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A decision science blind to decision procedures would be "unfair": The effect of decision process on decision-outcome satisfaction and subsequent choice in a performance environment

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Abstract: Contemporary models of decision making assume individuals evaluate options solely in terms of their expected outcomes. However, recent research indicates that in institutional settings decision makers are also concerned with the procedural fairness of the decision process that generates those outcomes, such as whether decision makers were granted democratic inclusion in the decision-making process itself. We provide a much-needed quantification of the value decision makers place on inclusive decision procedures, showing (a) the pattern by which decision procedures alter individuals' perceptions of otherwise identical outcomes, spanning losses and gains of differing quantity and quality (e.g., failure/success) and (b) that decision makers' felt freedom and feeling of being treated respectfully mediate the effect of decision process on the perception of outcomes. We show that individuals prefer lesser economic returns in order to receive higher utility from the decision process, and we discuss the implications of this finding for decision science.