public policy. However, in modern democracies, citizen involvement in public policy has decreased significantly. It is therefore important to develop practices that awaken dormant citizens and remind them of the important role that they can play. Public willingness to intervene in policy could improve the quality and meaningfulness of public life. More equitable results could legitimize policy and improve governance [1–4]. The participation of individuals in selecting solutions to their own problems promotes the common good [5–8].

Participation is a learning space for citizenship. The exercise arises from the opportunity, access to information, and education. These factors combine in building awareness of sustainable development [6–20]. Public participation promotes responsible, shared decision-making on issues that affect individual and collective life [20–22].

However, not all authors agree that high levels of citizen participation in public policy are necessary for a healthy democracy [22–26]. Citizens can be classified in three categories: active, standby/monitors,

or passive. Active citizens promote healthy communities, increase the quality of life and generate communal empowerment [27–38]. In contrast, passive citizens are disempowered, alienated from public life and disappointed with politicians, public policies and public institutions [39–42]. Standby citizens are not active, but are well informed about public policy and ready to participate if needed, with the facility of gradually moving from powerlessness to an empowered state [43–48]. Although distinctly different, both active and standby citizens assume a vital role in democracy, in contrast to passive citizens [27].

If individuals are unsatisfied with the results of their participation in public policy, then they will be unlikely to participate in other public issues. The converse is also true. If individuals feel positive about their contribution to public policy, the level of public participation increases. Active or passive citizenry is related to individual experience with politicians and public institutions [49]. Citizen behavior around public policy is directly related to the level of trust in politicians and public institutions. Trust is a vital resource that can reduce the conflict and confusion among citizens facing public policy issues [50–52]. Citizen distrust of the political system eventually removes the moral legitimacy of democratically elected individuals to govern, despite the officials' theoretical obligation to defend the interests of the citizens. If citizens do not see themselves in this model, they will not participate in decision-making. Often, this leads to the neglected management of common property policies, such as those related to territory or the environment.

Promoting citizen participation in public decisions will help develop fair and sustainable territories, but the interaction between citizen participation and trust in politicians and public institutions is complex and should be considered carefully.

The present study was carried out on a sample of 250 individuals. It aimed to (1) describe citizens' opinions and trust in politicians and government institutions; and (2) demonstrate that healthy levels of citizen engagement in politics may be upheld as long as citizens trust their political institutions and leaders, through a case study of Portugal's democratic system.

2. Materials and Methods

A sample of 250 subjects ($N = 250$) of both genders was used for the study. The inclusion criteria used were the following: all subjects were older than 18 years of age, were eligible electors in Portugal territory, and lived in Lisbon and the surrounding areas. Data collection took place between January and November 2015, and was gathered by a questionnaire given to a sample of citizens located in Lisbon and the surrounding areas, in order to characterize their opinions and relationships regarding the government and politicians. Interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis with sample individuals to complete the survey, which consisted of closed and open questions with items associated with six main axes, interrelated with the issue of public participation in the areas of planning and land management with six specific categories, namely: personal characterization, social characterization, county where individual lives, information, decision process and public participation. Previously, the final survey was tested using a pilot survey with a sample of 25 subjects, with the aim of identifying the presence of questions which could present some difficulties to be answered [53]. A database was developed after the results were validated, and the statistical analysis was made using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v. 21.0). Normality of the data was testing by using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (KS), and for inferential statistics we used the non-parametric independence Chi-square test. The type of public participation presented by the individuals was considered as the dependent variable, i.e., that it was a study on the influence of the variable citizens' opinion about the politicians'. Results with p -values < 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

3. Results

The results of the sample characterization for age, gender, marital status, education level, and opinions about government and politicians; the time to be called to plan the land together with politicians, the reasons for participating in planning, opinions about politicians, the type of

participation in public policies, and the measures to promote and to increase citizens' participation are listed on Table 1. All of the participants (100%) were unanimous in considering that all stakeholders (governments, private organizations, and ordinary citizens) should be involved in public policy dialogue. The vast majority of the sample (96.6%) considered that the population had to be called to plan together with the politicians where they live, with 98.8% explaining that "...it is those who live in the places that know better what is needed, where it is needed, and when it is needed". About 88.8% of the individuals have the idea that "governments do not listen to people and their opinions", and from those, 64% do not participate in public policies. A similar value for not participating in public policies (71.4%) was registered in the individuals who think that "the politicians listen to the population". No statistically significant differences between the two variables, i.e., what do citizens think about the politicians, related to the fact that they consider the population's opinion and the public's participation were registered ($p = 0.769$) (Table 2). Non-participation in public policies was recorded in 66.7% of the subjects who think that governments make decisions and take actions based on the opinion of citizens, and a similar value (64.4%) was registered as those who think that governments do not consider the opinion of population. The idea that decisions and actions taken by politicians are based on the opinion of the population does not influence the public participation level, as no statistically significant differences were registered ($p = 0.810$) (Table 2). Only 25.4% of the sample participates in public policies on a voluntary basis, and the main reasons for the lack of participation were the "lack of time" (91.9%) and the "lack of stimulation" (8.1%). Among the motivations for greater participation, respondents pointed out as their first choice the desire to "see that their opinion counted..." (60.1%), and the main measure selected to promote the citizens' participation was to "request directly their participation" (50%). Understanding or not understanding the politician's decisions and actions is directly associated with the assessment of the impact (positive or negative) that each of them will have to improve the quality of life of individuals. From the individuals who did not understand the decisions and actions taken by the government, 71% asserted that they do not participate in the public policies. A statistically significant relationship between the fact that individuals understand or do not understand the politicians' decisions and actions and the level of public participation was achieved ($p = 0.011$) (Table 2). According to the results, 68.8% of individuals that considered that political actions and/or decisions consider the needs of the population and improve the county's quality of life where they live as "non-existent" do not participate in public policies, while 67.2% of those who considered the politicians' actions and/or decisions as "weak" also do not participate. For the individuals who consider the politician's actions and/or decisions as "good", 66.7% said that they participate whenever they can. A statistically significant result was achieved between the variables of the type of evaluation that citizens attribute to the politicians' actions and/or decisions and the level of public participation in environmental policy and planning was presented ($p = 0.014$) (Table 3) (Figure 1).

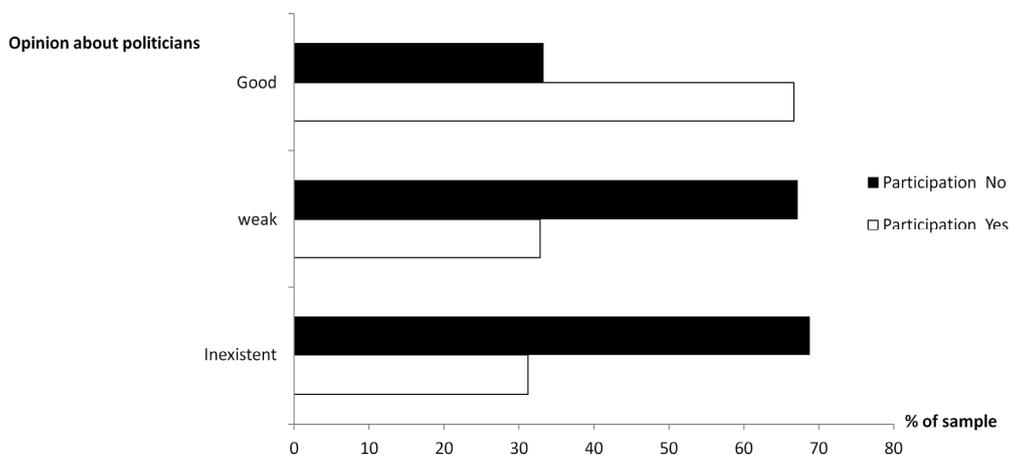


Figure 1. Sample opinion about politicians, and its relationship with the level of public participation.

Table 1. Sample characterization for the different parameters considered in the study.

Parameter	N	Category	Fr	F (%)		
Age	250	\bar{x}	42.30	<20 years	4	1.6
		SD	13.24	20–30 years	38	15.2
				30–40 years	78	31.2
				40–50 years	58	23.2
				50–60 years	44	17.6
				60–70 years	20	8.0
<i>min.</i>	14	5.6				
<i>max.</i>	71	28.4	>=70 years	8	3.2	
Gender	250	Male		120	48.0	
Marital state	250	Female		130	52.0	
		Single		88	35.2	
		Married		92	36.8	
		Divorced		68	27.2	
		Widower		2	0.8	
Education level	250	Without education		14	5.7	
		1st cycle		12	4.9	
		2nd cycle		50	20.3	
		3th cycle		30	12.2	
		12th Year		18	7.3	
		Bachelor		18	7.3	
		Integrated Master		88	35.8	
		Master of Science		10	4.1	
Doctoral		6	2.4			
Pop and politicians should plan the land together	250	Yes		242	96.6	
		No		8	3.4	
Reasons to participate in planning	250	Knows better who lives in the places		247	98.8	
		Like to participate in political processes		3	1.2	
Time point to be involved in policies	250	From the beginning of draft		206	82.4	
		During the draft of plan		40	16.0	
		After the draft of plan		4	1.6	
Opinion about government	250	Do not listen pop. opinion		222	88.8	
		Do not consider pop. opinion		182	72.6	
		Politicians just don't want to know		197	78.8	
		They are not close to pop.		23	9.1	
Type of participation on policies	250	If required			74.6	
		Voluntary			25.4	
Promoting the motivation for participation	250	If pop. think that their opinion counts			60.1	
		If pop. think that politicians try to change things			7.8	
		If the people were paid for			7.8	
Measures to increase citizens' participation	250	Request directly their participation			50.0	
		If politicians were nice			16.5	
		If politicians, consider the pop. opinions			12.2	

Table 2. Variable influence what citizens think about the fact that rulers hear or do not hear their opinion; what citizens think about the idea that decisions and actions taken by politicians are based on the opinion of the population; whether citizens understand or not the politicians decisions and actions; and the kind of valuation that every citizen attaches to the actions and/or decisions taken by the local and political power at the level of citizen participation. Statistically significant results for $p < 0.05$.

Common Parameter	Parameters	Chi-Square Test p -Value
Public participation level	What citizens think about whether the covenant of rulers hears or does not hear their opinion	0.769
	What citizens think about the idea that decisions and actions taken by politicians are based on the opinion of the population	0.810
	Do the citizens understand or not the politicians' decisions and actions	0.011 *
	Type of evaluation that every citizen attaches to the actions and/or decisions taken and the local political power	0.14 *

Note: * Statistically significant.

Table 3. The evaluation of the municipality's actions in terms of participation and appreciation of the county. Statistically significant results for $p < 0.05$.

Evaluation of Politicians Actions on Improvement of Life Quality	Public Participation Level		p -Value
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
Nonexistent	31.3%	68.8%	0.174
Weak	32.8%	67.2%	
Good	66.7%	33.3%	

4. Discussion

The sample was representative of the Portuguese population in terms of gender and age [54]. A majority of the participants (96.3%) agreed that land planning should be carried out jointly by citizens and leaders, reflecting the frequent opinion that local residents knew their needs and priorities best. These results were in line with other authors who argued that a social relationship with the local setting is a crucial factor in encouraging citizens to participate in environment and land planning [38,55–57].

Public institutions have important roles in democracy since they represent one of the means by which citizens realize their aspirations and interests [24,56–59]. They contribute to the distribution of power in political decision-making. Consequently, satisfaction with institutional performance [40–42,59–61] reflects the belief among citizens that their leaders comply with the citizens' values, i.e., consider the citizens' choices and interests. Trust in institutions develops public participation in politics and increases support for democracy [52].

In the social sciences, trust is an important issue [61–63]. It is a complex concept that can be defined as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" [52,64]. Trust in public institutions may influence the level and quality of citizen participation in public policy [24,65–70]. When governments do not hear citizen opinions or reflect on them in decisions, the synergy between the public and private spheres is compromised. As a result, the fostering and quality of democratic engagement may be called into question [52,71–77].

Public institutions ensure, at least theoretically, that citizens participate in decision-making. They regulate politicians and control their power, ensuring that the power does not circumvent citizen freedom or the goals of public life. Public institutions are the mechanisms of political mediation, informed by the choices that society makes to solve its challenges [24,58,62,78]. Trust in public institutions is directly related to citizens' evaluation of the functions of the institutions, which should reflect the role that each has been assigned by society [44,51]. Citizen confidence in local institutions is

tied to equality before the law, through which public interests are taken into account in politics. Trust in government and politicians also depends directly on citizens' experiences with public services [24,48–50].

Five fundamental practices can ensure that trust operates in the democratic system [79]. These are:

- (1) communication between citizens to define public goals
- (2) tolerance and acceptance of pluralism
- (3) consensus on democratic procedures
- (4) civic awareness among the actors competing for different purposes
- (5) citizen participation in governing organizations.

The relationship between government and citizens is complex; its effect on participation in public policy is far from clear. However, it is apparent that democracy and participation in public policy constitute a bidirectional liaison. As citizens become more affected by public policy, their democratic attitudes are reinforced and their participation in democratic processes increases. Such citizens, who can be classified as active, feel that their actions contribute to democracy and promote its vivacity, which further increases their level of participation [77,80–86].

However, not every author agrees that a high level of public participation is required for a functioning and healthy democracy [23–26]. Schlozman et al. [80] suggested that an ideal sense of civic responsibility should contain some level of passivity about public policy, which should not necessarily be considered a threat to democracy [87].

However, passive citizens experience the stressful or ineffective results of their lack of involvement in public policy. If they feel excluded from the political system, they often give up on participating, resulting in a loss of confidence in public institutions and political life [33,34,40–42,88–93]. A third type of citizen, which represents an intermediate position between active and passive citizens, is standby or monitor citizens [26,42,65,66,94–96]. These citizens appear passive, but in reality are well prepared for political action. They monitor the politicians and are interested in changes in policy; thus, they have a potential critical role in democracy [27,41,87,94].

A system for measuring the performance of politicians and institutions is necessary to allow citizens to know whether their participation in public policy is valued [61]. In a study by Hooghe and Verhaegen [96], 60% of citizens did not trust politicians and government institutions. This was in line with our results, where 71.4% of the sample indicated that politicians could not hear the citizens' opinions because they (the politicians) were too often absent from the local community, and 88% perceived that politicians did not consider public opinion. These percentages indicate low trust in the political system and institutions.

Nevertheless, contrary to the author's expectations, i.e., that trust in politicians would be associated with higher levels of participation and vice versa, the current study found no statistically significant association between political participation and the study participants' perceptions that government representatives heard ($p = 0.769$) or considered ($p = 0.810$) their opinions. These results were in line with other studies that suggested participation did not directly depend on trust in politicians [97–99].

The current results might reflect barriers to citizens receiving comprehensive information, which prevent them, whether they trust politicians or not, from perceiving how their opinions contribute to final decisions in public processes, in turn mistakenly increasing the conflict around public policy [100]. In other words, a lack of communication allows mistrust to develop between politicians, institutions, and the public, and citizen participation in public policy is compromised [75,95]. Politicians should work to increase trust among citizens, through more effective dialogue that allows a working consensus [39,55]. It is necessary to understand that the level of trust among citizens affects their attitudes, behaviors, and quality of life [101].

In this study, statistically significant similarities were found between the participants' assessment of the quality of life brought about by the decisions of those in power and the levels of citizen participation around land planning and land management ($p = 0.011$). These results were in line

with the other researchers that suggested public trust increases the success of public participation by promoting better policy and planning decisions that achieve a better quality of life [61]. However, the current results showed that citizen assessments of life quality were influenced by their understanding of political decisions ($p = 0.014$).

Effective communication between citizens and politicians will allow both to better understand the aims of political policy. When citizens believe that politicians are honest, show moral leadership and demonstrate integrity, and that these values are upheld by public institutions, a common aspiration can be realized: improving the quality of life.

5. Conclusions

Participation is an investment made by politicians and citizens, with the goal of obtaining a substantial return. Through public participation as a planning tool, political decisions are better adapted to reality, more attentive to existing priorities and better able to facilitate a credible plan. Citizens can influence the final decision in many ways. It is up to planners to evaluate the information provided by citizens and build partnerships, document the participation and its results, and, finally, explain how participation influenced the final decisions. As a result, the political sphere will then show citizens that their opinions and efforts are valued, resulting in political and public gain [93,102]. Also, promoting and strengthening the social ties between politicians and citizens will substantially enhance future joint actions.

Acknowledgments: The authors thank the Anjos of Assis Veterinary Medicine Centre (CMVAA), Barreiro-Portugal, and MARE NOVA.

Author Contributions: Vanda Carreira, Lia Vasconcelos and João Reis Machado conceived and designed the experiments. Vanda Carreira performed the experiments; analyzed the data; contributed reagents/materials/analysis tools; and wrote the paper.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Robert E. Goodin, and John S. Dryzek. "Deliberative Impacts: The macro-political uptake of mini-public." *Politics Society* 34 (2006): 219–44. [CrossRef]
2. Archon Fung. "Minipublics: Deliberative Designs and their consequences." In *Deliberation, Participation and Democracy: Can the People Govern?* Edited by Shawn W. Rosenberg. Nova Iorque: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
3. Vanda Carreira, João Reis Machado, and Lia Vasconcelos. "Citizens' Education Level and Public Participation in Environmental and Spatial Planning Public Policies: Case Study in Lisbon and Surrounds Counties." *International Journal of Political Science* 2 (2016): 25–34.
4. Vanda Carreira, João Reis Machado, and Lia Vasconcelos. "Legal citizen knowledge and public participation on environmental and spatial planning policies: A case study in Portugal." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research* 2 (2016): 28–33.
5. Archon Fung, and Erik Olin Wright. *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*. London: Verso, 2003.
6. Luiz César de Queiroz Ribeiro, and Orlando Alves dos Santos Junior. "Democracia e cidade: Divisão social da cidade e cidadania na sociedade brasileira." *Análise Social* 174 (2005): 87–109.
7. Antonio César Bochenek. *(In)eficácia da Implementação da lei de Cotas Para Mulheres na Política Brasileira. Relações de Trabalho, Desigualdades Sociais e Sindicalismo*. Coimbra: Faculty of Economy, University of Coimbra Press, 2008.
8. Loïc Blondiaux. *Le Nouvel Esprit de la Démocratie*. Paris: Seuil, 2008.
9. António R. G. Lamas. "Síntese e recomendações: O desenvolvimento da eco—Cidadania." In *Participação Pública e Planeamento. Prática da Democracia Ambiental*. Edited by José Alfredo Jacinto. Lisboa: FLAD, 1996, pp. 241–46.
10. Robert Prescott-Allen. *Barometer of Sustainability: Measuring and Communicating Wellbeing and Sustainable Development*. Cambridge: IUCN, 1997.

11. Robert Prescott-Allen. *Assessing Progress toward Sustainability: The System Assessment Method Illustrated by the Wellbeing of Nations*. Cambridge: IUCN, 1999.
12. Robert Prescott-Allen. *The Wellbeing of Nations: A Country-by-Country Index of Quality of Life and the Environment*. Washington: Island Press, 2001.
13. Thomas C. Beierle, and Jerry Cayford. *Democracy in Practice: Public Participation in Environmental Decisions*. Washington: Resources for the Future, 2002.
14. José Joaquim Gomes Canotilho. *Direito Constitucional & Teoria da Constituição*, 7th ed. Coimbra: Almedina, 2003.
15. Wilson Gomes. "Apontamentos Sobre o Conceito de Esfera Pública Política." In *Mídia, Esfera Pública e Identidades Coletivas*. Edited by Rousiley Maia and Maria Céres Pimenta Spínola Castro. Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 2006.
16. Pierre André, Bert Enserink, Desmond Connor, and Peter Croal. *Public Participation International Best Practice Principles. Special Publication. Series No. 4*. Fargo: International Association for Impact Assessment, 2006.
17. Kirsty L. Blackstock, G. J. Kelly, and B. L. Horsey. "Developing and applying a framework to evaluate participatory research for sustainability." *Ecological Economics* 60 (2007): 726–42. [[CrossRef](#)]
18. Paula Antunes, Giorgos Kallis, Nuno Videira, and Rui Santos. "Participation and evaluation for sustainable river basin governance." *Ecological Economics* 68 (2009): 931–39. [[CrossRef](#)]
19. Vanda Carreira. "Urbanism and Depressive Syndrome." Master Thesis, New University of Lisbon, Caparica, Portugal, 11 November 2009.
20. Michael Schudson. "What if civic life didn't die?" *American Prospect* 25 (1996): 17–20.
21. G. Orduna. *Sebenta de Apoio ao Master em Desenvolvimento Local Internacional*, 1st ed. Madrid: Instituto de Economia y Geografía, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2003, p. 66.
22. Carlos Milani. "O princípio participativo na formulação de políticas públicas locais: Análise comparativa de experiências européias e latino-americanas." In *CD-Rom do XXIX Encontro da ANPOCS*. Caxambu: ANPOCS, 2005.
23. David W. Cash, William C. Clark, Frank Alcock, Nancy M. Dickson, Noelle Eckley, David H. Guston, Jill Jäger, and Ronald B. Mitchell. "Knowledge systems for sustainable development." *PNAS* 100 (2003): 8066–91. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
24. Raymond Quivy, and Luc Van Campenhoudt. *Manual de Investigação em Ciências Sociais*, 2nd ed. Lisboa: Gradiva, 2008.
25. Michael Quinn Patton. *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc., 2008.
26. Marc Hooghe, and Yves Dejaeghere. "Does the 'Monitorial Citizen' Exist? An Empirical Investigation into the Occurrence of Postmodern Forms of Citizenship in the Nordic Countries." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30 (2007): 249–71. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Erik Amnå, and Joakim Ekman. "Standby citizens: Diverse faces of political passivity." *European Political Science Review* 6 (2014): 261–81. [[CrossRef](#)]
28. Martha Nussbaum. "Women and equality: The capabilities approach." *International Labour Review* 138 (1999): 227–45. [[CrossRef](#)]
29. David M. Chavis, and Abraham Wandersman. "Sense of community in the urban environment: A catalyst for participation and community development." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 18 (1990): 55–81. [[CrossRef](#)]
30. John E. Prestby, Abraham Wandersman, Paul Florin, Richard Rich, and David Chavis. "Benefits, costs, incentives management and participation in voluntary associations." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 18 (1990): 117–49. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Marc A. Zimmerman, and Julian Rappaport. "Citizen participation, perceived control, and psychological empowerment." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 16 (1988): 725–50. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
32. Frank Fischer. "Participatory governance as deliberative empowerment. The cultural politics of discursive space." *American Review of Public Administration* 36 (2006): 19–40. [[CrossRef](#)]
33. Terri Mannarini, and Angela Fedi. "The quality of participation in the perception of citizens: Findings from a qualitative study." In *Community Psychology: New Developments*. Edited by Niklas Lange and Marie Wagner. Happaugue: Nova Science, 2010, pp. 177–92.
34. Terri Mannarini, Angela Fedi, and Stefania Trippetti. "Public involvement: How to encourage citizen participation." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 20 (2010): 262–74. [[CrossRef](#)]

35. Matthias Finger. "NGOs and transformation: Beyond social movement theory." In *Environmental NGOs in World Politics: Linking the Local and the Global*. Edited by Tomas Princen and Matthias Finger. London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 48–66.
36. Carolyn Kagan. "Pillars of support for well-being in the community: The role of the public sector." Paper presented at the Wellbeing and Sustainable Living Seminar, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK, 24 May 2007. Available online: <http://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/17972/2/Pillars-of-support-for%20wellbeing.pdf> (accessed on 25 February 2016).
37. Hedayat Allah Nikkhah, and Maarof Redzuan. "Participation as a medium of empowerment in community development." *European Journal of Social Sciences* 11 (2009): 170–76.
38. Scott Mainwaring, and Mariano Torcal. "Party system institutionalization and party system theory after the third wave of democratization." *Handbook of Party Politics* 11 (2006): 204–27.
39. Leonardo Morlino. "What is a 'Good' Democracy? Theory and Empirical Analysis." Paper presented at the European Union, Nations State, and the Quality of Democracy, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA, 31 October–2 November 2002.
40. Joseph S. Nye, Philip Zelikow, and David C. King. *Why People Don't Trust Government*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
41. Pippa Norris. *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
42. Margaret Levi. "A State of Trust." In *Trust and Governance*. Edited by Valerie Braithwaite and Margaret Levi. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998.
43. Subodh P. Kulkarni. "Environmental ethics and information asymmetry among organizational stakeholders." *Journal of Business Ethics* 27 (2000): 215–28. [[CrossRef](#)]
44. Mark C. Suchman. "Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches." *The Academy of Management Review* 20 (1995): 571–610.
45. Guido Palazzo, and Andreas Georg Scherer. "Corporate legitimacy as deliberation: A communicative framework." *Journal of Business Ethics* 66 (2006): 71–88. [[CrossRef](#)]
46. Michael Siegrist, George T. Cvetkovich, and Heinz Gutscher. "Shared values, social trust, and the perception of geographic cancer clusters." *Risk Analysis* 21 (2001): 1047–53. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
47. Susan J. Pharr, and Robert D. Putnam, eds. *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
48. Richard Gunther, José Ramón Montero, and Juan Linz, eds. *Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges*. Oxford: OUP, 2002.
49. Paulo N. Lopes, Marc A. Brackett, John B. Nezlek, Astrid Schütz, Ina Sellin, and Peter Salovey. "Emotional Intelligence and Social Interaction." *Society for Personality and Social Psychology* 30 (2004): 1018–34. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
50. J. A. Moises. "Citizens' Evaluation of Democratic Institutions and the Quality of Democracy in Brazil." Paper presented at the 20th IPSA World Congress, Fukuoka, Japan, 8–13 July 2006.
51. Rachel Meneguello. *Grounds for Democratic Adherence: Brazil, 2002–2006*. Santiago de Chile: Informe Latinobarómetro, Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2006.
52. S. Silva. "Participação política e Internet: Propondo uma análise teórico-metodológica a partir de quatro conglomerado de fatores." In *Trabalho Apresentado no GT Internet e Política do I Congresso Anual da Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores de Comunicação e Política, Ocorrido na Universidade Federal da Bahia—Salvador-BA*. Salvador da Baía: Brasil, 2006.
53. Michelle Lessard-Hébert, Gabriel Goyette, Gérald Boutin, and Maria João Reis. *Investigação Qualitativa—Fundamentos e Práticas*, 5th ed. Lisboa: Instituto Piaget, 2012.
54. Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE). *Censos 2011 Resultados Definitivos—Portugal*. Lisboa: Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2012.
55. Leonardo Morlino. *Democracy between Consolidation and Crisis. Parties, Groups and Citizens in Southern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
56. Norberto Bobbio. *The Future of Democracy: A Defence of the Rules of the Game*. Bellamy: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
57. Juan J. Linz, and Alfred Stepan. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
58. Axel Hadenius. *Institutions and Democratic Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

59. Mark E. Warren. *Democracy and Trust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
60. Rachel Meneguello. "Grounds for Democratic Adherence: Brazil, 2002–2006." Informe Latinobarómetro, Corporación Latinobarómetro, Santiago de Chile, 2006. Available online: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/llilas/vrp/meneguello.pdf> (accessed on 3 April 2016).
61. Kaifeng Yang, and Marc Holzer. "The Performance-Trust Link: Implications for Performance Measurement." *Public Administration Review* 66 (2006): 114–26. [[CrossRef](#)]
62. Miguel Ángel López-Navarro, Jaume Llorens-Monzonis, and Vicente Tortosa-Edo. "The Effect of Social Trust on Citizens' Health Risk Perception in the Context of a Petrochemical Industrial Complex." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 10 (2013): 399–416. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
63. Wouter Poortinga, and Nick F. Pidgeon. "Exploring the dimensionality of trust in risk regulation." *Risk Analysis* 23 (2003): 961–72. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
64. Denise M. Rousseau, Sim B. Sitkin, Ronald S. Burt, and Colin Camerer. "Not so different after all: Across-discipline view of trust." *The Academy of Management Review* 23 (1998): 393–404. [[CrossRef](#)]
65. Ronald Inglehart, and Wayne E. Baker. "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values." *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000): 19–51. [[CrossRef](#)]
66. Ronald Inglehart, and Christian Welzel. "Political Culture and Democracy." In *New Directions in comparative Politics*. Edited by Howard Wiarda. New York: Westview Press, 2002, pp. 141–64.
67. James L. Gibson. "The legitimacy of the U.S. Supreme Court in a polarized polity." *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 4 (2007): 507–38. [[CrossRef](#)]
68. James L. Gibson, and Gregory A. Caldeira. *Citizens, Courts, and Confirmation: Positivity Theory and the Judgments of the American People*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
69. Stephen Tsang, Margaret Burnett, Peter Hills, and Richard Welford. "Trust, public participation and environmental governance in Hong Kong." *Environmental Policy and Governance* 19 (2009): 99–114. [[CrossRef](#)]
70. Lilita Seimuskane, and Maija Vorlsava. "Citizen's Trust in Public Authorities of Latvia and Participatory Paradigm." *European Scientific Journal* 9 (2013): 280–90.
71. María Victoria de Mesquita Benevides. *Cidadania e Democracia*. São Paulo: Lua Nova, 1994, pp. 5–16.
72. María Victoria de Mesquita Benevides. *A Cidadania Ativa: Referendo, Plebiscito E Iniciativa Popular*. São Paulo: Editora-Ática, 1994, p. 208.
73. Judith E. Innes. "Consensus building: Clarifications for the critics." *Planning Theory* 3 (2004): 5–20. [[CrossRef](#)]
74. Kathleen E. Halvorsen. "Critical next steps in research on public meetings and environmental decision-making." *Human Ecology Review* 13 (2006): 150–60.
75. Jens Newig, and Oliver Fritsch. "Environmental governance: Participatory, multi-level—And effective? " *Environmental Policy and Governance* 19 (2009): 197–214. [[CrossRef](#)]
76. Gemma Carr, G. Blöschl, and Pete Loucks. "Evaluating participation in water resource management: A review." *Water Resources Research* 48 (2012): W11401. [[CrossRef](#)]
77. Ellen Quintelier, and Jan W. van Deth. "Supporting Democracy: Political Participation and Political Attitudes. Exploring Causality Using Panel Data." *Political Studies* 62 (2014): 153–71. [[CrossRef](#)]
78. Yasunobu Maeda, and Makota Miyahara. "Determinants of trust in industry, government, and citizen's groups in Japan." *Risk Analysis* 23 (2003): 303–10. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
79. Piotr Sztompka. *Trust: A Sociological Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
80. Kay Lehman Schlozman, Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady. *The Unheavenly Chorus: Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
81. Benjamin R. Barber. *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
82. Robert A. Dahl, and Ian Shapiro. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
83. Steven J. Rosenstone, and John Mark Hansen. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan, 1993.
84. Jane Mansbridge. "On the Idea that Participation Makes Better Citizens." In *Citizen Competence and Democratic Institutions*. Edited by Stephen L. Elkin and Karol Edward Soltan. Pennsylvania: University Press, 1999, pp. 291–325.
85. Sofie Marien, Marc Hooghe, and Ellen Quintelier. "Inequalities in Non-Institutionalised Forms of Political Participation: A Multi-Level Analysis of 25 Countries." *Political Studies* 58 (2010): 187–213. [[CrossRef](#)]

86. Benjamin J. Newman, and Brandon L. Bartels. "Politics at the Checkout Line: Explaining Political Consumerism in the United States." *Political Research Quarterly* 64 (2011): 803–17. [CrossRef]
87. Ben Berger. "Political Theory, Political Science and the End of Civic Engagement." *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (2009): 335–50. [CrossRef]
88. Andrea Cornwall, and Rachel Jewkes. "What is participatory research? " *Social Science and Medicine* 12 (1995): 1667–76. [CrossRef]
89. Carolyn Kagan. "Making a Difference: Participation and Wellbeing." Renew Intelligence Report, School of Electronics and Computer Science, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK, 2006. Available online: <http://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/24692/> (accessed on 12 April 2016).
90. Tom R. Tyler. "Trust and Democratic Governance." In *Trust and Governance*. Edited by Valerie Braithwaite and Margaret Levi. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998.
91. Boaventura de Sousa Santos. *Democratizar a Democracia: Os Caminhos da Democracia Participativa*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2002.
92. Jose Sanchez Parga. "Del Conflicto Social al Ciclo Político de la Protesta." *Ecuador Debate* 64 (2005): 49–72.
93. Maria Salete Souza de Amorim. "Cidadania e Participação Democrática." Anais do II Seminário Nacional, Movimentos Sociais, Participação e Democracia, UFSC, Florianópolis, Brasil, 25–27 de Abril 2007. Available online: http://www.plataformademocratica.org/Publicacoes/7055_Cached.pdf (accessed on 5 March 2016).
94. Pippa Norris. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
95. Russell J. Dalton. *The Good Citizen: How a Younger Generation is Reshaping American Politics*. Washington: CQ Press, 2008.
96. Marc Hooghe, and Soetkin Verhaegen. "The effect of political trust and trust in European citizens on European identity." *European Political Science Review* 1 (2015): 1–21. [CrossRef]
97. Dave Mckenna. "UK Local Government and Public Participation: Using Conjectures to Explain the Relationship." *Public Administration* 89 (2011): 1182–200. [CrossRef]
98. Gemma Carr. "Stakeholder and public participation in river basin management—An introduction." *Wires Water* 2 (2015): 393–405. [CrossRef]
99. Gene Rowe, and Lynn J. Frewer. "Public participation methods: A framework for evaluation." *Science Technology Human Values* 25 (2000): 3–29. [CrossRef]
100. Mary GrisezKweit, and Robert W. Kweit. "Citizen Participation: Enduring Issues for the Next Century." *National Civic Review* 76 (1987): 191–98. [CrossRef]
101. Andre Blais. "Political Participation." In *Comparing Democracies 3: Elections and Voting in the 21st Century*. Edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris. Los Angeles: Sage, 2010, pp. 164–83.
102. Edwin Odhiambo Siala. "Factors Influencing Public Participation in Budget Formulation. The Case of Nairobi County." Ph.D. Dissertation, United States International University, Nairobi City, Kenya, 2015, EMBA/00019/2/2012.



© 2016 by the authors; licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).