

Improving the Integration of Expert Knowledge with Tacit Knowledge for Strategic Planning Processes

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What is the research question?

Consultants and scientists are developing various types of digital and other tools to support spatial planning processes. These tools are aimed at utilising knowledge in a structured manner in specific planning situations. In recent years, the focus has shifted from tools at project level to tools geared towards more strategic and more abstract issues. As a result, support for collaborative learning has gained more traction. How effective are current planning tools in this learning process and what is their added value for the quality of the process and the outcome in the Netherlands? This was studied systematically in controlled experiments.

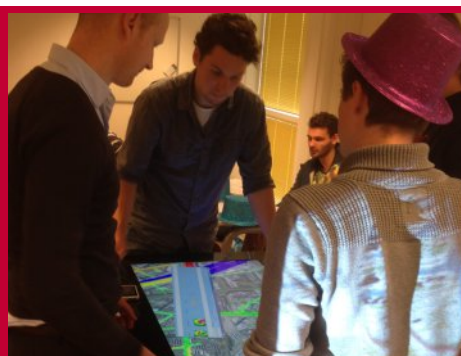
What are the findings?

- Experiments with Dutch Master's students, where some did and some did not have support tools, provided no clear picture of the added value of such tools on the qualities of a strategic planning process.
- A number of significant positive effects were observed on the quality of the planning process as perceived by the participants. This mainly concerned their personal experience of the planning process (such as enthusiasm and belief in a positive outcome) and the perception of consensus in the planning process.
- No significant positive effects were observed on the qualities of strategies formed when comparing the groups that did and did not have support tools.
- The added value of these tools on the quality of the planning process seems to depend strongly on the attention paid to the structure of a session. There are strong indications that properly structuring the exchange between the knowledge contained in the tool and the participants in a session is needed for there to be an effect on the quality of the process.

What are the recommendations?

- It would seem that investing in a mediator who can establish a connection between the knowledge contained in the tool and the group of participants is an important prerequisite. Without this, the best technology and the best model have little chance of providing added value.
- Digital tools provide added value in generating a better understanding, especially if they can be used jointly and interactively.
- Be selective in the use of digital tools. Because the tool can have a strong guiding effect, its use can negatively influence creativity and the cohesion between participants. If the goal is to stimulate creativity and a strong group process, the process must build in room for safeguarding these qualities.

For more information go to <http://www.climateplanning.tk/>



Interactive digital instruments



Experiments with students



Mediator necessary investment

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