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Chapter 3. Comparative Study of Factors Influencing Perceived Legitimacy across Different Political Regimes

Any political authority wants to be legitimate. Even the cruellest dictator needs at least a section of population to recognize their power, believe in his right to rule and the appropriateness of his decisions. Coercion—including the use of force—and distribution of rewards is believed to be a costly manner of making people comply with laws and support a regime. Relying on legitimacy—understood as a quality that secures voluntary transfer of power to authorities based on normative grounds—at least in principle, makes ruling easier and cheaper. Studies of perceived legitimacy of police and courts showed compelling evidence that a set of factors linked to fairness enhances favourable perceptions of political authorities. These studies, however, were conducted prevailingly in the context of the USA and Western Europe. This chapter explores what makes people deem governments legitimate and what role justice plays against other motives in the evaluations of authorities. As mentioned in the theoretical and methodological chapter, the study presented here is a comparative one and it aims to test the influence of the same factors believed to influence the perception of legitimacy in different political regimes, i.e. two old European democracies (Netherlands and France), a post-communist democracy (Poland), a post-communist hybrid regime in crisis (Ukraine), and a hybrid post-communist regime with increasing authoritarian tendencies (Russia).

Citizens' willingness to transfer power to political authorities is often explained through alternative, though not mutually exclusive, models of authority-citizen relations. On the one hand there is a self-interested, oriented towards personal gain, and following the logic of the rational choice theory citizen interested mainly in the outputs provided by authorities. On the other hand, a community-interested, justice-oriented, and following the logic of a fairness-based psychological model citizen whose main concern are the fair distribution and procedures (Tyler *et al.* 1986). In this chapter, I will first test these two theories and explore the relationship between the two models of a citizen using a vignette experiment. As discussed in Chapter 2, this method

allows for a joint test of multiple factors outlined in the theoretical framework and for detecting causal relations between identified factors and perceived legitimacy. The second goal of this chapter is to assess whether the theory travels well across regime types. And finally, the third goal is to compare the effects of hypothesized factors and their interactions on perceived legitimacy evaluations by individuals socialized in different political contexts.

3.1. Theory, definitions and hypotheses

Legitimacy is a quality of authorities and regimes attributed to them by citizens. As explained in more detail in Chapter 1, to assess the factors influencing evaluations of authorities by citizens, I use the conception of legitimacy which focuses on the individual level processes, i.e. perceived legitimacy. Perceived legitimacy is defined here *as an attribute ascribed to a political authority (or its representative) by individuals on the basis of evaluation of their normative qualities and resulting in a willingness to voluntarily transfer power to these authorities.* Hence, perceived legitimacy can be understood as the recognition of the authorities' right to rule based on the evaluation of certain moral standards that individual citizens are committed to.

As discussed in Chapter 1, authorities can use different sources of power to make citizens acquiesce with them, comply with their decisions, and support their actions. Perceived legitimacy is treated as one of these resources; in particular, it is the resource of power based on the evaluations of normative qualities of political authorities. Other resources of power were discussed in Chapter 1[17]. The main normative factors that lead to the increase of perceived legitimacy of authorities were identified by social psychologist. These factors are distributive fairness and procedural fairness (Van der Toorn *et al.* 2011). Following from this, two hypotheses were formulated[18]:

[17] Motives that lead to involuntary compliance (such as fear of coercion) are not tested here as they would be very difficult to manipulate independently in the vignette design. Moreover, the fear of coercion is related closer to the police, courts, and military (at least in democracies) than to the government that is the object of evaluation here.

[18] Hypotheses numbers were assigned in Chapter 1 and the same numbers are used consequently throughout the dissertation.

H2: Procedural justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities.

H4: Distributive justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities.

In this study, the evaluations of justice of political authorities are tested against instrumental reasons—the improvement of personal material situation. In line with rational-choice theory, positive personal outcome should be the main driver behind the evaluation of political authorities and its absence should lead to lesser appreciation of factors such as procedural and distributive justice. Hence the third hypothesis is:

H1: Positive personal outcome increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities.

Moreover, the rational choice theory implies that personal outcome matters more for the evaluation of political authorities than normative considerations. Therefore, two following hypotheses can be formulated about the interactions between personal outcome and normative factors:

H3: The effect of procedural justice on legitimacy is stronger when individuals experience positive personal outcomes.

H5: The effect of distributive justice on legitimacy is stronger when individuals experience positive personal outcomes.

Dependence of the individual on the political authorities is another factor that is expected to influence perceived legitimacy and according to system-justification theory it should increase perceived legitimacy. However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, there is evidence that comparatively worse social situation might actually decrease legitimacy. The hypothesis about dependence is based on the system-justification theory's prediction:

H6: Dependence on political authorities increases perceived legitimacy of the authorities.

Moreover, political socialization is believed to influence what rules and behaviours are considered most important by citizens, therefore differences in evaluations of political authorities between citizens socialized in different political regimes are expected. Because political socialization cannot be manipulated, the same experiment was conducted in five different countries with similar group of citizens (students) to compare the effects of different factors on their perceived legitimacy. The set of hypotheses linked to the regimes type is as follows:

H7: The most important motives citizens have to grant legitimacy to/support authorities in non-democracies are of instrumental nature.

H8: Procedural justice is a more important factor for perceptions of legitimacy among democratic citizens than among citizens socialized in new democracies and hybrid regimes

H10: Distributive justice has a more important role in perceptions of legitimacy among citizens socialized in post-communist regimes than among citizens socialized in democracies

Each of the hypothesized factors has been discussed in more detail in Chapter 1 and Figure 3.1 shows the overview of factors tested in this study.

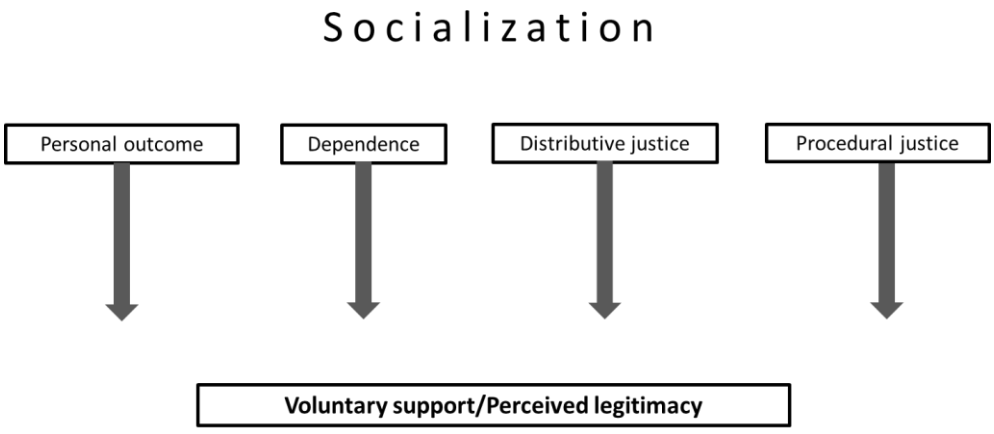

Figure 3.1. Factors influencing perceived legitimacy tested in this study: personal outcome, dependence, distributive justice, procedural justice, and socialization (in different countries).

3.2. Experimental vignette method

As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the method used to investigate the impact of the five factors on perceived legitimacy was a vignette experiment. Four factors were manipulated in the story describing a hypothetical situation in which a government made a decision about helping the victims of a flood that had occurred in their country. Each of the manipulated factors had two levels: being strong/present (level 1) or being weak/absent (level 2). This 2 (procedural justice) × 2 (distributive justice) × 2 (dependence) × 2 (personal outcome) design yielded 16 versions of the story. The

factors were operationalized in a hypothetical story about government's reaction to a flooding (see Chapter 2 for more details about operationalization). The same set of vignettes was presented to students in five countries in their native language (see Appendix F). The survey was administered as a paper-and-pen task to students in the Netherlands, Poland, France, and Russia and online to students in Ukraine and Russia.

As mentioned above, in each country we collected samples of students, because they are a comparable group in the cross-cultural context: they come from similar backgrounds, more often than other groups use the internet as a source of information, and—most importantly—because of their similar age, they were equally recently socialized into their respective political communities. In this way we kept many variables constant and were able to look for the differences in the evaluation process linked to different political context in which the respondents grew up. For more detailed discussion of the manipulations, operationalization and sample see Chapter 2. After reading the vignette, participants completed a questionnaire measuring their perceptions of legitimacy of the government in the story and whether the manipulations have been received as intended.

Prior to the analysis of the effects of the vignette on perceived legitimacy, I tested whether the manipulations used in the vignette text were effective and if the questions asked to evaluate perceived legitimacy made for a reliable scale. In all five countries answers to the manipulation check questions showed that all four manipulations worked in the intended direction and that the differences between the perceptions of the two levels of each manipulation were significant. The results of the t-tests are reported in Appendix H. The t-tests show that in different conditions participants perceived the stories presented to them differently and as intended.

I measured the dependent variable—perceived legitimacy—with seven questions: 1) I would trust this government; 2) If this situation is representative; 3) I would like it, if in the future, this government made decisions on this type of issues that influence my life; 4) Decisions of this government should be respected; 5) I would be willing to protest against this decision of the government; 6) On the whole this government is legitimate; 7) The government has the right to take this kind of decisions. All seven items were highly correlated with each other in all five countries

(see Appendix I). Principal axis factoring analysis showed that the items loaded highly on a single factor. Principal component analysis showed very similar results. The internal consistency of these seven items was good, Cronbach's α between .83 and .86, indicating that the scale is reliable. I computed the dependent variable, perceived legitimacy, as the average score for these seven items.

3.3. Results of the experiments

This section presents the results of the experiment in each country. It discusses all significant effects and interactions that were found and not only the hypothesised ones. This is to see whether the hypothesised effects are not confounded by other effects.

Netherlands

The data collection took place at the University of Leiden in September and October 2014. In total, 399 vignette responses were collected from students. The number of participants included in the analysis was 380 (responses from participants who were over the age of 25, or non-Dutch were excluded from analysis). Of the 380 participants, 149 were female and 214 were male (17 did not specify their gender). The average age of participants was 19.17 (min = 16, max = 25).

Figure 3.2 shows mean perceived legitimacy in all 16 conditions of the experiment. To assess effects of the manipulations, perceived legitimacy scores were analysed with a factorial ANOVA including all interaction effects. The ANOVA showed seven significant effects, including four main effects and three interaction effects, see Table 3.1. On average procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy from 3.53 to 4.14, distributive justice from 3.41 to 4.26, and positive outcome from 3.67 to 4.00. These main effects were in the predicted direction. Dependence decreased perceived legitimacy from 3.97 to 3.70 and the direction of the effect was opposite to the hypothesised one. There were significant two-way interactions of distributive justice × procedural justice and distributive justice × positive outcome. There was also a significant three-way interaction of procedural justice × dependence × positive outcome.

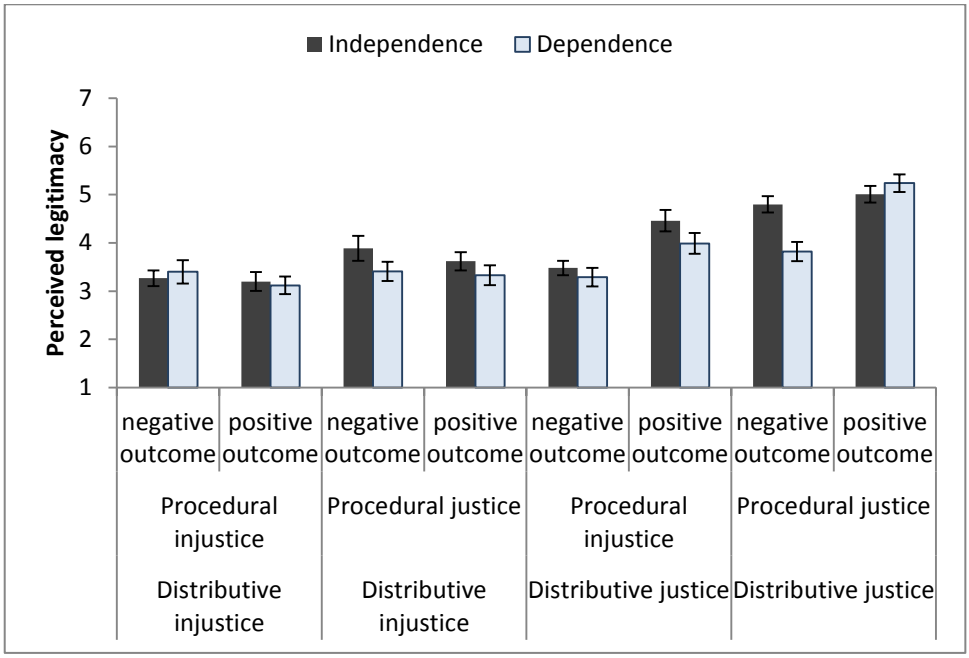

Figure 3.2. The Netherlands: Mean perceived legitimacy for all 16 conditions. Error bars show standard errors of the mean.

Table 3.1. Results of factorial ANOVA for perceived legitimacy (N = 379, adjusted R^2 = .300). Effects with p > .05 are not shown.

Factor/Interaction	*F* (1, 363)	*p*	Partial η^2
Procedural justice	37.92	< .001	0.10
Distributive justice	73.15	< .001	0.17
Positive outcome	10.57	.001	0.03
Dependence	7.15	.008	0.02
Procedural justice × Distributive justice	8.96	.003	0.02
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	25.57	< .001	0.07
Procedural justice × Dependence × Positive outcome	5.58	.019	0.02

Figure 3.3 shows that distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions with positive outcome. Distributive justice had a small effect on perceived legitimacy of the government when outcome was negative. This means that fair distribution of help to the victims increased positive evaluations of the government especially when participants also received help from the government that improved their material situation. Figure 3.4 shows the interaction effect of procedural justice

and distributive justice. Procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions with distributive justice. In other words, the ability to enter into discussion with the governmental commission increased perceived legitimacy when the help was distributed fairly to the victims of the flooding.

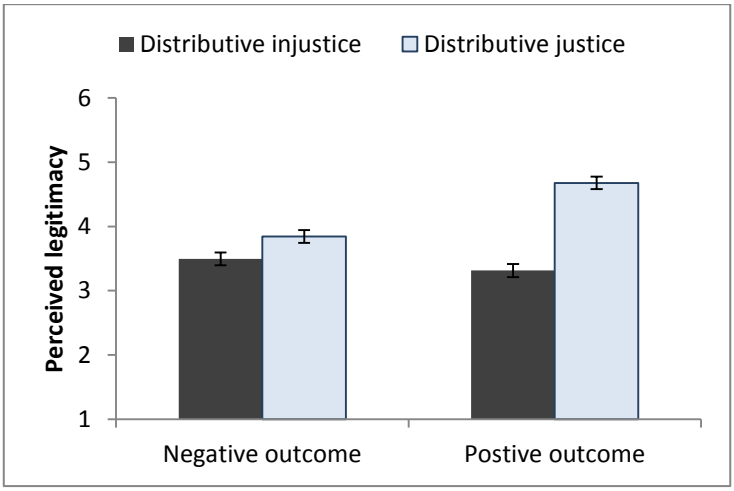

Figure 3.3. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the distributive justice × positive outcome interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

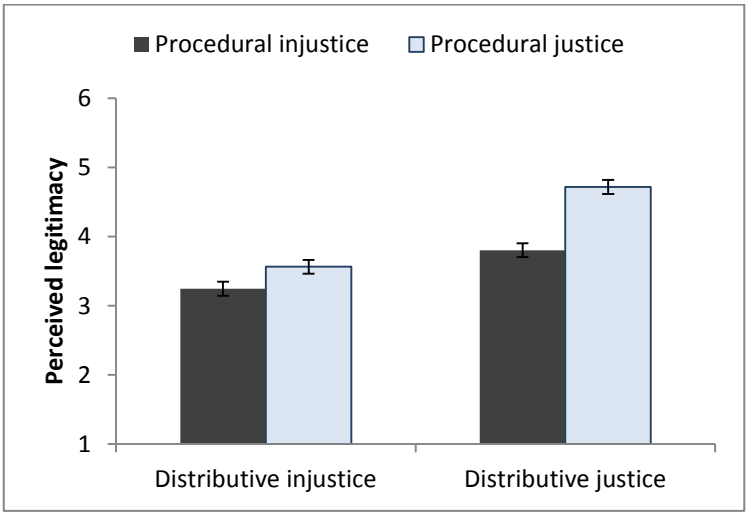

Figure 3.4. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the distributive justice × procedural justice interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

To interpret the three-way interaction of procedural justice × positive outcome × dependence, I examined pairwise comparisons for procedural justice across conditions of outcome and dependence. The two graphs on the left side of Figure 3.5 show that when participants were independent, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy both in conditions of positive outcome (difference M = 0.49, p = .013) and negative outcome (difference M = 0.97, p < .001). The two graphs on the right side of Figure 3.5 show that when participants were dependent, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions of positive outcome (difference M = 0.73, p < .001), but not in conditions of negative outcome (difference M = 0.27, p = .178). In other words, when participants were presented with a story in which their property was damaged and they did not have access to essential goods, being able to meet with the governmental commission and voice their needs increased positive evaluation of the government only if they received help from the government. If they did not receive help, the opportunity to voice opinions did not change perceived legitimacy of the government.

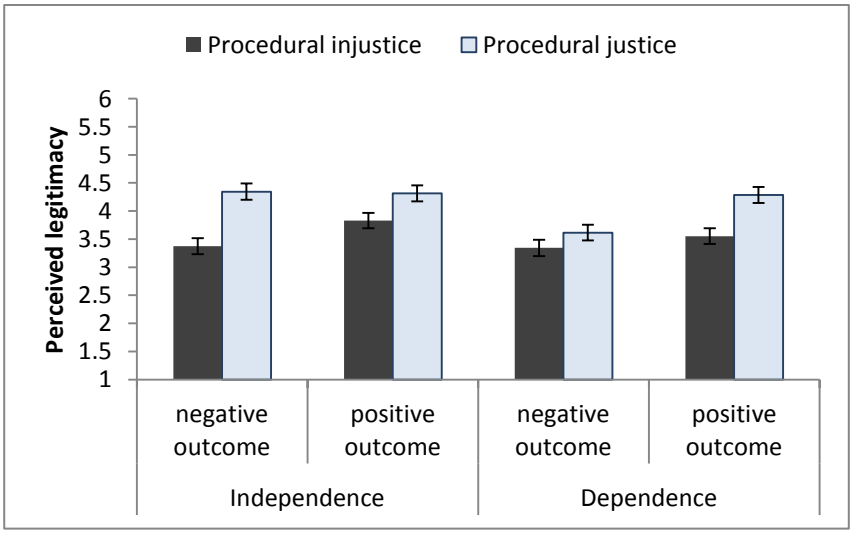

Figure 3.5. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the procedural justice × dependence × positive outcome interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

France

The data collection took place at the University of Lyon in November and December 2014. In total, 430 vignette responses were collected from students. The number of participants included in the analysis was 327 (responses from participants who completed the questionnaire inattentively, were over the age of 25, or non-French were excluded from analysis; the French sample consisted of 47 respondents that stated a different nationality than French). Of the 327 participants 203 were female and 116 were male (8 did not specify their gender). The average age of participants was 18.6 (min = 16, max = 25).

Figure 3.6 shows the mean perceived legitimacy score in all 16 conditions. To assess effects of the manipulations, perceived legitimacy scores were analysed with a factorial ANOVA including all interaction effects. The ANOVA showed two significant interaction effects and three significant main effects (Table 3.2). On average procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy from 3.93 to 4.32, distributive justice from 3.76 to 4.5, and positive outcome from 4.00 to 4.30.

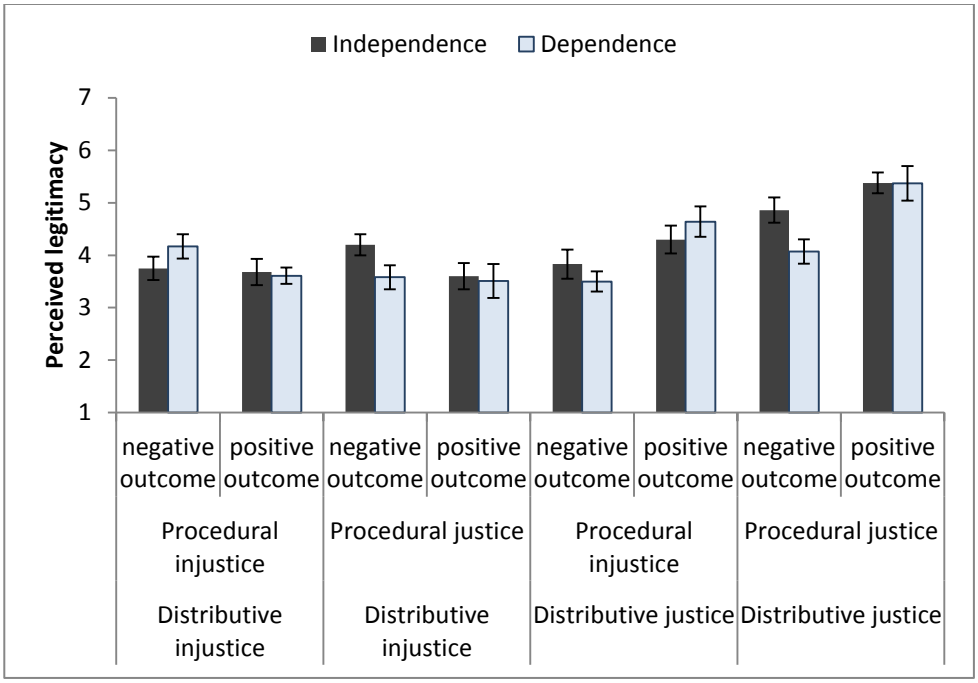

Figure 3.6. France: Mean perceived legitimacy for all 16 conditions. Error bars show standard errors of the mean.

Table 3.2. Factorial ANOVA for perceived legitimacy (N = 323, adjusted R^2 = .217). Effects with p > .05 are not shown.

Factor/Interaction	*F* (1, 307)	*p*	Partial η^2
Procedural justice	10.02	.002	0.03
Distributive justice	35.67	< .001	0.10
Positive outcome	4.69	.031	0.02
Procedural justice × Distributive justice	14.64	< .001	0.05
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	23.54	< .001	0.07

Figure 3.7 illustrates the interaction of distributive justice and procedural justice. The graphs show that procedural justice did not have an effect on perceived legitimacy in conditions with distributive injustice. There was no large difference in the evaluation of the government between participants who read a story in which the victims could voice their opinion and participants who read the story where they could not voice their opinion, if the distribution of help was unfair. Conversely, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions with distributive justice (V1, V5, V9, and V13).

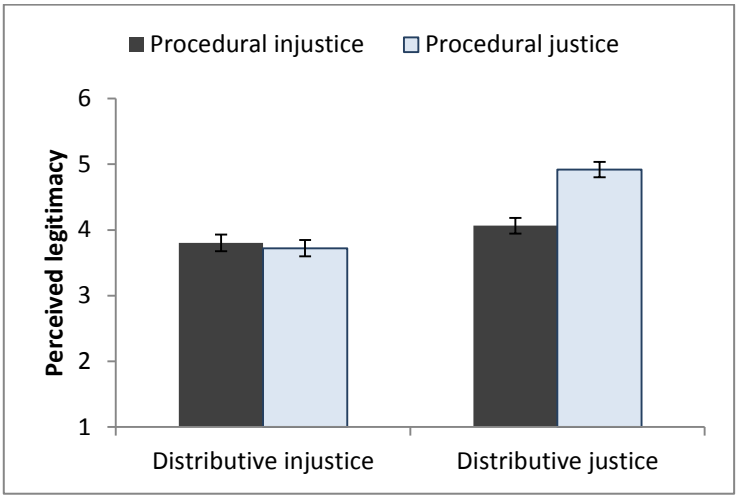

Figure 3.7. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the procedural justice × distributive justice interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

Figure 3.8 illustrates the interaction of distributive justice and positive outcome. Like in the case of the Netherlands, distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions with positive outcome. Distributive justice had no effect on evaluations of the government when outcome was negative.

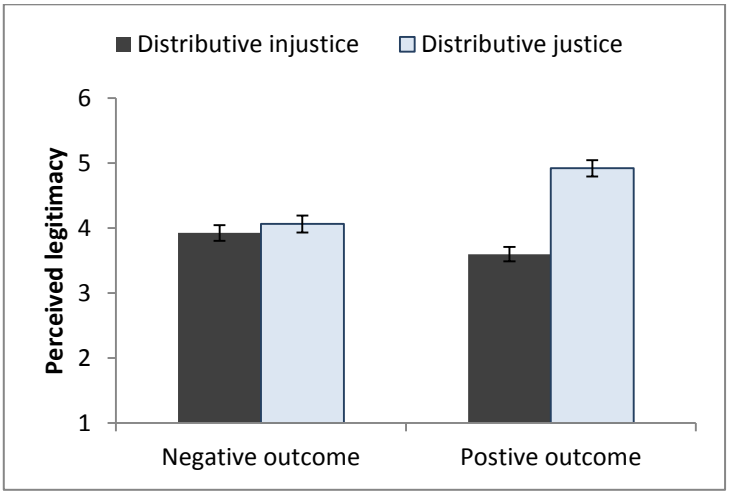

Figure 3.8. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the distributive justice × positive outcome interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

Poland

The data collection took place at universities and higher education institutions in Poznan and Krakow in May, June, and December 2014. In total, 462 vignette responses were collected from students. The number of participants included in the analysis was 437 (responses from participants who completed the questionnaire inattentively, were over the age of 25, or non-Polish were excluded from analysis). Of the 437 participants 268 were female and 150 were male (19 did not specify their gender). The average age of participants was 21.17 (min = 18, max = 25).

Figure 3.9 shows the mean perceived legitimacy scores for all 16 conditions. To assess effects of the manipulations, perceived legitimacy scores were analysed with a factorial ANOVA including all interaction effects. The ANOVA showed seven significant effects, including three main effects and four interaction effects, see Table 3.3. The main effects were in predicted directions. On average procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy from 3.39 to 3.96, distributive justice from 3.32 to 4.03, and positive outcome from 3.38 to 3.97. The main effect of dependence was not significant. Both two-way interactions of distributive justice × positive outcome and dependence × positive outcome were qualified by the higher-order interactions. There was a significant three-way interaction of procedural justice × dependence × positive outcome, which was qualified by a significant interaction including all four factors: procedural justice × distributive justice × dependence × positive outcome.

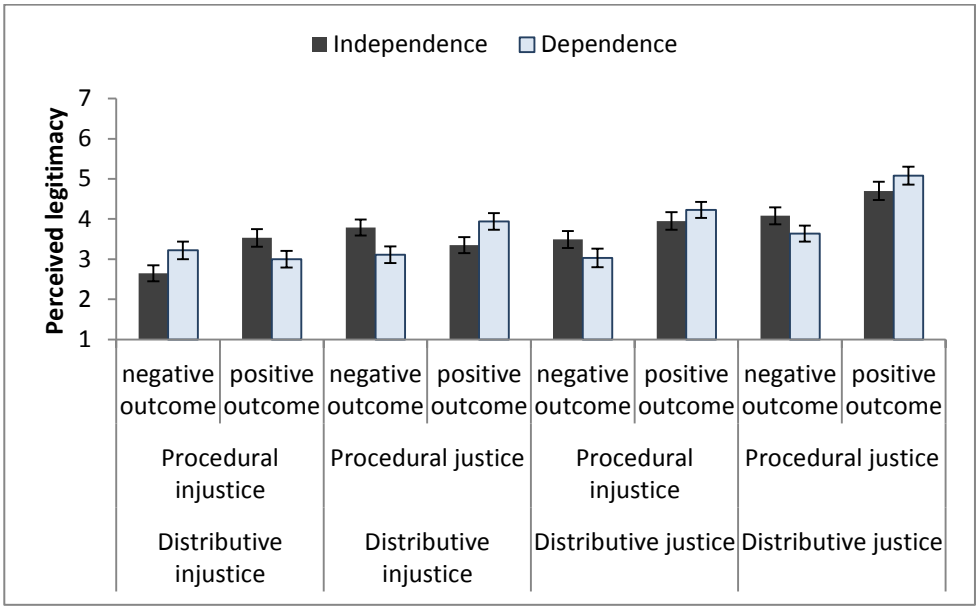

Figure 3.9. Poland: Mean perceived legitimacy for all 16 conditions. Error bars show standard errors of the mean.

Table 3.3. Factorial ANOVA for perceived legitimacy (N = 437, adjusted R^2 = .221). Effects with p >.05 are not shown.

Factor/Interaction	*F* (1, 421)	*p*	Partial η^2
Procedural justice	29.88	< .001	0.07
Distributive justice	44.70	< .001	0.10
Positive outcome	32.20	< .001	0.07
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	10.10	.002	0.02
Dependence × Positive outcome	4.16	.042	0.01
Procedural justice × Dependence × Positive outcome	8.61	.004	0.02
Procedural justice × Distributive justice × Dependence × Positive outcome	7.33	.007	0.02

To test the H6 (*Dependence on the authorities increases perceived legitimacy of the authorities)*, I compared the impact of dependence across eight combinations of other factors. Figure 3.9 shows that dependence had no consistent impact on perceived legitimacy. In conditions with procedural justice and distributive justice, dependence increased perceived legitimacy when outcomes were positive, but decreased perceived legitimacy when outcomes were negative (see from the right side of Figure 3.9:

distributive justice + procedural justice, distributive justice + procedural injustice, distributive injustice + procedural justice). However, when both distributive justice and procedural justice were absent (most left graph in Figure 3.9: distributive injustice + procedural injustice), then dependence decreased perceived legitimacy when outcomes were positive, and increased perceived legitimacy when outcomes were negative.

Also in Poland the interaction of distributive justice and positive outcome was significant. Figure 3.10 shows that distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy when the outcome was positive. Distributive justice had a smaller positive effect on evaluations of the government when outcome was negative.

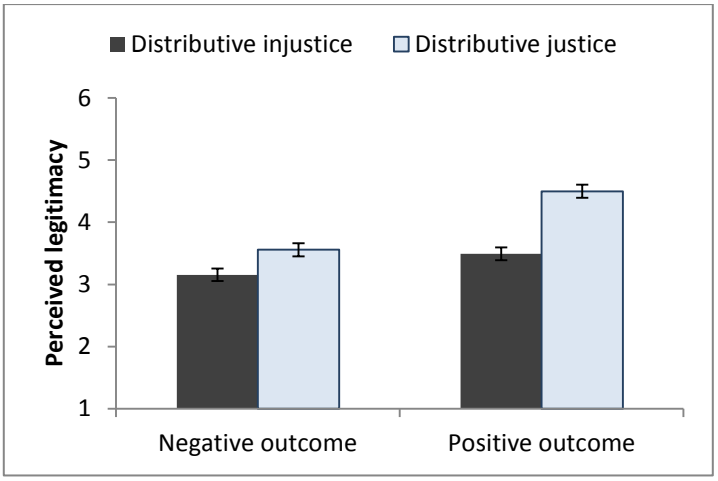

Figure 3.10. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the distributive justice × positive outcome interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

The interaction between dependence and positive outcome was significant in Poland too. Figure 3.11 shows that dependence decreased perceived legitimacy when outcome was negative. In other words, if a person depended on the help from the government and did not get the help (V13-V16), they had less favourable view of this government than a person who did not depend on the help from the government and did not get the help either (V9-V12). Dependence had a smaller (and positive) effect when outcome was positive.

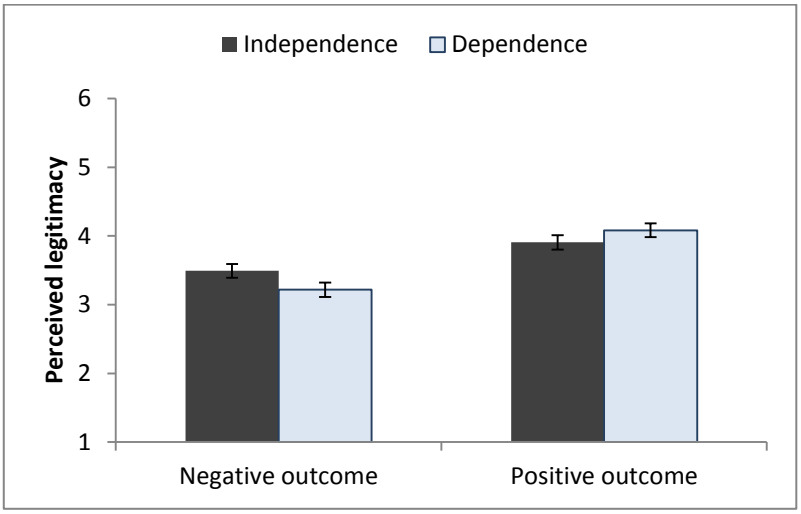

Figure 3.11. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the dependence × positive outcome interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

As in the Dutch sample, to interpret the three-way interaction of procedural justice × positive outcome × dependence, I examined pairwise comparisons for procedural justice across conditions of outcome and dependence. The graphs on the left side of Figure 3.12 show that when participants were independent, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions of negative outcome (difference M = 0.88 , $p < .000$), but not in conditions of positive outcome (difference M = 0.28, $p = .196$). The graphs on the right side of Figure 3.12 show that when participants were dependent, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions of positive outcome (difference M = 0.9, $p < .000$), but not in conditions of negative outcome (difference M = 0.25, $p = 0.24$).

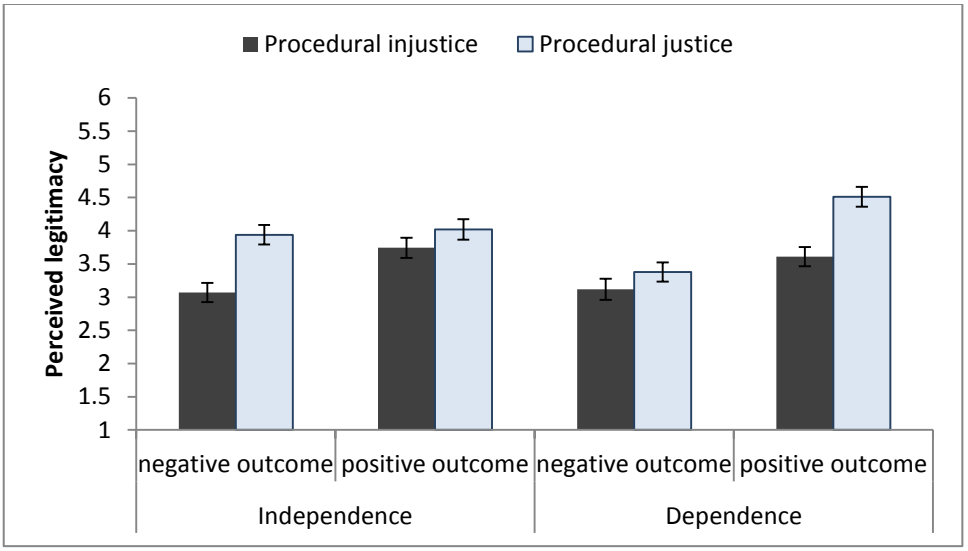

Figure 3.12. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the dependence × positive outcome × procedural justice interaction. Error bars show standard errors.

To interpret the four-way interaction, I compared the outcome ×distributive justice interaction across the four combinations of procedural justice and dependence (see Figure 3.13). The four-way interaction was presented in this way to make possible the test of H5 (*The effect of distributive justice on legitimacy is stronger when individuals experience positive personal outcomes)*. The graphs show how the interaction of distributive justice × positive outcome plays out depending on the configurations of procedural justice and dependence.

Distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy when there was positive outcome in three of the graphs below (procedural injustice + dependence, procedural justice + independence and procedural justice + dependence). That is, in each of these graphs there was a relatively small effect of distributive justice when outcomes were negative. The only combination of factors where distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy when the outcome was negative was in the case of procedural injustice + independence, i.e., when respondents were independent from the help of the government and when they experienced fair procedures (the victims of the flood had an opportunity to express their opinions).

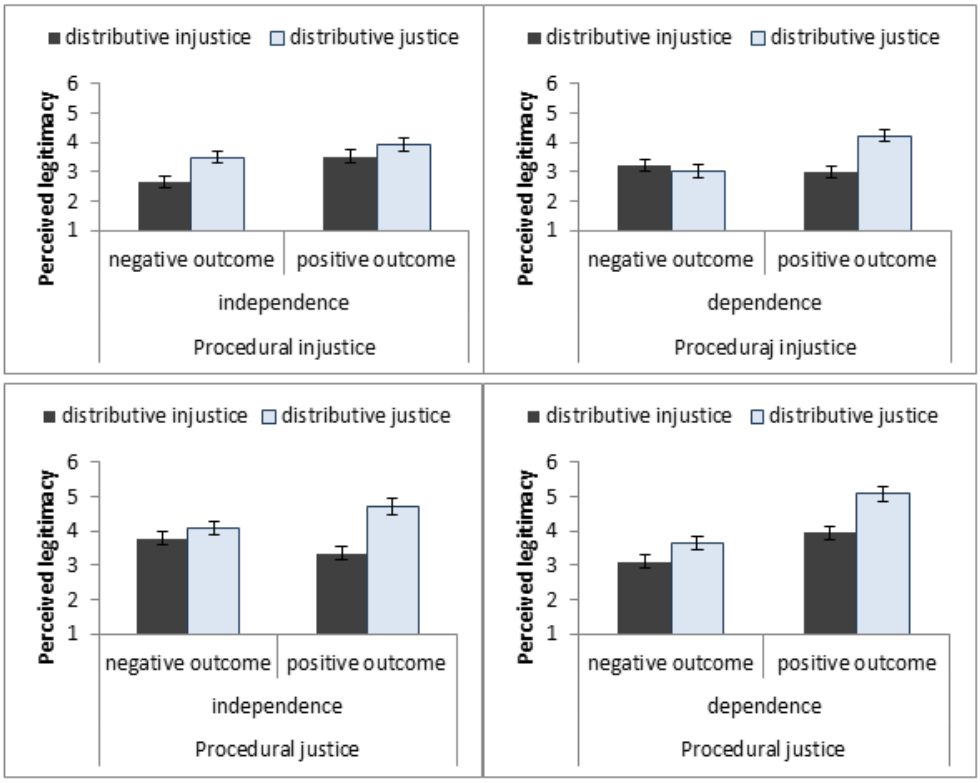

Figure 3.13. Mean perceived legitimacy scores for all 16 conditions to describe the procedural justice × distributive justice × dependence × positive outcome interaction. See text for details. Error bars show standard errors.

Ukraine

The data collection was conducted using Qualtrics online survey software. Participants of the survey were recruited from universities in Kiev and Mykolaiv (in the south of Ukraine) and completed the online survey between June and November 2014. In total, 930 people started completing the survey; the drop-out rate was 59 %. The number of participants included in the analysis was 425 (responses from participants who were over the age of 25, non-Ukrainian, or not studying at a Ukrainian university were excluded from analysis). Of the 425 participants 305 were female and 120 were male. The average age of participants was 19.8 (min = 16, max = 25).

Figure 3.14 shows the mean perceived legitimacy scores for all 16 conditions. To assess effects of the manipulations, perceived legitimacy scores were again

analysed with a factorial ANOVA including all interaction effects. The ANOVA showed seven significant effects, including four main effects and three interaction effects, see Table 3.4. The main effects of procedural justice, distributive justice, and outcome were in predicted directions. The main effect of the dependence was opposite to the hypothesised one; dependence had a negative effect on perceived legitimacy. On average procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy from 3.12 to 4.19, distributive justice from 3.03 to 4.28, and positive outcome from 3.33 to 3.98. The dependence decreased perceived legitimacy from 3.81 to 3.50. There were three two-way significant interactions of procedural justice × distributive justice, distributive justice × positive outcome, and dependence × positive outcome.

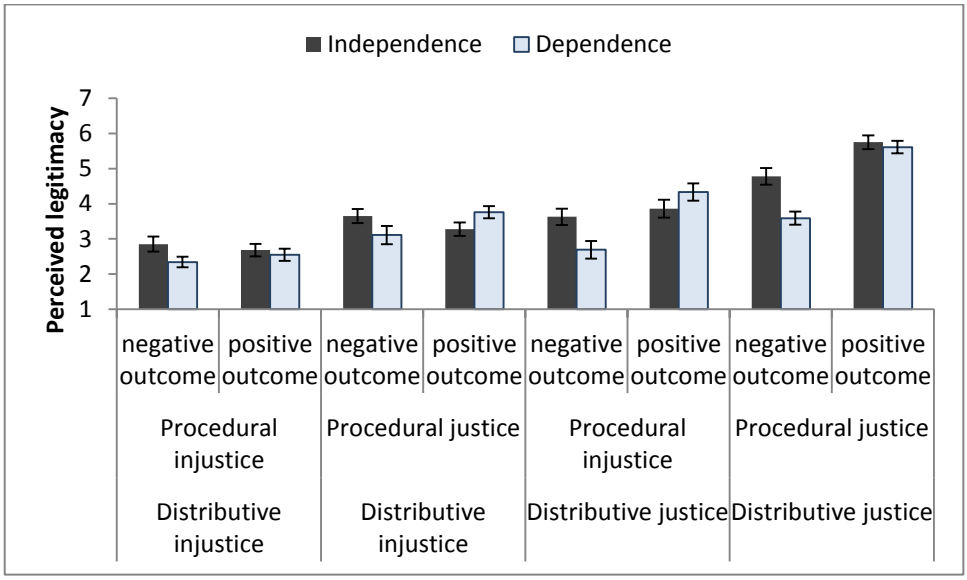

Figure 3.14. Ukraine: Mean perceived legitimacy for all 16 conditions. Error bars show standard errors of the mean.

Table 3.4. Factorial ANOVA for perceived legitimacy (N = 425, adjusted R^2 = .466). Effects with p >.05 are not shown.

Factor/Interaction	*F* (1, 409)	*p*	Partial η2
Procedural justice	106.36	< .001	.21
Distributive justice	144.40	< .001	.26
Positive outcome	38.64	< .001	.09
Dependence	9.12	.003	.02
Procedural justice × Distributive Justice	4.80	.029	.01
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	29.64	< .001	.07
Dependence × Positive outcome	21.70	< .001	.05

Figure 3.15 illustrates the interaction effect between procedural justice and distributive justice on perceived legitimacy score. When procedural justice was present (people had the opportunity to voice their opinions) the government scored higher on perceived legitimacy than when it was absent (people did not have the opportunity to voice their opinions). This effect was magnified in the presence of distributive justice. Procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy more when distributive justice was present.

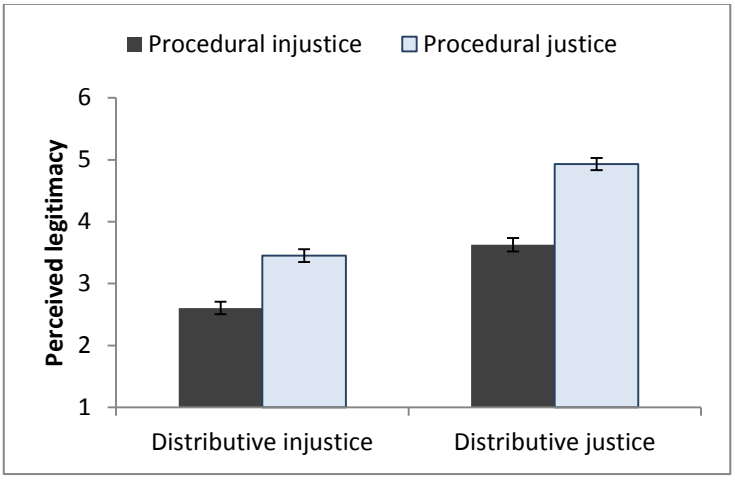

Figure 3.15. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the procedural justice × distributive justice interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

Figure 3.16 shows the same pattern of interaction of distributive justice and positive outcome as in all the previously analysed countries. Distributive justice

increased perceived legitimacy more in conditions with a positive outcome, whereas it had smaller effect in conditions with a negative outcome.

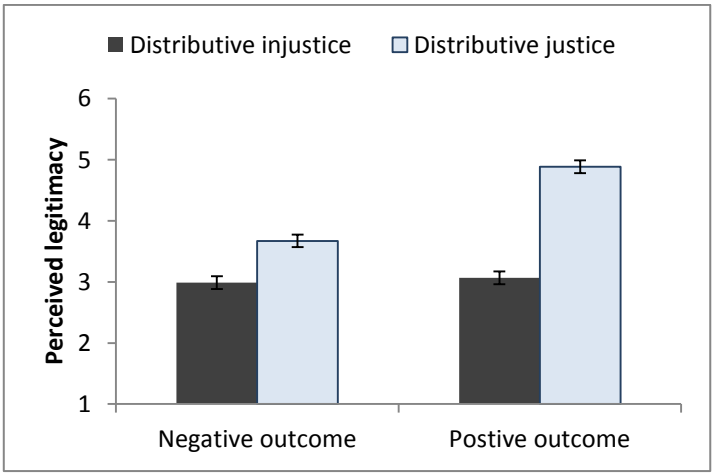

Figure 3.16. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the positive outcome × distributive justice interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

Figure 3.17 describes the interaction effect of outcome and dependence. Dependence decreased perceived legitimacy when outcome was negative. In other words, if a person depended on the help from the government and did not get the help, they had less favourable view of this government than a person who did not depend on the help from the government. Dependence had no effect on perceived legitimacy when outcome was positive.

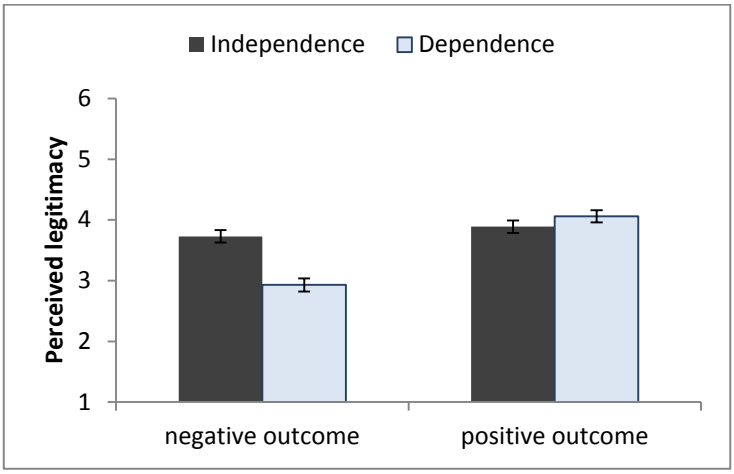

Figure 3.17. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the positive outcome × dependence interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

Russia

The data collection was conducted in May and June 2014 using pen and paper method and in June and September-December 2014 using Qualtrics online survey software. For the pen and paper version of the study, participants were recruited from the Higher School of Economics in Moscow and 303 responses were collected. To recruit participants for the online study, a link to the survey has been circulated on social networks for students by an assistant based in Moscow. In total, 3093 people started completing the online survey; the drop-out rate was 75 %. Participants of the online survey included in the analysis came from around 300 different universities located in many regions of Russia. The number of participants included in the analysis from both pen and paper and online survey was 934 (responses were excluded from the analysis if they came from participants who were over the age of 25, below the age of 16, non-Russian, or not based at a Russian university). Of the 934 participants 434 were female and 491 were male; 9 participants did not state their sex. The average age of participants was 20.21 (min = 16, max = 25).

Figure 3.18 shows the mean perceived legitimacy scores for all 16 conditions. To assess effects of the manipulations, perceived legitimacy scores were again analysed with a factorial ANOVA including all interaction effects. The ANOVA showed ten significant effects, including four main effects and five interaction effects

(see Table 3.5). The main effects of procedural justice, distributive justice, and outcome were in predicted directions. The main effect of the dependence was opposite to the predicted direction; dependence had a negative effect on perceived legitimacy. On average, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy from 3.71 to 4.22, distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy from 3.49 to 4.44, and positive outcome increased perceived legitimacy from 3.75 to 4.18. On average, dependence decreased perceived legitimacy from 4.13 to 3.80. There were four two-way significant interactions: procedural justice × distributive justice, distributive justice × positive outcome, dependence × positive outcome, and distributive justice × dependence. These interactions were qualified by two significant three-way interactions of procedural justice × distributive justice × positive outcome and procedural justice × distributive justice × positive outcome.

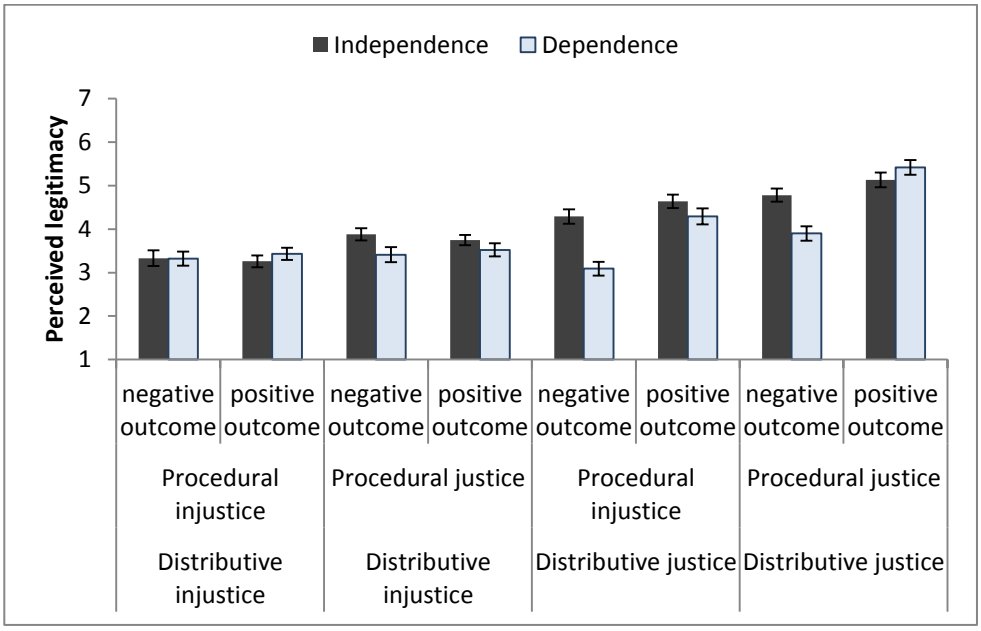

Figure 3.18. Russia: Mean perceived legitimacy for all 16 conditions. Error bars show standard errors of the mean.

Table 3.5. Factorial ANOVA for perceived legitimacy (N = 929, adjusted R^2 = .243). Effects with p >.05 are not shown.

Factor/Interaction	*F* (1, 913)	*p*	Partial η^2
Procedural justice	42.44	< .001	.04
Distributive justice	144.94	< .001	.14
Positive outcome	29.52	< .001	.03
Dependence	17.93	< .001	.02
Procedural justice × Distributive Justice	7.29	.007	.01
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	28.95	<.001	.03
Dependence × Positive outcome	14.97	< .001	.02
Distributive justice × Dependence	6.37	.012	.01
Dependence × Distributive justice × Procedural justice	8.20	.004	.01
Dependence × Distributive justice × Positive outcome	6.64	.010	.01

Figure 3.19 shows the two-way interaction of procedural justice × distributive justice. As in three other countries (in Poland this interaction was accounted for in a four-way interaction), procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy when distributive justice was present. This implies that participants that read the story in which the government consulted citizens about the help they need evaluated the government better if it also distributed help fairly to the victims of flooding.

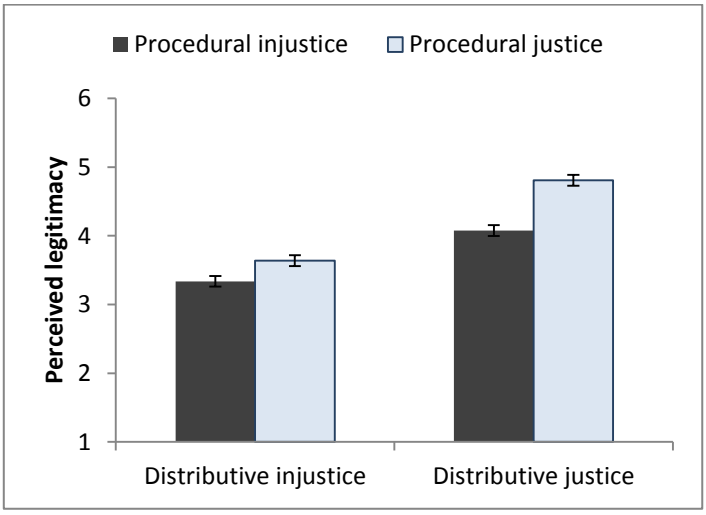

Figure 3.19. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the procedural justice × distributive justice interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

Another two-way interaction that was significant in Russia as in all the other countries was the interaction of distributive justice × positive outcome. Figure 3.20 shows that distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy more when the outcome was positive than when the outcome was negative.

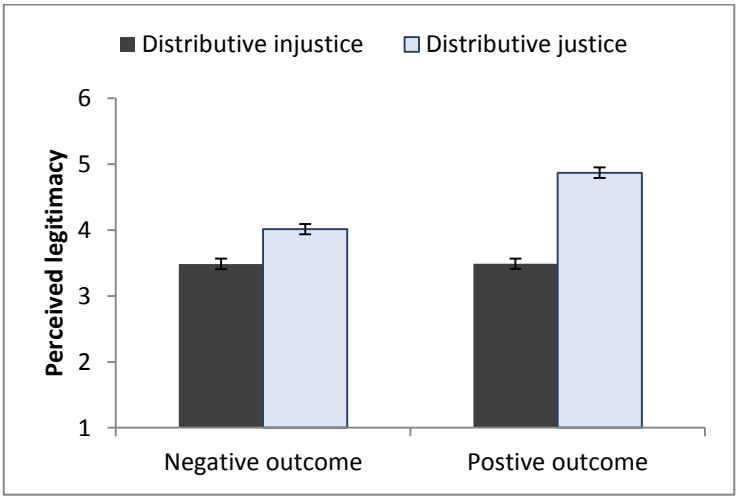

Figure 3.20. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the distributive justice × positive outcome interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

There were two two-way interactions involving dependence that were significant in the Russian case: the interaction of dependence and positive outcome and the interaction of dependence and distributive justice. Figure 3.21 shows that dependence decreased perceived legitimacy when outcome was negative. So, if a person depended on the help from the government and did not get it, they had less favourable view of this government than a person who did not depend on the help from the government. Dependence had no effect on perceived legitimacy when outcome was positive.

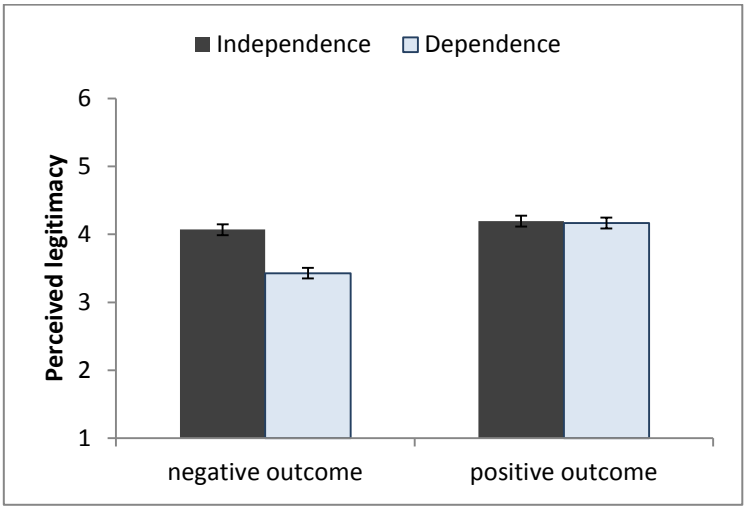

Figure 3.21. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the dependence × positive outcome interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

Figure 3.22 illustrates that distributive justice increases increased perceived legitimacy more when participants when independent than when they were independent. This means that if the government distributed the help fairly, participants that were in the conditions in which they did not suffer a large property loss and had access to primary goods like food and other essentials perceived the government as more legitimate than those who were in the conditions in which they lost the house and have no access to primary goods.

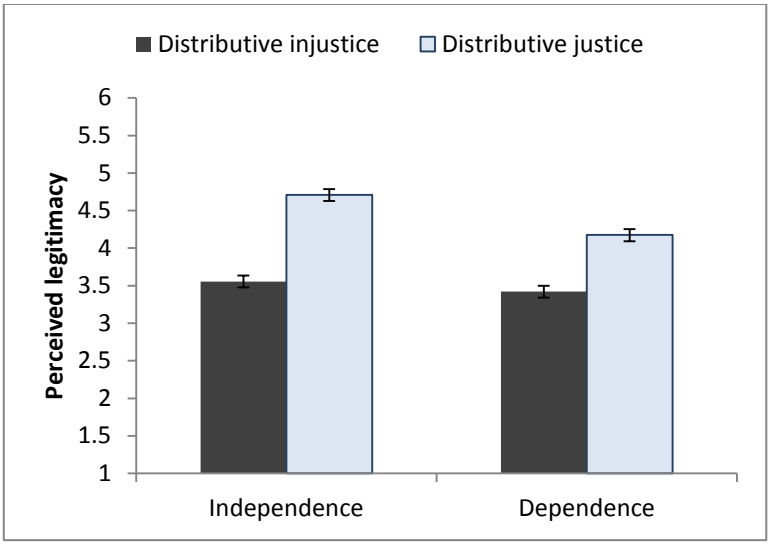

Figure 3.22. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the dependence × distributive justice interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

To interpret the three-way interaction of dependence × positive outcome × distributive justice, I examined pairwise comparisons for distributive justice across conditions of outcome and dependence. The graphs on the left side of Figure 3.23 show that when participants were independent, distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy both in conditions with negative outcome (difference M = 0.93 , p < .000) and in conditions with positive outcome (difference M = 1.38, p < .001). The graphs on the right side of Figure 3.21 show that when participants were dependent, distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions with positive outcome (difference M = 1.38, p = < .000) but not in conditions with negative outcome (difference M = 0.12, p = .450). In general, Figure 3.21 shows that distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy in all combinations of outcome, dependence and distributive justice, except when respondents were dependent and received a negative outcome.[19]

[19] The story with this combination of factors represents one of the less plausable scenarios in practice.

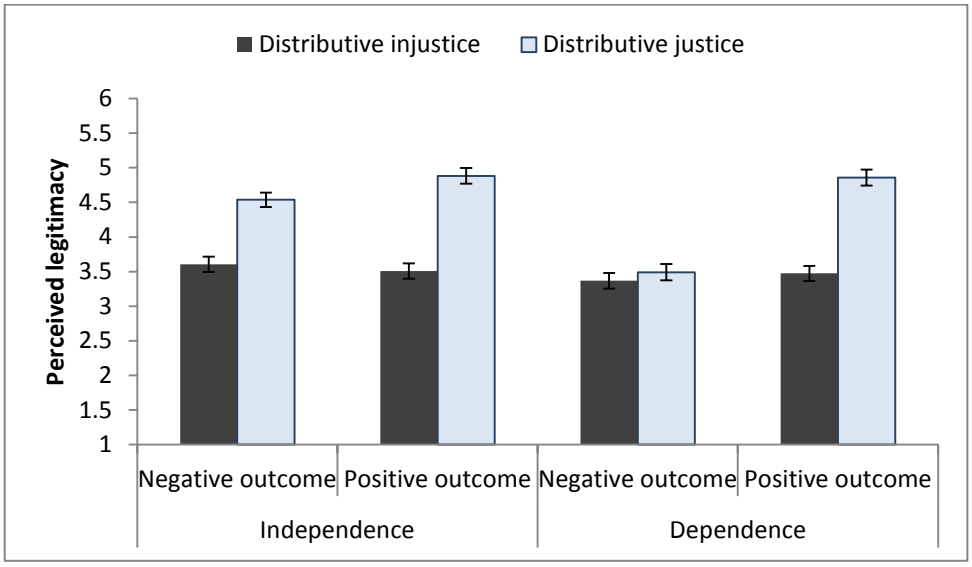

Figure 3.23. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the interaction of dependence × positive outcome × distributive justice interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

Similarly, to interpret the three-way interaction of dependence × procedural justice × distributive justice, I examined pairwise comparisons for procedural justice across conditions of distributive justice and dependence. The graphs on the left side of Figure 3.24 show that when participants were independent, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy both in conditions of distributive injustice (difference $M = 0.52$, $p = .001$) and distributive justice (difference $M = 0.49$, $p = .002$). The graphs on the right side of Figure 3.22 show that when participants were dependent, procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy in conditions of distributive justice (difference $M = 0.97$, $p < .001$) but not in conditions of distributive injustice (difference $M = 0.09$, $p = .576$).

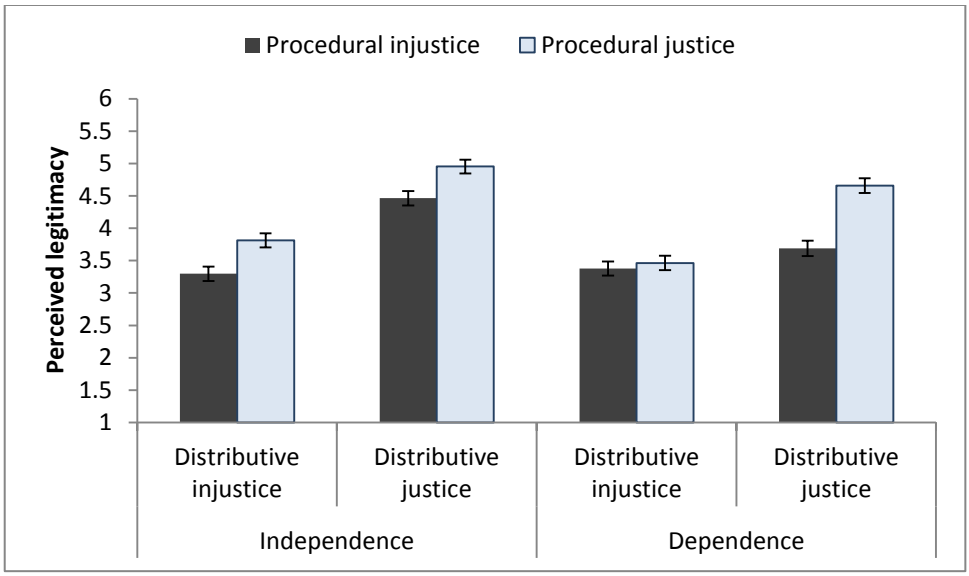

Figure 3.24. Mean perceived legitimacy scores to describe the dependence × distributive justice × procedural justice interaction effect. Error bars show standard errors.

3.4. Comparative analysis

To facilitate the comparison of the results from the five countries discussed above, Table 3.6 shows the results of the full factorial ANOVA models for all five countries. The table shows that in all five countries distributive justice had the largest significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy. Procedural justice and positive outcomes had significant positive effects on perceived legitimacy in all five counties too. Dependence did not have a consistent effect on perceived legitimacy across countries.

The interaction effect that was significant in all five cases was the interaction of positive outcome and distributive justice. This interaction showed that distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy when personal outcome was positive. In other words, if participants' material situation improved as a result of the government's decision, then the effect of just distribution of help among the victim of the flood on perceived legitimacy increased significantly. Another significant two-way interaction that was found in four out of five countries was the interaction of distributive justice and procedural justice. Interestingly, the procedural justice increased perceived

legitimacy if distributive justice was present. This interaction revealed that when there was no distributive justice, the victims' opportunity to deliberate on their situation or its lack did not change the perceived legitimacy score. The two-way interaction between the positive (personal) outcome and procedural justice was not significant in any of the five countries.

The interaction of dependence and positive outcome was significant only in two hybrid regimes—Russia and Ukraine. The interaction showed the same pattern in both cases. Dependence decreased perceived legitimacy when the outcome was negative and it had no effect on perceived legitimacy when outcome was positive. This means that if a person depended on the help from the government (they had no access to essential goods and services and their property was destroyed) and did not get the help, they had less favourable view of this government than a person who did not depend on the help from the government (whose property did not suffer and who had access to essential goods and services) and did not get the help either.

The analysis of the results in each individual country showed that there are no clear differences between the old democracies, the new democracy, and the hybrid regimes in how the tested factors influenced perceived legitimacy. Three hypothesized factors were significant and worked in the same direction in each country: distributive justice, procedural justice, and positive outcome increased perceived legitimacy. Dependence on average decreased perceived legitimacy, but it did not have a coherent pattern and its main effect was significant only in three out of five cases (in the Netherlands, Ukraine, and Russia).

To test whether the hypothesized effects differed across the five countries, data from all five countries were analysed in one ANOVA[20]. The model included the main effects of distributive justice, procedural justice, positive outcome, and dependence, the

[20] Combining datasets from different countries resulted in an unbalanced number of participants across countries. Because of the large sample size, the standard tests of homogeneity—Levene's test and Bartlett-Box F test for equality of variances were not useful. However, the homogeneity of variance was assessed with a scatter plot of residuals against the predicted values of perceived legitimacy (as suggested by Field et al. 2012, p.440). The plot does not show a strong systematic pattern (see Appendix J) and suggests that the assumption of the homogeneity of variances is not violated.

hypothesised interaction effects[21], country variable, and the interactions with the country variable (Table 3.7).

[21] To keep the model as powerful as possible (maximum degrees of freedom), only the hypothesized effects were included.

Table 3.6. Results of factorial ANOVAs for each country (full model).

	NL		FR		PL		UA		RU	
Factor	*F* (1, 363)	Partial η^2	*F* (1, 307)	Partial η^2	*F* (1, 421)	Partial η^2	*F* (1, 409)	Partial η^2	*F* (1, 913)	Partial η^2
Procedural justice	37.92***	.095	10.02**	.032	29.88***	.066	106.36***	.206	42.44***	.044
Distributive justice	73.15***	.168	35.67***	.104	44.70***	.096	144.40***	.261	144.94***	.137
Dependence	7.15**	.019	1.38	.004	0.13	.000	9.12**	.022	17.93***	.019
Positive outcome	10.57**	.028	4.69*	.015	32.20***	.071	38.64***	.086	29.52***	.031
Procedural justice × Distributive justice	8.96**	.024	14.64***	.046	1.48	.004	4.80*	.012	7.29**	.008
Procedural justice × Dependence	1.28	.004	3.60	.012	0.00	.000	0.12	.000	0.02	.000
Procedural justice × Positive outcome	0.00	.000	0.03	.000	0.02	.000	2.67	.006	0.15	.000
Distributive justice × Dependence	0.73	.002	0.21	.001	0.05	.000	1.73	.004	6.37*	.007
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	25.57***	.066	23.54***	.071	10.10**	.023	29.64***	.068	28.95***	.031
Dependence × Positive outcome	1.29	.004	2.32	.007	4.16*	.010	21.70***	.050	14.97***	.016
Procedural justice × Distributive justice × Dependence	0.87	.002	0.08	.000	0.08	.000	2.98	.007	8.20**	.009
Procedural justice × Distributive justice × Positive outcome	0.00	.000	0.07	.000	0.65	.002	1.15	.003	0.37	.000
Procedural justice × Dependence × Positive outcome	5.58*	.015	1.29	.004	8.61**	.020	0.10	.000	0.36	.000
Distributive justice × Dependence × Positive outcome	1.42	.004	2.13	.007	2.71	.006	1.61	.004	6.64*	.007
Procedural justice × Distributive justice × Dependence × Positive outcome	1.93	.005	0.93	.003	7.33**	.017	1.45	.004	0.18	.000

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 3.7. Factorial ANOVA for perceived legitimacy on the merged dataset (N = 2493, adjusted $R^2 = .268$).

Factor/Interaction	*F* (1, 2458)	*p*	Partial η^2
Corrected model	27.84	< .001	.28
Procedural justice	169.88	< .001	.07
Distributive justice	345.54	< .001	.12
Positive outcome	87.56	< .001	.09
Dependence	21.875	< .001	.01
Country	13.23	< .001	.02
Procedural justice × Country	4.89	.001	.008
Distributive justice × Country	4.03	.003	.007
Dependence × Country	1.36	.245	.002
Positive outcome × Country	1.84	.118	.003
Distributive justice × Positive outcome	91.27	< .001	.04
Distributive justice × Positive outcome × Country	0.78	.54	.001
Procedural justice × Positive outcome	0.49	.49	.000
Procedural justice × Positive outcome × Country	0.45	.77	.001

Table 3.7 shows that country variable had a significant effect on perceived legitimacy ($F = 13.32$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .02$), which indicates that countries varied in the average level of perceived legitimacy across all conditions. On average Polish and Ukrainian participants evaluated the governments most negatively across all conditions and had very similar average score (see Figure 3.25): mean perceived legitimacy in Poland and Ukraine was $M = 3.67$. All other countries differed significantly from Poland and Ukraine and between each other. The Dutch participants on average evaluated the government for $M = 3.83$, and this score was significantly higher than the mean score in Poland ($p < .05$) and in Ukraine ($p < .05$). The Dutch average score was also significantly lower than the scores in Russia ($p < .03$) and France ($p < .001$). Russian participants on average evaluated the government in the hypothetical stories higher than Polish, Ukrainian, and Dutch participants with the mean perceived legitimacy score of $M = 3.98$. The French participants stood out as those with the highest mean perceived legitimacy score of $M = 4.13$. Figure 3.25 illustrates differences between the mean perceived legitimacy scores across all conditions in five countries.

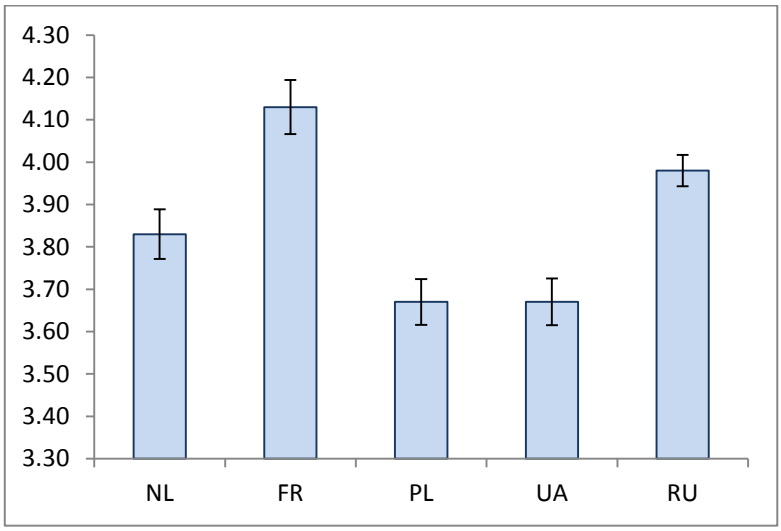

Figure 3.25. Mean perceived legitimacy scores across all conditions in five countries. Perceived legitimacy was measured on the scale from 1 (lowest score) to 7 (highest score). Error bars show standard errors.

Table 3.7 shows that there were also differences in how two factors influenced perceived legitimacy cross-country. More specifically, the effects of procedural justice ($F = 4.89$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .008$) and distributive justice ($F = 4.03$, $p = .003$, partial $\eta 2 = .007$) differed across countries. The comparison of mean differences in perceived legitimacy scores between conditions with procedural justice and conditions without procedural justice across five countries showed that in every country procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy. In other words, in all countries when victims of flooding had a chance to participate in a meeting with the governmental commission and voice their opinions about the help they need, the government was evaluated more positively than when the commission did not meet with the victims. The difference, however, was in the strength of the effect of procedural justice on perceived legitimacy. Figure 3.26 shows that in Ukraine the mean difference in perceived legitimacy between conditions with procedural justice and procedural injustice was bigger than in all the other countries. In other words, procedural justice had a significantly larger effect on perceived legitimacy in Ukraine ($M_{difference} = 1.05$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$) than in the Netherlands ($M_{difference} = 0.62$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$), Poland

($M_{difference}$ = 0.57, partial η^2 = .01), Russia ($M_{difference}$ = 0.52, partial η^2 = .02), and France ($M_{difference}$ = 0.43, partial η^2 = .004).

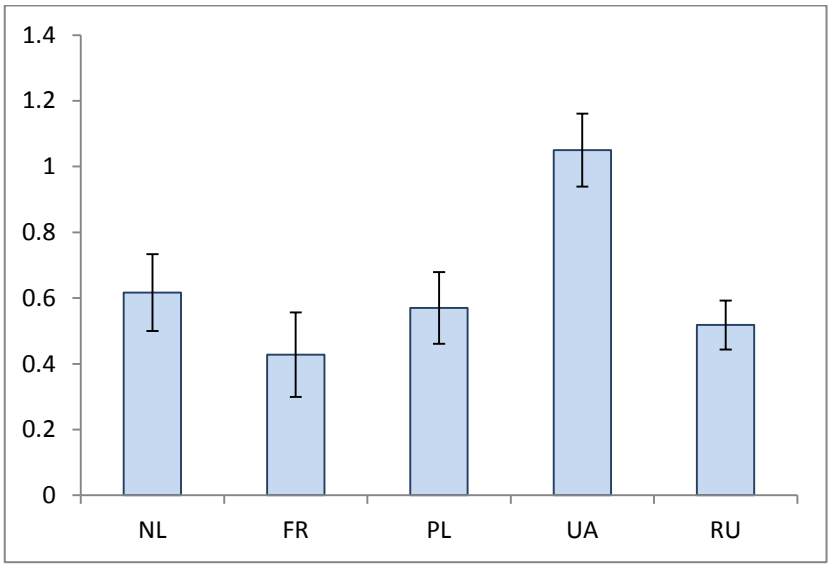

Figure 3.26. Mean difference between perceived legitimacy score when procedural justice was present and when procedural justice was absent in five countries. Error bars show standard errors.

A comparison of mean differences in perceived legitimacy scores between conditions with distributive justice and conditions without distributive justice across the five countries showed that in every country distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy. This means that on average, participants in all countries gave higher score to the government that distributed the help fairly to the victims of flooding—provided benefits to those who most desperately needed the help. As with procedural justice, the difference between the five countries was in the size of the effect. Figure 3.27 shows that in the Netherlands, France and Poland the mean difference between perceived legitimacy in conditions with distributive justice and in conditions without distributive justice was very similar (in NL: $M_{difference}$ = 0.86, partial η^2 = .02; in FR: $M_{difference}$ = 0.72, partial η^2 = .01; in PL: $M_{difference}$ = 0.72, partial η^2 = .02). In Russia ($M_{difference}$ = 0.98, partial η^2 = .07) and Ukraine ($M_{difference}$ = 1.26, partial η^2 = .05) the mean difference was larger than in democracies.

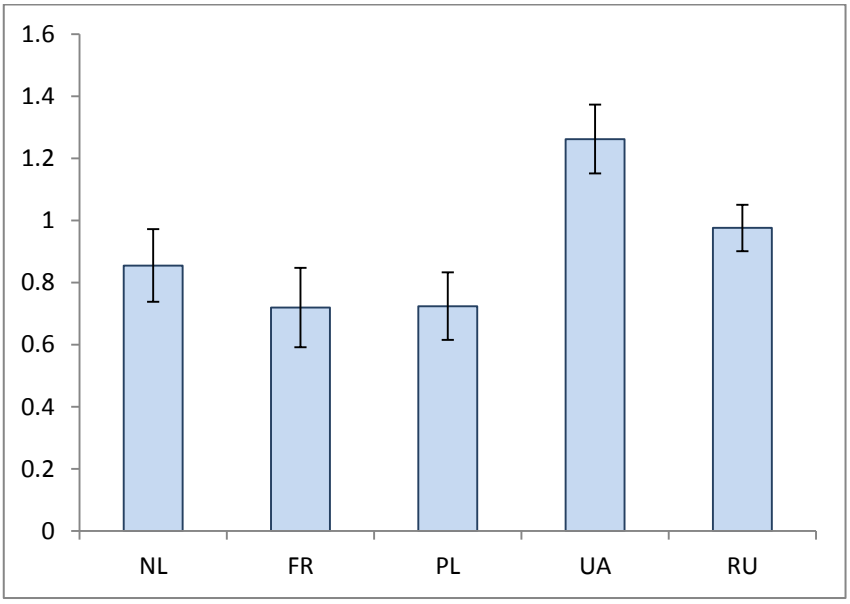

Figure 3.27. Mean difference between perceived legitimacy score when distributive justice was present and perceived legitimacy score when distributive justice was absent in five countries. Error bars show standard errors.

The effects of dependence and positive outcome did not significantly differ across countries. Also, the effects of hypothesised interactions of distributive justice with positive outcome and procedural justice with positive outcome did not differ significantly in the five analysed countries (Table 3.7).

3.5. Discussion

Scholars from various disciplines are interested in the evaluation mechanisms used by people to assess authorities. Political psychology and political science both investigate two different theories that offer explanations for granting legitimacy and support to political authorities, namely the rational choice model of citizen's behaviour and the normative common-good oriented model. In this study I tested hypotheses based on these two models of citizen in five different countries. Moreover, I compared how the previously identified factors influence perceived legitimacy of respondents whose

political socialization into different political regimes has shaped their assessment schemes.

Manipulation checks showed that the factors were manipulated as intended and the scale used to measure perceived legitimacy served as a reliable measure in all five countries. This allowed for testing the hypotheses.

The H4 *(Distributive justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities)* was supported. In all five countries distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy. Moreover, distributive justice had the largest significant effect on perceived legitimacy in all five countries. Also H2 (*Procedural justice increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities)* was supported. Procedural justice had a significant positive effect on perceived legitimacy across all cases. Because the main effects of distributive and procedural justice were significant, the results suggest that the normative factors matter for evaluations of political authorities and hence contribute to perceived legitimacy.

Moreover, the results of the experiments across the five countries supported the H1 *(Positive personal outcome increases perceived legitimacy of political authorities).* Receiving a positive personal outcome from the government consistently and significantly increased perceived legitimacy in the five countries indicating that the rational choice theory's prediction about the role that the positive outcome plays in evaluations of authorities is correct. What the experiments did show too, however, is that positive personal outcome did not have the strongest main effect of all the factors: distributive justice—fair distribution of help among the victims of flooding—increased perceived legitimacy the most. In all five countries there was a significant interaction of positive outcome and distributive justice, which supported the H5 (*The effect of distributive justice on legitimacy is stronger when individuals experience positive personal outcomes).* Across the analysed countries, distributive justice increased perceived legitimacy more when personal outcome was positive.

No support was found for the H3 (*The effect of procedural justice on legitimacy is stronger when individuals experience positive personal outcomes)* as the interaction between personal outcome and procedural justice was not significant in any of the countries under investigation. However, a significant interaction of procedural

justice with distributive justice was found in the analysis of four out of five countries (it was not found only in Poland). The interaction showed that procedural justice increased perceived legitimacy when distributive justice was present. If distribution of government's help was unfair, then having the opportunity to meet with the governmental commission and participate in a discussion either did not increase perceived legitimacy of the government or increased it to a smaller extent. In general, however, the results showed that participants socialized in old democracies, as well as in different post-communist regimes find having a voice in the decision-making process important.

The H6 *(Dependence on the authorities increases perceived legitimacy of the authorities)* was not supported either. Dependence did not have a consistent effect on perceived legitimacy: it had no effect on legitimacy in the French sample and had a significant main effect in the Dutch, Ukrainian and Russian samples. In the Polish sample it was a factor present in three interactions (Dependence × Positive outcome, Procedural justice × Dependence × Positive outcome, and Procedural justice × Distributive justice × Dependence × Positive outcome). In the Dutch sample dependence interacted with procedural justice and positive outcome. In the Russian sample dependence interacted with distributive justice and positive outcome. Contrary to the hypothesis, the main effects of dependence showed that being dependent on the government's help decreased perceived legitimacy in the Netherlands, Ukraine and Russia. This pattern was not reversed as part of the three-way interaction: in the Netherlands and Russia dependence either had no effect on perceived legitimacy or reduced perceived legitimacy. This effect is thus opposite to the hypothesis. In Poland, the effect of dependence was not consistent and in four out of eight conditions it decreased the perceived legitimacy whereas in the other four conditions it increased perceived legitimacy. Hence, the hypothesis was generally not supported.

The experiment tested also a set of comparative hypotheses, based on the assumption that being socialized in different political regimes can affect the role of different factors in the evaluations of authorities by citizens. The H8 (*Procedural justice is a more important factor for perceptions of legitimacy among democratic citizens than among citizens socialized in new democracies and hybrid regimes)* was

not supported. Procedural justice had a significant main effect in each country included in the analysis and it increased perceived legitimacy across the countries. The comparative analysis showed also that procedural justice had a significantly larger effect on perceived legitimacy in Ukraine than in other analysed countries. This indicates that the experiments did not find evidence in support of the hypothesis that procedural justice is more important in old democracies than in other regimes.

The H10 *(Distributive justice has a more important role in perceptions of legitimacy among citizens socialized in post-communist regimes than among citizens socialized in democracies)* was partially supported. Although distributive justice had the largest positive effect on perceived legitimacy in all five countries, its effect was significantly bigger in Ukraine and Russia. Considerations of fairness of the distribution of help were of larger concern to participants socialized in post-communist hybrid regimes.

I did not find support for the H7 (*The most important motives citizens have to grant legitimacy to/support authorities in non-democracies are of instrumental nature),* as there was no difference in the effect size of positive personal outcome between democracies and non-democracies. However, as mentioned above, distributive justice had the largest effect in the non-democratic regimes (Ukraine and Russia) showing that although personal outcome matters, the output aspect of legitimacy—fair distribution of help—was considered the most important quality of the government that affected the legitimacy score.

3.6. Conclusion

The results of the vignette experiments show that the theories about the factors influencing citizens' evaluations of political authorities are strong and travel well across different regime types (at least within Europe). The three factors predicted by the rational choice theory and a theory of justice-oriented citizen showed the same patterns in how they influenced perceived legitimacy of participants socialized in old democracies, a post-communist new democracy, a hybrid post-communist regime in crisis, and a post-communist hybrid regime with growing authoritarian tendencies. All participants cared about having the voice in the process of decision making by the

hypothetical government, they welcomed improvement of their material situation through governmental assistance, and most importantly, they were sensitive to fair distribution of help from the government. Dependence had no consistent effect on perceived legitimacy, but in general it either did not change perceived legitimacy or decreased it.

Moreover, in all countries positive personal outcome increased perceived legitimacy when the distribution of help of the government was fair. Interestingly, the lack of significant interaction between the positive outcome and procedural justice and the presence of the interaction of distributive justice and outcome suggest that in general the more important goal of having a voice and participation in deliberation is to arrive at a fair distribution rather than an individual favourable outcome. Following from this, it can be concluded that the two ways in which citizens are expected to evaluate political authorities were not mutually exclusive. The results supported the image of a community-interested, justice-oriented citizen who grants legitimacy to authorities because they take care of the common good (distributive justice) and listen to the people's opinions (procedural justice). The results also showed that the image of a self-interested, personal gain-oriented citizen cannot be rejected. Participants did care about their personal outcome—receiving help from the government resulted in a more favourable evaluation of the authorities. This means that both normative and rational-choice motives contributed to the evaluation of the government.

The differences expected to occur due to participants' socialization in different political regimes were not large. As mentioned above, the direction of significant effects was the same across samples from all regime types. However, the effect of distributive justice was significantly higher in the Ukrainian and Russian samples than in the democratic samples. This result implies that fair distribution of help by the government is a more salient issue in these hybrid regimes. It can be due to socialization and higher expectation on the side of citizens to receive fair distribution of goods and services. Moreover, the time of data collection in Ukraine can explain the strength of the effect of distributive justice—the data was collected during the months following Euromaidan, a series of protests that challenged the president of Ukraine—Yanukovych—and expressed discontent with the socio-political situation in the

country. According to Ryabchuk (2014, p.131), deeper underlying reasons behind the protests are of socio-economic nature rather than geopolitical or ideological divides that are emphasised by political leaders. The grievances of population towards political authorities are linked to the lack of effectiveness of governments' actions to solve the problems that are of the greatest concern for Ukrainians: rising prices for food, communal housing costs, unemployment, low wages and pensions, corruption, and crime (Ryabchuk 2014, p.130). The high awareness of these socio-economic problems in their society could have resulted in the strongest effect of distributive justice among Ukrainian participants. In the Russian case, the strong effect of distributive justice could be explained also by a comparatively high inequality of Russian society (according to the World Bank's data, Russia is the least equal society of all five analysed countries[22]). Russians, especially living in the peripheries, are very concerned with their material well-being and sensitive to the issues of fair re-distribution (Busygina and Filippov 2015).

To summarize, the theoretical model combining the rational choice and justice-oriented motivations of citizens in their evaluations of political authorities works well. The results suggest that citizens' positive evaluations can be enhanced by instrumental incentives (personal positive outcome), but also that just behaviour on the side of political authorities (distributive and procedural justice) can lead to achievement of a higher level of support and increase perceived legitimacy. This pattern held independently from the regime type in which participants were socialized.

[22] According to the World Bank (2012) Russia's GINI coefficient in 2012 was at 41.6. The GINI coefficient for other countries was: the Netherlands 28.0, France 33.1, Poland 32.4, and Ukraine 24.7.