the stimulus articles (1 = conflict-focused articles, 0 = inefficiency-focused articles) on conflict impression ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < .05$) and a significant effect of the stimulus articles on inefficiency impression ($\beta = -0.29$, $p < .05$). The conflict impression variable was also significantly predicted by the consensus perception of political processes ($\beta = -0.24$, $p < .05$). The less consensus-oriented political processes are perceived to be, the more likely are the articles considered to present political decision-making processes as conflict-oriented. Similarly, the inefficiency impression variable was significantly predicted by the efficiency perception of political processes ($\beta = -0.68$, $p < .05$). The less efficient political processes are perceived to be, the more likely are the articles considered to present political decision-making processes as inefficient. The model fit was quite satisfactory, with CFI = .89, RMSEA =.06 (90% CI = .05, .07), Chi-Square = 190.40, df = 85. Thus, the data does provide support for the assumption that the impression which the articles raised is determined by respondents' perception of political processes.

6.3.3. Effect of Stimulus Articles on Political Support via Effects on Accessibility

Priming effects are assumed, i.e. exposure to the articles is proposed to make the discrepancy temporarily accessible for participants who are high in the magnitude of the discrepancy (H6). As a result, for subjects who are high in the magnitude of the preference-perception discrepancy, it is predicted that the political support decreases as a result of exposure to the stimulus articles. To test this prediction, a series of magnitude of discrepancy (high, low) x experimental treatment (exposure to conflict articles, no exposure to conflict articles / exposure to inefficiency articles, no exposure to inefficiency articles respectively) ANOVAs was performed on political support; one series for the effect of the consensus discrepancy on political support, the other series for the effect of the efficiency discrepancy on political support. The discrepancy items are factor scores for consensus discrepancy and efficiency discrepancy. The construction of factor scales is described in Section 5.3.6, and Table 5.9 presents the results for the factor analysis.[84] The high vs. low discrepancy magnitude groups were built based on a median split. Respondents with consensus discrepancies above the median (MD = 1.33) were put in the high consensus discrepancy group (n = 128), respondents with consensus discrepancies below the median were put in the low consensus discrepancy group (n = 129). Respondents with efficiency discrepancies above the median (MD = 2.66) were put in the high efficiency discrepancy group (n = 131), and respondents with efficiency discrepancies below the median were put in the low efficiency discrepancy group (n = 127). The support items are also factor scores; the construction of the factor scores is described in

84 The discrepancy items were subjected to factor analysis using principal components extraction with oblique rotation which does not presume orthogonal factors. The factor loadings were used to derive factor scores for each survey respondent. Regression method was selected to construct the factor scales.

Section 5.3.6.[85] Two factors are distinguished. The first factor refers to support for the government. The second factor encompasses support for the parliament, support for political actors, and support for democracy. Socio-demographic variables (age, gender, education, income, political ideology, and political experience) were included as covariates. The results show a significant main effect of the consensus discrepancy on support for the parliament, political actors and democracy ($F = 10.075$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2=0.06$), a significant main effect of the efficiency discrepancy on support for the government ($F = 8.023$, $p = .005$, $\eta^2=0.04$) and a significant main effect of the efficiency discrepancy on support for the parliament, political actors and democracy ($F = 16.166$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2=0.09$). The main effect of the consensus discrepancy on support for the government was not significant ($F = 1.571$, $p = .219$, $\eta^2=0.004$). These results indicate that a large discrepancy between process preferences and process perceptions (in the sense that preferences exceed perceptions) is associated with lower levels of political support. The main effects of the treatment and the two-way interaction effects on support for the government and support for the parliament, political actors and democracy were all non-significant.[86] The lack of significant interaction effects indicates that political support does not decrease as a result of exposure to the stimulus articles for subjects who are high in the magnitude of the preference-perception discrepancy. Thus, the data do not support H6.

6.4. Summary and Discussion

This chapter reported findings on the impact of the experimental stimulus articles on respondents' perceptions of political processes. The results indicate that the stimulus

85 The political support items were subjected to factor analysis using principal components extraction with oblique rotation which does not presume orthogonal factors. The factor loadings were used to derive factor scores for each survey respondent. Regression method was selected to construct the factor scales.

86 Main effect of the conflict treatment on support for the government: ($F = 1.792$, $p = .182$, $\eta2 = 0.006$).
Main effect of the conflict treatment on support for the parliament, political actors and democracy: ($F = .336$, $p = .563$, $\eta2 = 0.004$).
Main effect of the inefficiency treatment on support for the government: ($F = 2.084$, $p = 150$, $\eta2 = 0.006$).
Main effect of the inefficiency treatment on support for the parliament, political actors and democracy: ($F = .006$, $p = .000$, $\eta2 = 0.000$).
Interaction effect conflict treatment & discrepancy magnitude on support for the government: ($F = 1.490$, $p = .223$).
Interaction effect conflict treatment & discrepancy magnitude on support for the parliament, political actors and democracy: ($F = .177$, $p = 674$).
Interaction effect inefficiency treatment & discrepancy magnitude on support for the government: ($F = .087$, $p = .768$).
Interaction effect inefficiency treatment & discrepancy magnitude on support for the parliament, political actors and democracy: ($F = .600$, $p = .439$).