

# Review of: "Participatory budgeting for public involvement in environmental sustainability at a Thai university"

Valentino Marini Govigli

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper provides an interesting evaluation of an application of Participatory Budgeting (PB) at a Thai University on environmental sustainability projects. This to assess the public reaction regarding their involvement in the participative activity. Appraising the rate of engagement and participants' emotion of participatory-based activities is an important research field, as it provides to practitioners a clear assessment of participants' self-evaluation allowing to estimate the method's efficacy in promote awareness and public engagement.

Overall, I find the manuscript well-written and potentially interesting to the audience of the journal. Nonetheless, I have the following major remarks (and some additional minor comments posted at the end of my review), which need to be addressed to make the contribution publishable.

1. I feel that the author does not exploit fully the data they collected. While performing the PB, the author gathered information on the respondents' role within the university. Nonetheless, this information is not used in combination with the content analysis from the two open questions of the survey to explore whether the participants' perception on the PB differs depending on the institutional role of the respondents. This is an aspect that should be included into the analysis as it will give a sense on whether diverse participant groups (e.g., students and staff members primarily) engaged differently during the proposed exercise and/or whether they have experienced different emotions. This is probably the case as staff members have more experience participating in survey-based activities. I strongly suggest to the author to revise the analysis to include this abovementioned aspect.
2. It would be also interesting to explore the number of project that each participant decided to prioritize with the available budget (as well as the amount of money they left out from the budget unused). This can provide extremely policy-relevant information on how PB participants decide to allocate money across a wide array of projects and whether different participants' groups (students vs. staff) proposed a different number of projects to be funded.
3. I am also puzzled to see that the author did not collect any additional demographic information on the participants, such as gender, age, residence, etc. These predictors would have brought interesting information to explain any emerging patterns from the data, regarding the participants' perceptions and their emotions stemming from the exercise. Perhaps this data is stored elsewhere, or it is retrievable without extensive sampling effort. If this is the case, I strongly recommend the author to present it in-text and used it for their analysis.

Finally, some minor remarks:

- Were the follow up questions of the survey open-ended? If so, as I have guessed, it would be useful to specify it in the

text.

- I would also like to see the survey to be provided as appendix of the manuscript.