THE COMPLEMENTARITY OF URBAN LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Henry Bäck
The complementarity of urban leadership and community involvement

The project Participation, Leadership and Urban Sustainability (PLUS)\(^1\) is a comparative study of sixteen cities in eight European countries. Two cities are selected in each country. In each city major initiatives within two policy areas are chosen for scrutiny. These policy areas have been defined as “social inclusion” and “economic competitiveness”. Two central components of sustainable development are thus covered. The objective of the project is to explore into the effects on performance within these policy areas of combinations of urban leadership and community involvement. This alleged causal relation is at the core of the research endeavour. The same argument as with regard to effectiveness in terms of policy also is applied to democratic performance. The criterion here will be democratic legitimacy. One very important part of the theoretical framework of the project is the idea that there is a positive interaction of urban leadership and community involvement on both policy performance and democratic performance. This interaction effect in the project has been termed CULCI, which stands for “complementarity of leadership and community involvement”. The objective of this short research note is to investigate into the question, whether such an interaction effect actually appears in a comparative analysis of the findings from the sixteen case study cities. In short the research question for this paper thus is: Does CULCI exist?

The interplay between urban leadership and the involvement of communities and community actors in policy processes is at the heart of the PLUS project. This interplay is assumed to have effects for policy processes, teleological as well as deontological. The substantial objectives of the policy processes under study is urban sustainability, that is economic growth coupled with protection of the environment and limited natural resources as well as social justice and inclusion. The effectiveness of policy initiatives in achieving these objectives is assumed to be enhanced by the interplay between leadership and involvement. The deontological aspects concern democratic legitimacy. Also legitimacy is assumed to be enhanced by this interplay of leadership and involvement.

\(^1\) See also Haus & al 2004 and the web-page http://www.plus-eura.org
This idea could be formally summarised:

\[
\text{Legitimacy} = f(\text{Leadership, Involvement})
\]

It is evident from what Haus and Heinelt (2003) write in their description of the theoretical framework of the project, that the two independent variables may have additive as well as multiplicative effects, and that it is the multiplicative effects that are the most interesting. For these, at least if they are positive, the term “Complementarity of urban leadership and community involvement” (Culci) is coined.

Considering the disadvantages that are connected with uncontrolled leadership power on the one hand and euphoric, but euphemistic community involvement on the other, it seems, however, worthwhile to ask, thirdly, if a particular co-effect, or even interplay between both can lead to mutual remedy of at least some of the shortcomings. (Haus & Heinelt 2003)

Formally, we could represent the idea of the two kinds of effects:

\[
\text{Legitimacy} = \alpha + \beta \ast \text{Leadership} + \gamma \ast \text{Involvement} + \delta \ast \text{Leadership} \ast \text{Involvement}
\]
If $\delta=0$ there will only be additive effects. This means that insufficient involvement may be compensated with increased leadership. The question whether this is the case is not unfamiliar in democratic theory. Even etymologically democracy implies a combination of popular involvement (demos) and rule (kratia). Could less of popular involvement be compensated for by more efficient rule? Was fascist Italy as democratic as today’s Britain because authoritarian rule achieved that trains left on time?

The challenge that the PLUS project is trying to meet is to identify in practical urban policy making the (positive) $\delta$s, that is, Culci. The three effects $\beta$, $\gamma$ and $\delta$ theoretically could be negative, zero or positive. This means that they could be combined in 27 different ways. If we for the sake of simplicity assume that the dependent variable is a quantitative measurement of the degree of legitimacy and that the two independent variables represent occurrence or non-occurrence of leadership and involvement respectively, the above-discussed case with only additive effects ($\beta>0$, $\gamma>0$, $\delta=0$) can be illustrated:

**Figure 2 Model with only positive additive effects**

$\beta$, the effect of leadership is the distance between the two lines in the graph, while $\gamma$, the effect of involvement is the slope of the lines. As the lines are parallel, both will have the same slope and the distance between them always will be the same. Now, let us consider an example of a positive multiplicative effect, that is, of Culci:
Here the two lines are no longer parallel. If there is no leadership, increased involvement will have quite limited consequences for the dependent variable (legitimacy), while the combination of leadership and involvement (the upper right-hand point) produces particularly high levels of legitimacy. Of the total of 27 different combinations of effects this is the $\beta > 0$, $\gamma > 0$, $\delta > 0$ case.

I will not go further into the remaining 25 combinations. I will only point at the possibility of a negative interaction effect. Here is as an example $\beta > 0$, $\gamma > 0$, $\delta < 0$:
The legitimacy produced by leadership without involvement is reduced when involvement occurs. A conceivable situation could be when increased activity among community actors arouses discontent with the incumbent regime. As Culci is defined in positive terms, that is, Culci is a positive interaction effect this kind of interaction is not Culci.

**Cases and variables**

I will now turn to the empirical testing. What combinations of $\beta$, $\gamma$ and $\delta$ are present in the case material collected within the project? A number of choices have to be made before we can start. The first is the matter of the unit of analysis. As I conceive it the units of analysis of the project basically are 32 policy initiatives. These have been analysed as sequences of policy development, policy decision making and policy implementation. Thus described the cases are 32 different *episodes*. Each of these 32 episodes can be characterised in terms of urban leadership, community involvement and legitimacy. A drawback of this conception is that the population will be quite small, which makes statistical testing difficult. Another drawback is that the different phases that make up the episodes could be characterised differently. With regard to leadership, involvement and legitimacy such differentiated descriptions do exist in a pooled database within the project. Regarding each policy phase as a unit of analysis will produce a population of 96 policy episodes to analyse. This increases the applicability of statistical analysis. I have in my contribution to the second book of the project (Bäck 2004) used this approach for investigating into the institutional and structural explanations of the occurrence of *combinations* of leadership and involvement, and I think that this approach has been fruitful.

Smaller episodes resulting from the subdivision of policy phases or stages of course also are conceivable. If data were available for such sub-episodes statistical analyses of course would be even more accurate. A general drawback, whichever unit of analysis is chosen, however, is that it does not consider interconnections between episodes. This follows from an implicit analytical assumption, that it is meaningful to consider the separate episodes in isolation, rather than applying more holistic approaches, regarding policies or even cities as unique cases. Modelling interconnections formally might be theoretically possible, but it would vastly complicate the exercise, perhaps to the limit where we would conclude that the task is impossible. I will in the analyses to follow only take the interconnectedness into account by controlling for policy phase and character of the initiative.\(^2\)

\(^2\) Policy initiatives within two policy sectors, social inclusion and economic competitiveness, are studied in the
Other methodological choices concern what values of the three variables (legitimacy, leadership and involvement) are to be considered. Let us begin with the dependent variable, i.e. legitimacy. Legitimacy is defined by Haus & Heinelt (2003) as “acceptance, trust and support as well as political justifiability and enforceability, both with respect to the decision and implementation processes and to the policy objectives as such.” Legitimacy is achieved through processes of legitimation. Three principles of legitimation are identified:

- Input legitimation is achieved through participation, and the criterion for legitimacy is consent.
- Throughput legitimation depends on transparency and the criterion is accountability
- Output legitimation depends on effectiveness and the criterion is problem-solving

Project partners have delivered assessments for all the cases (the 96 episodes) whether there was a contribution to input, throughput and output legitimacy. These will be used as dependent variables in the analyses to follow.

Involvement has been evaluated after three different dimensions. First an assessment of the composition of involvement has been used i.a. in my own contribution to the second project book. Here a distinction is made between three main categories of actors:

- Associations
- Businesses
- Individual citizens

In the contribution by Howard & al (2004) to the same book two dimensions of involvement are suggested:

- Full or selective involvement
- Aggregative or deliberative involvement

PLUS project. The possibility that there might be common features for all cases of inclusion and competitiveness policies respectively is considered by introducing a dummy variable.
Referring to John & Cole (1999) four different styles of leadership are identified in contributions to the reporting from the project (especially Getimis & Grigoriadou 2004):

- Visionary leadership is authoritarian and outward-oriented, that is trying to mobilise actors outside of the municipal organisation.
- City boss leadership is authoritarian and inward-oriented
- Consensual facilitating leadership is non-authoritarian and outward-oriented
- Caretaker leadership is non-authoritarian and inward-oriented

Adding “any leadership” and “any involvement” to these lists leaves us with eight categories of involvement (any, associations, businesses, individuals, full, selective, aggregative, deliberative) and five categories of leadership (any, visionary, boss, consensual, caretaker). Thus there will be 8*5=40 combinations of involvement and leadership to investigate. As there also are three different dependent variables, a total of 120 models will be estimated. The general format of these is:

\[
\text{Legitimacy} = \alpha + \beta \cdot \text{Leadership} + \gamma \cdot \text{Involvement} + \delta \cdot \text{Leadership} \times \text{Involvement}
\]

Some examples could be:

- Input legitimacy = \(\alpha + \beta \cdot \text{Visionary} + \gamma \cdot \text{Associations} + \delta \cdot \text{Visionary} \times \text{Associations} \)
- Input legitimacy = \(\alpha + \beta \cdot \text{Visionary} + \gamma \cdot \text{Businesses} + \delta \cdot \text{Visionary} \times \text{Businesses} \)
  
- Throughput legitimacy = \(\alpha + \beta \cdot \text{Boss} + \gamma \cdot \text{Full} + \delta \cdot \text{Boss} \times \text{Full} \)
- Output legitimacy = \(\alpha + \beta \cdot \text{Caretaker} + \gamma \cdot \text{Deliberative} + \delta \cdot \text{Caretaker} \times \text{Deliberative} \)

In order to take into account the effects of different phases of the policy process, as well as the two different policy areas, three dummy variables (policy development, policy implementation and economic competitiveness initiative) are added to all the models. These will, however, not be reported. That there are such effects can be seen from Figures 5 and 6.

There are higher levels of throughput and output legitimacy in the economic initiatives. Especially noteworthy is the high level of output legitimacy in the economic initiative. Considering the relatively equal level of input legitimation it seems warranted to conclude...
that the economic initiatives generally achieve higher levels of legitimacy than the social inclusion initiatives, and that this primarily is achieved through effective problem-solving but also to some degree more transparent processes than is the case in the social inclusion initiatives.

Figure 5 High legitimacy per policy initiative (percent)

Legitimacy generally seems to have been assessed lower in the policy development and implementation phases. This is especially the case with regard to throughput legitimation.

**Results**

The 120 different models were estimated with the use of binary logistic regression. In 82 of these analyses no significant effects at all were reported, that is all the regression coefficients, the additive effects (β and γ) and the interaction effect (δ) could be zero. In these cases there is of course no Culci, as Culci is a positive interaction effect.

In Table 1 the 38 models where significant effects appeared are summarised. Additive involvement effects (γ) appear in 14 analyses. The majority of these are positive, but in three cases involvement has a negative effect on legitimacy. One of these negative effects relates to the only significant effect recorded of aggregative participation. It is far more common that leadership effects achieve significance. This occurs in 27 of the 38 models. Two thirds of these significant effects are positive, that is, leadership enhances legitimacy. The negative effects accrue to the city boss leadership style that thus appears detrimental to legitimacy.
Significant interactions occur very sparsely in the table. Only two instances have been recorded, and in these two cases the effects are negative. As Culci has been defined as a positive interaction effect, the conclusion must be that it has not been possible to identify one single occurrence of Culci in our comparative material.
Table 1 Summary of logistic regression analyses. Occurrence of significant estimates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Additive involvement effect</th>
<th>Additive leadership effect</th>
<th>Interaction effect</th>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Any</td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Input</td>
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<td>Consensual</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Associations</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Throughput</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Output</td>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Individual</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>Throughput</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Input</td>
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<td>City boss</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Deliberative</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Deliberative</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Input</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Output</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>74</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Aggregative</td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>81</td>
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<td>Visionary</td>
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<td>82</td>
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<td>Consensual</td>
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<td>Aggregative</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>Output</td>
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<td>Consensual</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Aggregative</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Throughput</td>
<td>Aggregative</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Aggregative</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>++</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>++</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Throughput</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>City boss</td>
<td>++</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance levels: +++ and --- p<.01; ++ and -- p<.05; + and - p<.1

Finally a few typical models will be given as illustrative examples. These illustrations are based on subgroup means, and there is thus not, as in the regression analyses any controls for policy area or process stage performed.
Figure 7 Model 54 Output legitimacy dependent on consensual leadership and individual involvement (means)

In this example we can see the positive effect of introducing leadership (from 50.0 to 83.3) as well as of introducing involvement (from 50.0 to 84.6). The interaction between the two independent variables, however, is negative. The difference due to leadership is much smaller (and actually reversed in direction) when individual citizens are involved as compared to when citizens are not involved. If there had been Culci the two lines would have diverged from each other, rather than converge, when we move from left to right.

Figure 8 Model 97 Input legitimacy dependent on consensual leadership and full involvement (means)
In this second illustrative example we explore the relationship between input legitimacy on the one hand and consensual facilitating leadership and full involvement on the other hand. Both independent variables have significant effects on legitimacy. There is an interaction effect (as the two lines are not parallel), but this interaction effect failed to be significant in the regression analysis. It should be noted that this interaction is not Culci, because it is negative, just as in model 54. Consensual facilitating leadership increases the occurrence of high input legitimacy with some 30-40 per cent, just as full involvement increases input legitimacy with around 6-27 per cent. If there is an interaction between the two, it is negative.

Finally in Model 55 an example involving city boss leadership that we noted quite often had negative consequences. The 00-point, that is there is neither city boss leadership nor individual involvement displays high input legitimacy in 69.7 per cent of the cases. This is the $\alpha$ of the formal model used in this paper. The introduction of city boss leadership (\(\beta\)) decreases the occurrence of high input legitimacy with 25.2 percentage points to 42.3. Also individual involvement is negative to legitimacy, but it reduces the occurrence of high legitimacy less. The reduction (\(\gamma\)) is 11.4 percentage points to 58.3. If we deduct both $\beta$ and $\gamma$ from $\alpha$ we will receive 33.1. If the two negative effects were perfectly additive, this would be the actual occurrence of input legitimacy in the lower right hand point in the diagram. The actual value of this point, however, is 40, which implies an interaction effect (\(\delta\)) of 6.9. This interaction, however, was not significant in the regression analysis. But, had it been significant, this would have been a case of Culci, as it is a positive interaction effect.

**Figure 9 Model 55 Input legitimacy dependent on city boss leadership and individual involvement (means)**
If looked upon in this less rigorous way, there thus appear interaction effects, both positive and negative, but if we use the criterion of statistical significance, interaction effects are almost completely absent from the analysis. A number of additive effects of leadership and involvement do appear. These are more often than not positive, that is both leadership and community involvement have positive effects on legitimacy. The exception might be the city boss style of urban leadership that in quite many analyses has been demonstrated to be detrimental to legitimacy. Regarding Culci, the positive interaction effects between leadership and involvement, the conclusion, however, must be that it has not been possible to identify any occurrences. The reservation of course to be made, is that it has not been possible using these data and these methods. Other definitions of the unit of analysis or other categorisations of leadership and involvement perhaps could give more encouraging results. After conducting this exercise, however, the conclusion seems to be rather given: There probably is no such thing as Culci present in the PLUS project material.

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