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## Internal dynamics at work

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Marina Lindell

## 19 Internal dynamics at work

**Abstract:** Although CAs vary in design – for example they have a different purpose, composition length, and impact – they are similar in their endeavour to reach high quality deliberation. A plethora of research suggests that the internal quality of the CA (or any citizen deliberation) is crucial for the legitimacy of decision-making but also for how participants are included and affected. For a long time, research looked at knowledge and opinion change as the primary outcome of a deliberative process while largely overlooking the quality of deliberation and its impact on these effects. High-quality deliberation does not imply change per se, but rather evidence that the group processes helped individuals to gain new knowledge and confront different perspectives. This chapter focuses on internal dynamics and their role for these transformations. Features that enhance equality are considered particularly important. Hence, focus is on inclusion, diversity and deliberative disagreement, experts and evidence, reflection and perspective-taking.

**Keywords:** inclusion, diversity, experts, reflection, perspective-taking, design

### 19.1 Introduction

Deliberative democracy is both a theoretical endeavour and an empirical project. Theorists have focused on normative ideals, the role of deliberation for informed opinions and collective judgements, and the role of democratic deliberation in the democratic system while empirical researchers largely have focused on analysing deliberative principles, outcomes of deliberation, and the implementation and the quality of deliberative processes (Willis, Curato and Smith 2022). The first citizens' assembly (CA) in 2004 in British Columbia was a milestone for empirical research. For the first time, randomly selected citizens were given the mandate to assess and redesign the province's electoral system. Even though electoral reform did not follow, the CA was seen as an archetype for reforming democracy and developing democratic processes. The last two decades we have seen an increased experimentation with deliberative mini-publics, i.e. deliberative polling, citizens' juries, participatory budgeting, and CAs, in all parts of the world and in various contexts. In the last five years, a plethora of Climate Assemblies has been implemented in many countries (e.g. in France, Spain, United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Scotland, Finland, and Luxembourg). Deliberative mini-publics are increasingly used as long-term institutional remedies to the crisis of democracy, and there is a wealth of studies stating that deliberative forums like these can promote empathy and understanding of other's viewpoints, transform atti-

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tudes, increase cognitive complexity, and lead to better alignment between values and preferences (Curato, Vrydagh and Bächtiger 2020; Fishkin 2018; Grönlund, Setälä and Herne 2010; Smith 2021). Improved reasoning, listening, and increased respect for other's opinions are often identified as crucial elements underlying these transformations (Bächtiger and Parkinson 2019).

In 2021, a knowledge network on Climate Assemblies, KNOCA, was established. Its purpose is to share best practices on the design and implementation of CAs. The design of the CA is indeed important. If done well, CAs can be a tool to bring informed views of the public into policymaking, help break political deadlock on policy issues, understand the priorities of citizens, increase the legitimacy of social action, reduce the impact of lobbyists and special interests, and to increase citizen participation (see <https://knoca.eu/>). For a long time, research looked at knowledge and opinion change as the primary outcome of a deliberative process while largely overlooking the quality of deliberation and its impact on these effects. As critics started to raise the argument that opinion change *per se* should not be seen as a central outcome of deliberation, research focus shifted towards examining the internal dynamics behind these transformations. In this chapter, I first reflect on the transformations and the effects from deliberative processes, such as CAs, on the participants. I then review the literature on the role of internal dynamics, focusing on features important to enhance equality. Hence, I focus on inclusion, diversity and deliberative disagreement, experts and evidence, and reflection and perspective-taking and their role for these transformations. I end by outlining possible future developments of the research field, specifically in relation to internal dynamics.

## 19.2 Impact of deliberative processes

### 19.2.1 From opinion change to clarification of opinion

Empirical studies of citizen deliberation suggest that participants often change opinions. Learning usually serves as a strong stimulus for opinion change, since citizens are not adequately informed about a wide array of social and political issues they have not had to seriously address before. Studies also suggest that those with lower levels of knowledge change their opinions more (Fishkin 2018; Suiter, Farrell and O'Malley 2016). Deliberative theories of democracy largely emphasize the same ideal, namely that decision-making should be preceded by a process in which citizens engage in rational argumentation that shapes and possibly changes their opinions. Decision-making based on deliberation is expected to yield more rational and considered opinions than decisions based solely on individual preferences (Andersen and Hansen 2007; Dryzek 2000; Fishkin 2018; Grönlund, Setälä and Herne 2010; Smith and Wales 2000; Suiter, Farrell and O'Malley 2016).

Moderation is normally seen as the desirable outcome of a deliberative process: by listening to others, participants with extreme opinions realize that there is merit in other positions and arguments. Polarization, by contrast, is frequently considered as a suspicious outcome. According to Sunstein (2002), polarization reflects a dynamic psychological process, whereby groups move to the extreme on the basis of biased information processing and biases in the argument pool. However, studies (see Esterling, Fung and Lee 2021; Grönlund, Setälä and Herne 2015; Lindell et al. 2017) suggest that deliberative dynamics can mitigate polarization tendencies by introducing deliberative norms, trained moderators, and balanced information. Although polarization can make it hard to find common ground and make joint decisions, recent lines of theorizing argue that polarization may have deliberative dimensions: it may simply reflect preference clarification in that participants better understand what they really want (Knight and Johnson 2011). In their influential book on democracy, Knight and Johnson (2011, 145) consider clarification and “structured disagreement” more important than opinion change *per se*; and clarification may well encompass polarization, moderation, or stability of opinions. In accordance with Sunstein (2002), however, deliberative democrats would insist that if polarization (or, moderation) occurs, it should do so in normatively defensible ways and not be the product of undesirable group dynamics or on other non-deliberative pathways.

Habermas (2018) acknowledges that although it is a sign of deliberative failure if there is never a change of minds over a long-running debate, it is not necessary that people change minds in every single venue. It is important to consider outcomes beyond opinion change, i.e. deep learning might not always lead to opinion change but sometimes to opinion stability and clarification. Thus, the concept of opinion change also includes the possibility of opinion stability and clarification. High-quality deliberation does not imply change *per se*, but rather evidence that the group processes helped individuals and groups to gain new knowledge and confront different perspectives (Karpowitz and Mendelberg 2018: 541). There seem to be a broad agreement in deliberative theory that normatively desirable opinion changes should at least reflect a high epistemic quality (and respective capacities of participants), the absence of group pressures, or some ethical aspects (such as empathy and understanding) (Lindell et al. 2017). Opinion change can never in itself be a qualitative criterion of deliberation.

### 19.2.2 From individual-level effects to societal impact

Many studies demonstrate that participants show a different relation to their community after deliberation. This is visible as an increase in political tolerance, social trust, internal efficacy, practical civic skills, willingness to act politically, and higher civic engagement (Andersen and Hansen 2007; Brown 2006; Carpini, Cook and Jacobs 2004; Hall, Wilson and Newman 2011; Smith 2009; Smith and Wales 2000). However, there is also evidence that deliberation does not have any effect on civic skills, and it might even lead to a decrease in some skills, for example Grönlund et al. (2010: 108)

identified a small decrease in internal efficacy suggesting that confrontation with new information and arguments might lead to an increased feeling about the complexity of politics. Deliberation seems to stimulate discursive engagement of participants, for example participation in debates, advising family members, giving talks in the workplace (van der Does and Jacquet 2021). There are also indications of a long-lasting impact on participants' interest in politics, political engagement, and policy attitudes (Fishkin 2018; Luskin, Fishkin and Jowell 2002; Smith 2021; Smith and Wales 2000). Recently research has increasingly focused on relations between CAs and mass democracy including engagement with citizens outside the forum (see Goldberg in this *Handbook*), the role of media (see Maia in this *Handbook*), the importance of a two-way communication and spill-over effects to non-participants (see Curato and Roundtree in this *Handbook*; Curato, Vrydagh and Bächtiger 2020; van der Does and Jacquet 2021).

### 19.2.3 From isolated initiatives to deliberative systems

Whereas literature on deliberative and participatory processes published in early 2000s tended to focus on isolated initiatives, this latter period has seen a shift towards thinking in terms of democratic systems and the need for embedding deliberative governance into said systems more permanently (Brown 2018). The focus has also slowly shifted from individual effects to meso- and macro-level effects where deliberative mini-publics' relationships with the media and with the public are under scrutiny. Legitimacy is largely evaluated in relation to the societal and wider impact of the mini-publics and transparency with the process itself. Research focus has been on developing institutional designs to increase legitimacy, policy uptake, and the role of deliberative mini-publics (e.g., CAs) in democratic decision-making (see Minsart and Jacquet in this *Handbook*). According to Bächtiger and Parkinson (2019: 155) micro institutions such as mini-publics can exert important deliberative roles in a democratic system when their recommendations affect other sites and they "export" deliberative norms to other sites and places. We need a variety of practices that add deliberative and democratic qualities to the system.

## 19.3 Internal dynamics and their impact

Knight and Johnson (1997) understand equality in deliberative democracy as the equal opportunity to political influence. Political equality is usually discussed in terms of distribution of power and resources. According to Curato et al. (2019: 61–73) it is essential that deliberation do not reinforce existing power imbalances but redistributes power and voice by empowering marginalized groups. Offering them a seat at the table to reason together is not enough, they also need to have a voice at the table. For this, the role of facilitators is crucial since they can create an environment for less confident speakers to express themselves and thereby give them an opportunity to gain political influ-

ence. Well-designed mini-publics can equalize opportunities to speak and be heard as well as correct asymmetries in information and knowledge.

Although there are many internal design features, i.e. dynamics, that are important to take into account, I focus on features that relate to political equality and re-distribution of power: Inclusion, Experts and evidence, Diversity and deliberative disagreement, and Reflection and perspective-taking. Although these features are highly intertwined, I will discuss them separately to better enhance their impact on deliberative transformations and processes.

### 19.3.1 Inclusion

The selection method largely determines who participates. Legitimacy depends on who participates, how they have been selected, and how representative the group is of the wider society. Sortition, or random selection, was introduced as a method for inclusion in order to promote political equality (Owen and Smith 2018). Sortition gives everyone a theoretically equal chance of being selected and it embodies the idea that all citizens are equally capable of political judgement and equally responsible for the public good (Smith 2021: 100). An open invitation is highly unlikely to gather anything resembling a representative group of citizens. The participants self-selecting through an open invitation are more likely to be older, and are more engaged in the issue. Minorities, the young, and the less advantaged tend to participate less (Fishkin 2018: 15–16). Socioeconomic inequalities also tend to allow wealthier, more educated individuals to participate more easily than poor and less well-educated ones. Sortition might reduce this participation bias (Fung 2005: 407–408).

In large CAs, sortition might ensure that the participants are representative of the population. In smaller assemblies, stratified random sampling might be needed to make sure that all groups, i.e. small ethnic groups, minorities are included. The use of stratification can help to reduce the risk that certain groups are over- or under-represented, but for this to happen it requires the identification of relevant strata. Notably, for example, while there was stratification for gender, geography, and age in the British Columbia CA, it failed to stratify for ethnicity. Representatives from BC's indigenous population were subsequently appointed to correct an initial imbalance arising from random selection (James 2008). With a small number of participants, as in a citizens' jury, the random sample is not statistically representative of the population but rather demographically diverse (Smith 2009; Thompson et al. 2021).

Often, demographic representation is stressed, since it is important that all groups in society are represented in the assembly. A rationale behind this is that people from different demographic backgrounds are most likely to have different views and interests and excluding parts of the population will undermine the process. Other times, attitudinal representation might be equally or more important (Harris 2019: 49; Fishkin 2018: 73). Especially if the deliberating issue is salient, highly polarized, and the decision will influence policymaking, it might be crucial for the sake of legitimacy that

the discussion is balanced and that the deliberating group is a representative microcosm of the public opinion. Dryzek and Niemeyer (2008) raise the importance of discursive representation. To have countervailing discourses well represented at the outset can be a way to prevent groupthink and the silencing of uncomfortable or minority voices. “The key consideration here is that all the vantage points for criticizing policy get represented – *not* that these vantage points get represented in proportion to the number of people who subscribe to them” (Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008: 482). As already stated, inclusion is related to political equality. In this sense, it is not only about having a chair at the table but also about having a voice and being listened to. Young (2000) refers to external and internal exclusion and suggests that certain measures, such as facilitators, deliberative norms, decision-rules, and group composition need to be taken into account to make sure internal exclusion does not take place. Although everyone does not need to speak equally, it is crucial that everyone is given the same opportunity to speak and to be listened to. A study from Finland (see Lindell et al. 2017) where citizens deliberated on immigration clearly suggests that the presence of an immigrant in the discussion group have an impact on the participants’ opinions. The low physical presence of immigrants in the discussion group was identified as one important factor behind the polarization of opinions in an anti-immigrant direction. This finding is in line with long-standing claims that the physical presence of less privileged or marginalized groups is not only a democratic predicament but matters for outcomes as well (see also Phillips 1995). Also in accordance with social identity theory, members of a group might enhance their similarities, i.e. strengthening in-group identity, and thus seek to find negative aspects of out-groups. This suggests that physical presence is an important factor to reduce such tendencies (Hogg 1993) and to enhance inclusion.

Since members of a CA are not elected, they cannot be held accountable to those affected by their decisions (for a discussion on this see Vandamme in this *Handbook*). This makes representative claims difficult. According to Brown (2018: 176–178) representative claims rest on their descriptive representativeness of diverse social perspectives. Thus, he raises concerns that members from disadvantaged groups speak less and are taken less seriously (see also Gerber et al. 2018). There are also studies indicating that there are gender inequalities, for example that a male deliberator’s arguments are taken more into account (Beauvais 2021; Curato, Vrydagh and Bächtiger 2020). This resonates with Sanders (1997) concerns that power relations within a deliberative mini-public tend to reproduce those in society. Deliberative democrats’ response has been to identify design aspects and internal dynamics that can help reduce these biases. Even if a CA mirrors the nation in all variables typically deemed important, the public needs to accept its outcomes because they trust the members in order to be legitimate (Gutmann and Thompson 2018). For this, it is highly important that the members of the CA engage with the larger public as well and do their best to achieve a two-way communication (e.g., the British Columbia CA and Australia’s Citizens’ Parliament met with groups outside the forum to get their perspective).



### 19.3.2 Experts and evidence

Another key design feature of CAs is that participants gather evidence and receive balanced information on the issue at hand. The main rationale behind such practices is that giving citizens an opportunity to acquire evidence and additional information, citizens can make informed and well-considered judgements on policy issues, deepening their understanding of the topic and its complexities (Fishkin 2018; Leino et al. 2021; Lightbody and Roberts 2019). It also gives participants the possibility to learn and gain knowledge, which is important for levelling differences in initial knowledge and deliberative capacities.

Evidence can be presented in different forms and by different actors. Usually various experts in the field present reports, facts, and research. Experts do not only refer to academic specialists but also to knowledge experts, stakeholders, and experts by lived experience that present their views and arguments. In some CAs, participants are given the chance to call in new experts and to ask for more evidence (Lightbody and Roberts 2019; Thompson et al. 2021). Expert views might have a strong impact on how individuals perceive the issue, what kinds of beliefs they have and, consequently, on their attitudes and views. Even if organizers usually invite experts with various expertise and point of views, citizens may use expert information highly selectively to confirm their pre-existing views. Experts need to be chosen wisely to ensure a plurality of expert views and to make sure all views are valued (Leino et al. 2021). The credibility of the expert, the format, and evidence quality might also have an impact on individuals' opinions (Lightbody and Roberts 2019: 226). According to Thompson et al. (2021) the major role of experts is to stimulate learning and reflection and to make the participants considering various arguments and values.

Leino et al. (2021) suggest that expert hearings should be preceded and followed by deliberation in small groups. This might foster critical reflection on expert information among participants and help avoid blind deference or selective use of expert information. Experts are questioned individually or as a panel and they can provide the participants with written information in advance (Lightbody and Roberts 2019: 232). Lightbody and Roberts (2019) raise concerns that Q&A sessions can undermine the quality of evidence and the argument while encouraging emotional expressions and a debate climate where the best arguer is right. It might be a good idea to also “learn” citizens to scrutinize information and to help them develop critical thinking and support them in weighing evidence (Lightbody and Roberts 2019: 235–236).

CAs usually feature expert hearings, the idea being that expert hearings help participants to reach more considered opinions. Therefore, it is perhaps surprising that there is relatively little research concerning the role of experts in citizen deliberation. As other individuals, experts will differ in terms of views, communication skills and style, charisma, experience, and the ability to get their message through which might also have an impact on the participants. Leino et al. (2021) are one of the few that has analysed how expert hearings in a deliberative mini-public affect participants' knowledge and attitudes (to pandemic policies). They conclude that a deliberative proc-



ess where people need to justify their views to a diverse group of people is arguably an efficient method of correcting individual biases and for processing expert information (see also Mercier and Landemore 2012).

Thompson et al. (2021) study three citizens' juries in Scotland and conclude that the information phase with brief presentations from experts followed by a session for scrutiny with small group discussions and interrogation of the experts in plenum, had the largest influence on the jurors' opinions (compared to the reflection and deliberation phases). As it seems, the prospect of having to deliberate the issues later, including justifying one's opinions, provides a strong incentive for jurors to listen, consider, and weigh the evidence and values presented to them (see also Goodin and Niemeyer 2003 for a similar discussion). Due to time constraint, experts could not address all questions in the plenary. As a result, the experts provided written answers to the unaddressed questions, and this compilation was circulated to the jurors a week before Day 2. The late change of two experts in one of the citizens' juries did not have any impact on the opinions and Thompson et al. (2021) suggest that it is the complexity of arguments and putting attention to the issue and learning about it that have the largest impact on opinions, not the expert *per se*.

There is a tendency that people (especially with strong opinions) tend to be uncritical of information and arguments that support their initial view while being hypercritical of information and arguments that contradict it (Karpowitz and Mendelberg 2018: 539; Lord, Lee and Lepper 1979; Mercier and Landemore 2012). Sometimes people are also misinformed and (even worse) highly confident about their false beliefs. Thus, it is important to design deliberative processes that make people evaluate arguments consciously, and that increase their knowledge and understanding of others' viewpoints (Karpowitz and Mendelberg 2018). In likeminded groups, there might be a risk of biased assimilation of information. People also tend to rely on the judgements and information of trusted others, making informational cascades a serious problem (Sunstein 2002). Hence, it is important to design the learning and information phase so that the information is balanced, learning takes place, and participants get a chance together to scrutinize the evidence presented to them.

### 19.3.3 Diversity and deliberative disagreement

Making sure that the deliberating group(s) has a diversity of epistemic resources as well as a diversity of perspectives, is crucial and closely linked to the issues of inclusion and representation. Gutmann and Thompson (2018: 909) enhances the need for deliberative disagreement and suggest that more research is needed on the role of disagreement. In their view, mutual respect is a form of agreeing to disagree, and here lies the importance of deliberative disagreement. Mutual respect might develop over time when citizens realize that there are merits in others' perspectives and viewpoints and that "winner takes it all" solutions are subordinate to solutions where compromises are included and where minority views are given weight as well. According to them:

“Citizens may differ on the right resolution but also about the reasons on the basis of which the conflict should be solved.”

Caluwaerts (2012) has analysed a deliberation across language divides in Belgium. He concludes that the discussion was more deliberative, i.e. more similar to Habermas’s ideal speech situation in the groups that included participants from both language groups. In these groups, participants listened more thoroughly to the arguments presented and made more effort in presenting their own arguments, than in the group with likeminded people where they assumed that everyone would think like them. When exposed to disagreements and new arguments the participants get a larger argument repertoire and an increased ability to list reasons for various opinions (Karpowitz and Mendelberg 2018: 541).

In heterogeneous groups, participants with lower status, for example lower education, minorities, might have difficulties making their voices heard and to get support for their arguments. There might be merits in creating “safe places” where participants can explore their views together with like-minded people. Indeed, studies indicate that among those with lower resources deliberation in likeminded groups generated a higher sense of equality than discussion in mixed opinion groups (Himmelroos, Rapeli and Grönlund 2016). Mansbridge (1994: 63–64) mentions two disadvantages with deliberating in likeminded enclaves. First, in a discussion with likeminded people, participants are not encouraged to listen to different opinions. Hence, they do not learn to formulate their opinions so that outsiders can take them into account. Second, discussions in enclaves are protected from constructive criticism, which might lead to polarization. She concludes that deliberation with likeminded people needs to be linked to a larger context where the benefits of both likeminded deliberation and deliberative disagreement can be exploited. There is empirical research, for example a study by Grönlund et al. (2015), suggesting that deliberative norms can alleviate the negative consequences (such as opinion polarization and amplification of cognitive errors) in likeminded enclaves. Change of opinion is also due to inconsistent arguments, misconceptions, and unreasonable demands being filtered out in the deliberative discussion. In a deliberation, self-interest does not receive support and in order to get support for their own opinions, they must be more focused on the needs of others and on the common good. Participants are given the opportunity to weigh different interests against each other and this creates a better understanding of different arguments, which means that even if the participants disagree, they have better understanding of what they disagree about (Fishkin 2018; Gutmann and Thompson 2018).

Deliberative democrats strongly agree that a demand for consensus might be counterproductive. An expectation of reaching consensus can create an obstacle to a critical dialogue and individual perspectives may dominate the agenda and define consensus. It might also prevent minority inclusion and force minority opinions to form after the group. Showing disagreement can be preferable in many situations. Thus, finding common ground where everyone benefits might be more feasible than reaching consensus (Gutmann and Thompson 2018; Harris 2019). The cost of consensus might also be a loss of precision and a tendency to make vague formulations that can be interpreted in a

number of different ways. It can also result in a tendency to avoid debating more contentious issues and work against deeper deliberation (Olafsson 2016: 255–256). On the other hand, the requirement of consensus might also imply that more information is shared, knowledge increases to a greater degree and the deliberation is more thorough (Grönlund, Setälä and Herne 2010).

### 19.3.4 Reflection and perspective-taking

Dryzek (2000) suggests that deliberation needs both internal reflection and interaction with others. Without interaction with others, arguments are not tested in real political interaction. Deliberation requires citizens, not just hypothetically, to exchange views and rationally argue for their views (Goodin and Niemeyer 2003, Mercier and Landemore 2012). Goodin and Niemeyer (2003) emphasize the internal reflective process they call “deliberation within” as an important part of the deliberative process. The internal process of deliberation always precedes participation in a discussion. After all, this is how we decide what our views and preferences in the coming discussion are. Hermans (2020) introduces the term “inner democracy” to describe the process of dialogical play between thought and counter-thought in developing our inner positions. He also highlights the need for interactions with ourselves and with others. The deliberative ideals say that we should have an open mind and be willing to change our opinions, but if no one is prepared to take a stand for or against something, deliberation would have nowhere to begin. Self-reflection is thus included when we react to the arguments that others present. The initial process of focusing on a topic, presenting information about it, and inviting citizens to think deeply about it probably provides strong stimulus for self-reflective deliberation (Goodin and Niemeyer 2003). Recent research implies that reflection decreases partisan-motivated reasoning and affective polarisation (Muradova 2021).

Muradova (2021) has examined the Irish CA and suggests that the process of perspective-taking, defined as actively imagining others’ experiences, perspectives, and feelings, can enhance more reflective judgements. She finds evidence that the diversity of viewpoints and the interplay between rational argumentation and personal stories induce the process of perspective-taking in deliberation. To fully understand and try to see things from others’ perspectives we need information on the others’ worldviews, perspectives, lives, and values. The process of perspective-taking also needs to be activated and storytelling is one way of doing that by displaying values that are typically not talked about (Muradova 2021). Perspective-taking might be challenging for people, and it is likely that taking the perspective of someone similar to oneself is easier than with someone very different. Even though Muradova finds no evidence for biased perspective-taking, she suggests that this is something worth paying attention to.

Deliberation is an argument-driven endeavour and some individuals are better than others at articulating their arguments in rational, reasonable terms (Young 2000). Even if researchers have opened up for alternative forms of communication,

e.g., storytelling and greetings, rational argument is still in the heart of deliberative democracy (Dryzek 2000: 67–71). Besides justifying their arguments, deliberative theory also requires that deliberators consider the arguments of others with respect. Disrespect involves degrading others and their arguments as well as hints of irony and sarcasm (Bächtiger et al. 2010: 41–42).

Talk-centric deliberative democratic theory has largely tended to focus on voice and argumentation while overlooking the importance of listening. The quality of listening is expected to have a direct impact on the quality of deliberation. Feeling heard and being heard are different things and deliberative theorists have increasingly acknowledged the centrality of listening (Scudder 2020). There are good reasons to assume that listening is a presumption for considering others' arguments and perspectives, and for understanding others' viewpoints. Hence, listening also affects participants' opinions.

In an experimental study, Baccaro et al. (2016) identified a gap between opinion change and good procedural deliberative quality. Asking participants to declare their position at the outset and to justify it, discouraged opinion change but simultaneously also reduced the impact of the pre-deliberative opinions of the other group members and encouraged better epistemic deliberative quality. Conversely, asking participants not to take a stance facilitated opinion change but reduced knowledge gains, lowered epistemic deliberative quality, and led to strong social influences on individual opinions. This suggests that there may be a trade-off between opinion change and high-quality deliberation. It also raises the question whether opinion change always is a desirable outcome.

The most comprehensive and most known empirical instrument to analyse the quality of deliberative discourse is the Discourse Quality Index (DQI) developed by Steiner et al. (2004). Although this chapter will not discuss the measurement of deliberative quality, the DQI deserves to be mentioned since it has transformed the empirical research by putting focus on normative ideals such as participation (inclusion), justification, respect, and reciprocity. Respect implies valuing others and having a positive attitude towards their arguments and claims. Respect is more than being polite. It is about being able to engage even with individuals that one disagrees with. It does not necessarily imply changing opinion but a willingness to agree also with people who do not share one's opinions (Bächtiger and Parkinson 2019).

## 19.4 Conclusion

Although CAs vary in design – for example they have different purpose, composition length, and impact – they are similar in their endeavour to reach high quality deliberation. A plethora of research suggests that the internal quality of the CA (or any citizen deliberation) is crucial for the legitimacy of decision-making but also for how participants are included and affected. Inclusion relates to both equality and redistribution of power: Who is being selected and whether everyone has an equal chance to influence

the discussion have a large impact on the outcome. Learning, seen as an active act, is essential for deliberative processes and is often the driving force behind opinion change. Disagreement is needed to fully understand others' viewpoints, but it might also help oneself to better understand one's own opinions and values. Reflection and perspective-taking as well as reason-giving and listening are core principles of the deliberative discussion and closely linked to deliberative normative ideals.

As more CAs are implemented at a fast pace, we will learn to understand the impact of internal dynamics even better. A large part of the research so far relies on experimental studies and therefore examining real world civic forums will be an important addition to the research on citizen deliberation. How will deliberation and internal dynamics function in the real world of politics? Also, more research is needed on how to re-distribute power and how to address inequalities in both participation and influence. Research by Alice Siu (2017) and Edana Beauvais (2021) has showed that power relations and inequalities are problems that need to be taken more seriously. There are also many assumptions about the potentially low quality of deliberation in likeminded groups. Many of these theoretical assumptions would need further elaboration, i.e. how different viewpoints are taken into account in likeminded small-group deliberations. If CAs are to be widely used as democratic remedies for reducing the gap between decision-makers and citizens, it is crucial that they are inclusive, offer a diversity of epistemic resources, acknowledge diversity and disagreements, and rely on high quality deliberation.

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