

**Social Activism Targeting Business: Australian-based Case Studies of
Precarious Work and Climate Change**

by:

Michael Wambu Gatumu
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Master of Accounting
Master of Philosophy

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College of Arts Social Sciences and Commerce

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Michael Wambu Gatumu

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ABSTRACT

Social activism has often been used to bring about change in businesses and societies. Currently, precarious work and climate change are grand challenges that the world is facing. Signs indicate that social activism targeting businesses is being used as one of the tools to tackle these societal problems, based on the view that businesses should add value to society by addressing negative externalities. Management theorists have demonstrated empirically that social activism influences businesses and their decision-makers. However, there is a paucity of research examining this, considering not only the outcomes of activism, but also its context, and the mechanisms. This gap in literature is evident in Australia, particularly in the areas of precarious work and climate change.

With social activism being intrinsically multi-faceted, it is situated in an array of disciplines. It is in this vein that this thesis addresses the gap in the literature, by providing an integrated examination using Social Movement, Neo-institutional, Stakeholder, Resource Dependence and Bourdieu's Power theories. Such an examination reflects the complexity of social activism and its impacts, with a broad spectrum of elements, including institutional structures and power dynamics.

Adopting a qualitative case study methodology, this thesis examines how social activism influences businesses, based on precarious work and climate change in an Australian setting. The primary data source is semi-structured and narrative interviews with 37 participants. Based on the qualitative findings, this thesis presents a process model, in which the contextual factors, social activism mechanisms, actions of businesses, and outcomes, interact recursively. The findings suggest that political capital, which is a source of power, shapes the context, and the mechanisms. Moreover, legitimacy, pragmatism, and stakeholder salience influence the proactive and reactive actions of businesses, with the structural outcomes shaping the context and consequently, the mechanisms.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Thesis Topic

Social Activism and Change

Social activism has been critical in advancing change in businesses and societies (Briscoe & Gupta 2016, p. 409). This is evidenced through seminal social movements over time, such as the women's suffrage movement in the United States of America (USA) from the 1800s (McCammon et al. 2001); the 1960s civil rights movement in the United States of America (USA) (McAdam 1982); and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa (Cole & Limb 2017). More recently, social activism has contributed to a LGBTQ friendly organisational culture and supportive legislation (Roumpi, Giannakis & Delery 2020); transparency in supply chains through corporate disclosures and the protection of the human rights of vulnerable people (Islam & van Staden 2018); and adoption of corporate social innovation practices that have transformed companies and societies to be more sustainable (Carberry et al. 2019).

Demonstrating the complexity of social activism and the changes being pursued, prominent cases show that tensions between social activists and their targets tend to be enduring. For example, in relation to Australia's Aboriginal movement, the enactment of the *Native Title Act* marked a success for the Aboriginal movement (Burgmann 2003). However, the movement's objective to redress the inequalities that began in 1788 when the first European settlers arrived in Australia, has not been fully achieved (Burgmann 2003). Likewise, while discrimination based on race is proscribed by the American *Civil Rights Act*, racial inequalities still exist in 2020, as evidenced by the murder of George Floyd, which was a catalyst for Black Lives Matter protests in the USA and beyond (Rouleau, Hällgren & de Rond 2020).

Moreover, the possibility that powerful social actors can co-opt other actors, which consequently can impair the changes sought by social activists, demonstrates the complexity of changes through social activism. This is illustrated in Britain where the movement against the extraction of crude oil and natural gases through fracking has not found much success (Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018). Specifically, the powerful fossil-fuels energy sector and the British Government seemed through

co-opting to have deflected the discourse in the country away from the greenhouse gas emissions that are generated from the gases extracted to fracking being beneficial in terms of addressing Britain's energy demands (Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018). Co-opting by the powerful players would in such a case limit the changes being pursued through social activism.

In relation to how changes occur, it is widely recognised by social movement theorists that social activists pursuing changes need to collectively mobilise around the pertinent issues (McAdam 1982; McCarthy & Zald 1977; Pichardo 1997; Smelser 1962). These social movement theorists have posited that the rationality of activists is intrinsic to activism, and organisation around an issue is a key dimension of activism. However, in early years, some prominent psychologists viewed social activists as irrational, and social movements as disorganised pursuits of change (Freud 1922; Le Bon 1897). These views have changed such that catalysts of social movements have been conceptualised to include as the political conditions, the meanings that people attach to issues, the mobilisation of resources (McAdam 2017), and the objective of enabling societal well-being (Pichardo 1997).

This chapter introduces the thesis by firstly presenting the two issues that the thesis is examining in global and Australian settings. Following this, the aim of the thesis and its contribution will be highlighted. Thereafter, a brief review of extant knowledge and the research gap will be presented. The chapter will conclude with the outline of the thesis.

Precarious Work and Climate Change in a Global Setting

Two current topics that have been the focus of social activism are precarious work and climate change. In a global setting, these two topics are of significance, as evidenced by their inclusion in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs reflect the “grand challenges” that the world is facing and that need to be addressed by 2030 (Brammer et al. 2019, p. 518). The eighth of the 17 SDGs aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” and the tenth goal aims to “reduce inequality within and among countries” (United Nations 2015). These two goals pertain to precarious work as illustrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where precarious workers who

were in insecure employment (e.g., casual workers) were the first to face unemployment, without any redundancy benefits that permanent workers receive (van Barneveld et al. 2020).

In the literature, French theorist Pierre Bourdieu has been identified as being the first to use the term *précarité*, which translates to precarity in English. It refers to employment arrangements where workers are temporary, part-time, or casual (Millar 2017, p.2). Capturing the elements in Bourdieu's view on precarity is a definition of precarious work as being “uncertain, unstable and risky” (Kalleberg 2009, p. 2), since the risk associated with work is primarily borne by the worker and not the government or employer (Kalleberg & Hewison 2013).

The thirteenth SDG aims to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” (United Nations 2015). Climate change occurs due to the production of greenhouse gas emissions, like the use of fossil fuels, which contribute to global warming (Höök & Tang 2013). Climate change impedes the ability to achieve social justice and equality throughout the world, as empirical evidence demonstrates that people who are already vulnerable suffer the most from the impacts of climate change (Nerini et al. 2019). Precarious work and climate change are clearly grand challenges that mobilise different stakeholders to address them.

Precarious Work and Climate Change in Australia

Precarious work is a complex and significant issue in an Australian setting. Specifically, key issues linked to precarity include wage stagnation (Stanford 2018), the living wage (Thorntwaite 2017), and wage theft in the form of employers deliberately underpaying their workers entitlements including superannuation and penalty rates (Chalmers 2019; Evans 2019; Stein & Ogilvie 2020). The indication is that precarity is attributable to the context. For example, the existence of institutional structures that enabled the wages of the low-income earners to be stagnant while the country's production growth is rising (Stanford 2018). Another contextual factor contributing to precarity is culture. Specifically, workers on temporary visas have been underpaid, but the exploitations by their employers have gone unreported because of a lack of awareness of their rights and a fear that their visas might be jeopardised (Thorntwaite 2017).

The stakeholders in relation to precarious work include industry associations, trade unions and other activist groups such as charities that have been campaigning for the rights of precarious workers. Industry associations have asserted that workers in casual and temporary work arrangements are not disadvantaged as they have the flexibility to balance work responsibilities, family, and leisure (Markey & McIvor 2018). Contrastingly, trade unions and other activist groups for the rights of precarious workers have argued that employers are the main beneficiaries of precarious work, with workers tending to face uncertainty in their wages and working conditions, especially those in low-skill and easily replaceable roles (Markey & McIvor 2018). In response to issues such as wage stagnation, wage theft, and the inequalities in the labour market, unions and activist groups have been calling for significant changes to the industrial relations system, to address the country's inequalities attributable to the system (Clibborn 2019).

Climate change is also a contentious topic in Australia, as demonstrated by the enactment, and then the repeal, of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) (Nyberg, Spicer & Wright 2013). Under a Labor Government, the CPRS legislation was passed, in November 2011, by the Australian Parliament as a federal government greenhouse gases emissions scheme to curb anthropogenic climate change (Wright & Nyberg 2017). Some large and powerful businesses, specifically those in the energy and resource sectors, were strongly opposed to the enactment of the CPRS (Nyberg, Spicer & Wright 2013). A tactic that these businesses used was linking their economic well-being with that of the Australian society, arguing that the CPRS would have an adverse effect on their market competitiveness and the well-being of Australians (Nyberg, Spicer & Wright 2013). Another tactic that the powerful companies used was conducting public campaigns where they framed the CPRS as the “government’s carbon tax”; while it was not a tax, it imposed a price on carbon (Wright & Nyberg 2014, p. 213). A Conservative Government won the September 2013 federal election, and a few weeks later, the Government introduced a bill to repeal the CPRS legislation, which was passed in July 2014 (Wright & Nyberg 2017). With the Conservative Liberal-National Parties governing the country from September 2013 to the present, Australia has remained without CPRS legislation.

Besides Government and businesses, another key stakeholder in the climate change issue is activist groups. The activist groups seeking climate action have been calling for a transformation of

institutional structures (Marris 2019; Morton 2021). A transformation of these structures would enable a more sustainable future and the achievement of the 1.5 degrees Celsius target provided in the *Paris Agreement*, of which Australia is one of the countries that have committed to it (O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward 2018). Activist groups have also targeted businesses, such as mining companies in the fossil fuel sector, which have been directly contributing to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions (Morton 2021). Other companies that have been targeted, such as those in the financial sector, are not necessarily high emitters of greenhouse gas emissions but are influential in that they provide finance and insurance to the fossil fuel companies (Piggot 2018). Activist groups target these companies to enable a more sustainable future (Morton 2021; O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward 2018).

Significance of Precarity and Climate Change

In Australia, the significance of precarity is demonstrated by Government Inquiries that have focused on the issue. Specifically, in 2016, a Federal Senate Inquiry into the exploitation of workers under temporary visas released its report recommending that workers on these visas be educated on their rights (Education and Employment References Committee 2016). In a similar vein, in 2018, a Queensland State Government Senate Inquiry that examined wage theft also recommended education as a strategy to deal with the issue (Education Employment and Small Business Committee 2018). In another state government context, the 2018 Victoria Parliament Inquiry into penalty rates and fair wages reported that there was inadequate legislative protection for vulnerable workers (Penalty Rates and Fair Pay Select Committee 2018). More recently, at a federal level, there is a Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into wage underpayments whose report is due around June 2021 (Parliament of Australia 2020).

Likewise, the significance of climate change is demonstrated by the Victoria State Government Inquiry into climate change that focussed on it being tackled at a community level. The report tabled in November 2020 by Victoria's Parliament highlighted that in climate change matters, communities across the state were looking for leadership from the Government in the form of stronger emission reduction targets (Parliament of Victoria 2020). The conservative Federal Governments have tended to take a minimalist policy approach in relation to climate change (Crowley 2017). However, in November 2020 it established an inquiry into legislation on climate

change mitigation and adaptation (Parliament of Australia 2021). Moreover, the significance of climate change seems to have permeated to case law. Specifically, a 2019 ruling by the New South Wales Land and Environment Court rejected the approval of a coal mine, demonstrating the currency and importance of the topic (Hughes 2019). The Judge, in his ruling, stated that he would not grant consent for the mine because it would result in a significant increase in the global greenhouse gas emissions and that in the current milieu, the focus should be on reducing emission levels (Hughes 2019). These illustrations demonstrate the significance of precarity and climate change in an Australian setting.

Aim of the Thesis and Contribution

This thesis aims to explore the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism for business and stakeholders in Australia in relation to social activism surrounding precarious work and climate change. Social activism has facilitated changes that pertain to many and different environmental and social issues. Precarious work and climate change are *grand challenges*, as reflected by the SDGs; therefore, gaining an understanding of social activism surrounding these issues is of value. Specifically, such an understanding is of value to a range of social actors in the following ways: first, it can assist business to proactively plan for the institutional pressures encountered as well as respond to such pressures; second, it can be of use to social activists and advocacy organisations, in their pursuits of change, to identify suitable strategies and tactics; third, it can assist regulatory bodies and governments to identify and address gaps in policies that if addressed can generate environmental and social value.

Extant Knowledge on Social Activism and Businesses

Theories

Social activism is multi-faceted by nature and hence situated in various disciplines including sociology, political science, organisational studies, and management. Based on this multi-dimensionality, an integration of Social Movement, Neo-institutional, Stakeholder, Resource Dependence and Bourdieu's Power theories are used in this thesis. Social Movement theory has been a basis for most of the studies examining the impacts of social activism on businesses because as posited the theory explains the conditions that enable social movements to develop, and this can include some form of deprivation as well as resonance with the aims of the movement (Smelser

1962). The theory also explains the mobilisation process required for a social movement to achieve its aims (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy & Zald 1977), as well as the framing process that social movements use in their campaigns (Benford & Snow 2000). Moreover, Social Movement theory explains the activism tactics such as protests (King 2008), and the outcomes of the movement such as the cultural changes that the movements aspire to, for example America's LGBTQ movements aim for public support for marriage equality (Amenta & Polletta 2019). In relation to social activism tactics, the term encompasses the "routines" undertaken by activists to obtain "concessions" from their targets, gain "attention" to their causes and/or mobilise people to join their cause (Briscoe & Gupta 2016, p.675).

Neo-institutional, Stakeholder and Resource Dependence theories explain how businesses respond to external pressures including those from social activists. Specifically, Neo-institutional theory as proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) explains businesses obtain legitimacy based on coercive, normative, or mimetic isomorphic pressures. Stakeholder theory based on work by Freeman (1984) proposes that organisations are in reciprocal relationships with their stakeholders, and this work has been extended by Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) who focused on how the salience of stakeholders such as social activists, is determined by the legitimacy and urgency of their demands, as well as the power of the stakeholders. Resource Dependence theory identifies power in the relationship between businesses and stakeholders as an important factor and as posited by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), the control of resources and interdependencies among social actors influence their decisions. These interdependencies include those between social activists and businesses, and as posited by Briscoe and Gupta (2016), social activists are constrained by their resource dependence on the businesses their target.

As stated earlier in this chapter, Bourdieu has been identified as being the first to use the term precarity in relation to work arrangements (Millar 2017). This can be traced back to his first publication on the social inequalities based on his experiences in the French Army during the Algerian war in the 1950s and 1960s (Millar 2017). Bourdieu's other work also sought to understand inequalities in societies (Swartz 1997), which is important when considering the power dynamics between social activists and their targets, who are powerholders. Bourdieu's Power theory explains the power dynamics based on concepts that Bourdieu refers to as *habitus*, *fields*,

and *capital*. *Habitus* are the habits or more precisely the dispositions that people unconsciously possess (Bourdieu 1993), which are enacted within *fields*, which Bourdieu uses as a spatial metaphor for the contexts in which tensions between different social actors occur (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The theory explains that there are tensions because of the limited *capital* in the *fields* that social actors are seeking to gain more of or retain (Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The theory also explains that the habitus prevalent in fields represents the values and ideologies of the most dominant social actors (Bourdieu 1993), and therefore the indication is that social activism seeks to change the dominant *habitus*.

Empirical Research

Empirical research has also provided insights into social activism and its influence on business. As will be briefly explained below, this has been done in terms of its impetus, the mechanisms and the outcomes for business and stakeholders.

Impetus of Activism

Empirical studies have demonstrated that the political conditions are an impetus for social activism (Bartley 2003; Dubuisson-Quellier 2013; McLean & Fuller 2016; Vasi et al. 2015). For example, political conditions underpinned by neoliberalism have been found to be an impetus for social movements in the protection of the natural environment and campaigning for workers (Bartley 2003). Empirical studies have also found social issues (Bartley & Child 2014; Chuang, Church & Hu 2018; Islam & van Staden 2018; Van Cranenburgh, Liket & Roome 2013) to be an impetus for social activism; an illustration of this is the exploitation of workers in conflict zones (Islam & van Staden 2018). In a similar vein, corporate governance issues are also an impetus for social activism (Akemu, Whiteman & Kennedy 2016; Neville et al. 2019; Marquardt & Wiedman 2016), which includes those campaigning against the lack of gender diversity on boards (Marquardt & Wiedman 2016).

Empirical research has also found that institutional structures impact the issues that social activism aim to address (Doh & Guay 2006; Kellner et al. 2016; Kumar et al. 2020; Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018). For example, a complex industrial relations system has been found to have a negative effect on business compliance in relation to their workers' rights (Kellner et al 2016), and climate change

regulation has been found to influence climate action by businesses (Kumar et al. 2020). The institutional structures of countries have also been found to influence the actions of social actors including activists and business (Doh & Guay 2006; Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018).

Social Activism Mechanisms

Research on social activism mechanisms has found that the mobilisation process by activists is linked to power (Tapia 2013; Yaziji & Doh 2013). Specifically, social activists face constraints in terms of mobilising resources because the resources that they need to achieve their aims tend to be controlled by individuals and institutions that espouse conflicting values and ideologies that differ from those of the activists (Yaziji & Doh 2013). It has therefore been found that mobilisation is most effective through social capital or the social networks of the activists (Akchurin & Lee 2013). For example, social networks can enable activists to gain more publicity on their campaigns (Akchurin & Lee 2013). In this vein, the internet has also been found to have considerably reduced the transactional costs required for mobilisation (Gomez-Carrasco & Michelon 2017; Luo, Zhang & Marquis 2016).

Besides mobilisation, empirical studies on social activism mechanisms have shed light on the framing process and activism tactics. The framing process, in which a campaign highlights a problem in society and offers potential solutions that can be addressed through a social movement's collective identity, has been found to enable the mobilisation of resources by the movements (Hervieux & Voltan 2018; Lee, Ramus & Vaccaro 2018). In terms of activism tactics, research has indicated that there is a link between protests where a company's reputation is threatened and change, not just within the company but also at the sector-level (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015). It has also been found that large organisations with a good reputation can be targeted by social activists to enhance the visibility of the activism campaign (Bartley & Child 2014). Shareholder activism is another social activism tactic. In Australia, empirical evidence indicates that this tactic has started to gain traction, particularly in relation to climate change shareholder resolutions (de Wit & Luck 2020).

Business Mechanisms

A mechanism provides an explanation on *how and/or why* a phenomenon operates as it does (Anderson et al. 2009), and therefore business mechanisms is used here to refer to *how and/or why* businesses are influenced by social activism. Research on business mechanisms has found that they tend to operate on a short-term shareholder model, which contrasts with a longer-term stakeholder model (Wright & Nyberg 2017; Young & Marais 2012). More specifically, in relation to social activism, legitimacy has been found to be a basis for the actions of businesses as they aim to protect it (Andia & Chorev 2017; McDonnell & King 2013; Ritson, Wilson & Maclean 2015). For example, to protect its legitimacy, the tobacco industry was found to have funded research to counter social activism campaigns on the harmful effects of smoking (Andia & Chorev 2017). Associated with legitimacy, research has also found that the salience of stakeholders impacts how business decision-makers respond to social activists (Briscoe, Chin & Hambrick 2014; Gupta & Briscoe 2020; Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015). As an illustration, businesses have been found to respond to social activism when a campaign gives them a competitive advantage (Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015).

Several empirical studies (Grant & Vasi 2017; Schneiberg 2013; Van Wijk et al. 2013; Wilmers 2017; Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018) have also shed light on the power dynamics in the relationship between social activists, businesses, and industry associations. From these studies it has been found that businesses use a wide range of tactics to entrench power, when their power is threatened (Schneiberg 2013; Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018). Although these studies have found businesses to have co-opted social activists, there is an indication that social activists are not always co-opted by more powerful social actors (Grant & Vasi 2017; Van Wijk et al. 2013). For example, it has been found that social movement organisations whose aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions were not co-opted by powerful energy businesses (Grant & Vasi 2017).

Outcomes of Social Activism

Empirical research on the outcomes of social activism has found a link between activism and its influence on business and decision-makers. At an individual level it has been found that trade unions have generated positive wage returns for their members despite oppositional forces from business (Nahm, Dobbie & MacMillan 2017; Wilmers 2017). At an organisational level, the

outcomes of social activism include its impact on board structure in corporations, with board members leaving or retaining their positions based on social activism (McDonnell & Cobb 2020). There have also been negative financial impacts on businesses targeted by social activists (King 2008; Lewis, O'Donovan & Willett 2017). At a structural level, social activism has added social and environmental value. For example, social value was added with Australian trade unions in the 1970s opposing apartheid in South Africa (Cole & Limb 2017). Environmental value was generated with the “green bans” that the Australian union movement enforced to protect the natural environment (Burgmann 2008, p.65). The structural outcomes of social activism have also resulted in changes in legislation, such as a change to the regulation on fracking (Klutzz 2019). Other structural outcomes include multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Global Reporting Initiative to generate environmental and social value (Carberry et al. 2019). Notwithstanding these changes, research has also found that the status quo has been maintained by business, and more so in relation to climate action (Markey & McIvor 2019; Wright & Nyberg 2019).

Research Gap

Studies of social activism come from an inter disciplinary array of perspectives. Drawing on this range of theoretical perspectives a variety of empirical studies have examined social activism’s contextual factors (Carberry et al. 2019; Chuang, Church & Hu 2018; Islam & van Staden 2018; Marquardt & Wiedman 2016); the strategies and tactics used by activists (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015; Gomez-Carrasco & Michelon 2017; Grant & Vasi 2017; Kim & Youm 2017); the responses by businesses to social activism (Gupta & Briscoe 2020; Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015; Schneiberg 2013; Wright & Nyberg 2017); and the outcomes of social activism (Bartley 2003; Burgmann 2008; Klutzz 2019; Wilmers 2017). Even so, there is a research gap on the contextual factors, mechanisms and outcomes of social activism surrounding precarious work and climate change in an Australian context. Addressing this research gap is of significance because it provides an understanding on how business and its stakeholders are responding to two prominent global challenges, that is, precarious work and climate change. Australian industrial relations theorists have identified precarious work, and specifically in relation to migrant workers, as a “critical issue for scholarship” (Wright & Clibborn 2019, p.157), whilst management theorists have stated that, “of all challenges facing humanity, none is more profound than climate change” (Wright & Nyberg

2017, p. 1633). Gaining insights into *how* social activism, that focuses on these two issues influences business, in an Australian context is therefore of significance.

In relation to the two issues of focus in this thesis, Ptashnick and Zuberi (2015) focused on the actions of businesses in relation to the adoption of the living wage in Canada while Wright and Nyberg (2017) examined the responses of large Australian businesses to climate change. These two studies focused on the mechanisms of activists. There has however been no study identified that explored the contextual factors that have enabled the social movements surrounding precarious work and climate change in Australia, the actions of the social activists, businesses and their representatives and the outcomes of social activism for business and stakeholders. Noteworthy is a lack of studies that concurrently draw on the range of theoretical perspectives concurrently. Social movement theory tends to look at drivers, mechanisms, and outcomes, while this thesis draws on a range of theoretical perspectives to examine these elements in more depth. The thesis will bring to the fore factors that are important to the issue at hand, and drawing on different theories, develop a model that demonstrates the interactions between context, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism.

Research Questions

The main research question that the thesis address is: *how does social activism emerge and consequently affect business and its stakeholders?* There are four subsidiary research questions focusing on the context, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism: first, *how does the context enable social activism?* Second, *how do social activists use a range of mechanisms for change?* Third, also focusing on the mechanisms, *how do businesses and their representatives respond to social activism?* Fourth, *how do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?*

Outline of the Thesis

The thesis has 10 chapters, with this chapter having introduced social activism as being important in facilitating social and environmental changes. The chapter also introduced precarious work and climate change, which are two *grand challenges* as reflected by the SDGs. In addition, it has highlighted the research gap on the contextual factors, mechanisms and outcomes of social

activism surrounding precarious work and climate change. Chapter 2 presents the theories that inform the study. Chapter 3 presents the empirical research on social activism and businesses. Chapter 4 presents a discussion on the research methodology. Chapter 5 presents the first analysis chapter and examines the findings on the contextual factors in the precarious work case study; and Chapter 6 presents an analysis of the case study's mechanisms and outcomes. Chapter 7 examines the contextual factors in the climate change case study; and Chapter 8 presents an analysis of this case study's mechanisms and outcomes. Chapter 9 presents the cross-case analysis; and Chapter 10 concludes the thesis.

CHAPTER 2: THEORIES

Introduction

Chapter 1 introduced precarious work and climate change as the two topics that are being explored in this thesis. The initial step in exploring this topic is to examine the theories that can shed light on the social movements surrounding businesses and their stakeholders. The objective of this chapter is to provide a discussion on the contextual factors that can enable social movements to develop, the strategies used by social activists, the responses by businesses to the movements and the outcomes of social activism; by drawing from Social Movement, Neo-institutional, Stakeholder, Resource Dependence and Bourdieu's Power theories.

Social Movement Theory

Early Descriptions of the Impetus Behind Social Movements

Over a century ago, scholars portrayed social movements as being disorganised, impulsive and irrational. Specifically, in the 1890s, psychological scholarly work by Gustave Le Bon, argued that individuals lost their rationality, became emotional as well as violent when they became part of a social movement or joined a "crowd" (Le Bon 1897). Le Bon stated, "the crowd is always intellectually inferior to the isolated individual, but that, from the point of view of feelings, and of the acts these feelings provoke, the crowd may be according to circumstances, be better or worse than the individual" (Le Bon 1897). Similarly, in the 1920s, other psychological scholarly work by Sigmund Freud asserted that when individuals come together to form a group such as a social movement, then their thoughts and actions become those of a "herd instinct" or in other words, a mob mentality, whereby the individuals lack autonomy (Freud 1922). These early depictions of social movements had a hostile tone towards people coalescing around an issue and attempting to remedy or fight for it.

Relative Deprivation and Structural Functionalism Theories

During the time of Le Bon and Freud's depictions of social movements and up to the 1960s, social movements could be explained by Relative Deprivation and Structural Functionalism theories. Relative Deprivation theory can be linked to Samuel Stouffer who, during the Second World War,

surveyed soldiers and found that some soldiers were comfortable with their slow promotion while others were dissatisfied (Stouffer et al. 1949 cited by Pettigrew 2015). An analysis of these findings found that the immediate points of reference were the yardsticks that people used as a comparison (Stouffer et al. 1949 cited by Pettigrew 2015). For example, the “military policemen” compared their promotions with other “military policemen” and not the “air corpsmen” with whom they did not interact (Pettigrew 2015, p. 11). The theory therefore posits that people will be driven to seek remedial action when they feel dissatisfied based on an immediate point of reference (Walker & Pettigrew 1984).

Structural Functionalism as posited by Smelser (1962) is based on the research by Seminal sociologists Émile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton (Fogarty 1994). Structural Functionalism theory posits that society is represented by a unified moral code which constrains the levels of autonomy of the social actors (Durkheim 1933 cited in Fogarty 1994, p. 206). Structural functionalism aims to firstly identify the structures or the systems that are based on social norms and, secondly, to identify functions which explain how the structures work (Parsons 1937; Merton 1968 cited in Fogarty 1994, p. 206). In relation to social movements, Smelser (1962) posited that relative deprivation, in and of itself, is not sufficient to spur a social movement but that the deprivation should be structural. An example of a structural deprivation is wage inequality in a country.

Resource Mobilisation Theory (A Sub-Set of Social Movement Theory)

Resource Mobilisation theory is a sub-set of Social Movement theory and seems to have gained a significant amount of traction in the 1970s (McCarthy & Zald 1977). Resource Mobilisation theory diverts from a focus on the motivations of individuals being part of a collective identity, such as in Relative Deprivation and Structural Functionalism theories, to an emphasis on how a social movement can successfully achieve its objectives. A core assumption of Resource Mobilisation theory is that individuals are rational (Jenkins 1983), which differs from the depictions of social movements by Le Bon and Freud. Relying on this assumption, Resource Mobilisation theory posits that for a social movement to successfully achieve its aims, focus should first be on mobilising resources such as funding, labour, and infrastructure (McCarthy & Zald 1977) and second on the mobilising structures (Jenkins 1983). The mobilising structures are the mechanisms that explain

how social movements operate (Jenkins 1983). More recent theoretical work has demonstrated that the consideration of these mechanisms is important because having resources does not necessarily translate to having a successful social movement (McAdam 2017). The methods used to mobilise the resources and coordinate the operations also need to be factored in for a social movement to successfully attain its goals (McAdam 2017).

Framing

Connected with mobilisation of resources is the framing process, in which three main tasks are undertaken. The first is “diagnosis”, which identifies what the issue is and who is to blame for it; secondly, the “prognosis”, which provides the potential solutions to the issue; and thirdly, the “motivation”, where people are mobilised to be part of the issue’s collective identity (Benford & Snow 2000, p. 615). Associated with these three steps are emotional dimensions, specifically “anger” due to the issue, “fear” because of the threat the issue poses and “hope” that the issue can be resolved through the collective identity (McAdam 2017, p. 194).

Political Process Theory (A Sub-Set of Social Movement Theory)

Political Process theory is also a sub-set of Social Movement theory and like Resource Mobilisation theory, relies on the assumption that individuals are rational. However, it focuses on the political environments of social movements, which are not considered by Resource Mobilisation theory (McAdam 2017). Political Process theory was developed by theorist Doug McAdam based on a case study of the American civil rights movement (McAdam 1982).

Political opportunities, *mobilisation*, and the *meanings* that people attach to their situation (McAdam 2017, p. 202) are the key factors of Political Process theory. McAdam’s case study analysis demonstrated that any action or event that seeks to undermine the political structures provides *political opportunities* for the challengers of the system to *mobilise* into a collective action group (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 2011). The challengers generally have considerably weaker bargaining power than their leaders (McAdam 1982). More recent work by McAdam (2017) identified that the *meanings* that people attach to their situation is a third key factor. The meanings that people attach to their situation is comparable to Relative Deprivation theory and Structural Functionalism as a catalyst for social movements is based on a form of perceived deprivation of

something that is of value to the people. McAdam (2017) illustrated that the 1979 nuclear accident in Pennsylvania, USA, was a catalyst for the public to become more aware and fearful of nuclear technology and subsequently was an acceleration of the denuclearisation movement in the USA. The awareness and fear that people attached to the nuclear technology was *a not in my backyard* (NIMBY) type of catalyst for the movement. McAdam (2017), however, highlighted that an exception was the climate change movement, whereby extreme weather events have not seemingly been catalysts for the movement in the USA. He stated that it was not clear why the NIMBY type of catalyst did not apply to America's climate change movement.

New Social Movement Theory (A Sub-Set of Social Movement Theory)

New Social Movement theory is concerned with the micro and macro levels of contemporary social movements (Pichardo 1997). At the micro level, the theory focusses on how personal identity and associated behaviours are interlinked with social movements (Pichardo 1997). At the macro level the focus is on the economic context associated with, and the impact of culture on contemporary social movements (della Porta 2015). There are varied perspectives on the New Social Movement theory (Buechler 1995), and these are united by two assertions. The first assertion is that contemporary social movements developed following a shift from a predominant manufacturing economy to one that is more service based (Pichardo 1997). The second assertion is that the demands that are made by contemporary social movements are different from those in a primarily manufacturing economy (Buechler 1995). Specifically, while the demands of the traditional social movements were based on aspects that were instrumental for the working class, the demands of the contemporary social movements are based on enhancing the general well-being of the social activists (Pichardo 1997). Though both progressive and conservative contemporary social movements have contributed to transformational change, New Social Movement theory is based on social movements underpinned by progressive ideologies (Pichardo 1997). Examples of social movements that have been examined using the theory include those seeking to address environmental issues and youth-related issues as well as inequalities based on gender and sexual orientation (Pichardo 1997). Social movement unionism, which focuses on the well-being of all, and not just union members, is a concept that is aligned with New Social Movement theory.

Social Movement Unionism

Origin and Definition of the Concept

Social movement unionism was conceptualised to describe militant trade unions that existed under the authoritarian political regimes in South Africa, Brazil, South Korea, and the Philippines in the 1970s and 1980s (Tapia & Alberti 2018). Notwithstanding trade unions being sidelined in the political decision-making processes under these dictatorships, it did not translate to the unions being disillusioned or co-opted by the powerful governments (Tapia & Alberti 2018). Instead, the unions fought for the rights of the whole working class rather than a sub-group of workers that they represented (von Holdt 2002). They did so by building alliances at the grassroots-level with other social activists, specifically students and the local communities (Fairbrother 2008). These actions resulted in a shift from the classical role of trade unions being primarily involved in wage bargaining of their members to a considerably broader focus on remedying wider social inequalities (Szabó 2020).

Therefore, social movement unionism generally includes trade unions building alliances with other social activists as strategies to effect social change in the wider community (Fairbrother 2008). In practice, social movement unionism entails trade unions considering how the limited resources within their fields and in their possession are to be used for other matters besides bargaining for better wages and working conditions for their members (Prowse & Fells 2016). Social movement unionism contrasts with business unionism, which encapsulates the traditional trade union role of wage bargaining on behalf of union members (Fairbrother 2008).

Description of Trade Unions as Social Movements or Processes in Social Movements

In the literature at the nexus of social movements and industrial relations, some researchers have described trade unions as being social movements (Evans 2015; Fairbrother 2008; Szabó 2020), whilst others depict trade unions as processes in social movements (Diani 2019). For the first description, trade unions are represented as a vehicle to fight for the social actors who have constrained power, which is a feature of social movements (Fairbrother 2008). These social actors would not necessarily be members of trade unions, which is of importance due to data showing that there has been a decrease in trade union density (i.e. the proportion of workers and employees who are trade union members) in many countries (Lazar & Sanchez 2019). Adopting a business

unionism approach would see many workers not receiving the protection of their rights by trade unions (Lazar & Sanchez 2019). On the other hand, adopting a social movement approach entails that besides representing the union members, the unions had to be concerned with the rights of the precarious and non-unionised workers (Tapia, Elfström & Roca-Servat 2018).

Extending the analysis of social movement unionism based on the concept of trade unions as processes in social movements, Diani (2019) proposed an analysis at the individual, organisational and event levels. The individual-level analysis pertains to how the activist chooses to engage with the opponent (Diani 2019). At the organisational level, the analysis is on the trade union or social movement organisation. An example would be how the union decides to allocate its resources, recruit members, and provide them with incentives to participate in the union. The events-level analysis pertains to gatherings of activists and other stakeholders for industrial relations matters such as protest rallies. Diani (2019) asserted that transformational change that has occurred within the first two decades of the 21st century had been led by individual social activists and not trade unions. He further explained that the milieu of the first two decades of the 21st century was more complex than the milieu of the 1960s when trade unions could mobilise people using class-based discourses to fight against social injustices (Diani 2019). One example provided by Diani (2019) to support his assertion related to the Greek protests against the austerity measures imposed on the country in the early 2010s. Diani (2019) highlighted that though the Greek trade unions mobilisation efforts had led to a high turnout of social activists in the protests across Athens and other Greek cities, transformational change was largely due to the efforts of individual social activists. The research on the roles of Greek trade unions during the period of austerity by Vogiatzoglou (2018) appears to support Diani (2019)'s view. Specifically, Vogiatzoglou (2018) highlights that despite two large Greek trade unions mobilising tens of thousands of people to protest against the austerity measures, there was minimal substantive change. Vogiatzoglou (2018) found that substantive change could be attributed to precarious workers (who in Greece are highly unionised) who had formed coalitions with non-labour social activist groups, which became a catalyst for the anti-austerity social movement. Despite there being a difference in the view that trade unions are a social movement versus trade unions being a process in social movements, a unifying factor is the importance placed on trade unions building alliances when pursuing transformational change.

Summary of Social Movement Theory and the Concept of Social Movement Unionism

There has been a shift in the perception of individuals who collectively identify with a social movement to challenge the system as being irrational (Freud 1922; Le Bon 1897) to these individuals being rational (McAdam 1982; McCarthy & Zald 1977). Though Relative Deprivation and Structural Functionalism are traditional theories that appear to have been prominent when Le Bon and Freud argued about the irrationality of social activists, there is value in these two theories. Relative Deprivation theory focuses on the immediate circumstance of an individual and uses it as a yardstick to judge the individual's level of satisfaction (Stouffer et al. 1949 cited by Pettigrew 2015). For Structural Functionalism there is value given the theory posits that structural relative deprivation, a clear diagnosis of the problem and a plausible prognosis to address the problem are important conditions for successful social movements to develop (Smelser 1962).

More recent theories of social movements, specifically Resource Mobilisation and Political Process theories, are also useful. Resource Mobilisation theory is useful as it canvasses the resources social movements mobilise as well as the associated mobilising structures (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy & Zald 1977). In Political Process theory, which is closely associated with Resource Mobilisation theory, key factors are political opportunities, mobilisation (McAdam 1982), and the meanings that people attach to their situations (McAdam 2017). These are useful to understanding the contextual factors and mechanisms of social activism. Lastly, New Social Movements theory, which considers personal identities and behaviour at the micro-level (Pichardo 1997), and political factors, economic context and cultural context surrounding social movements at the macro-level (della Porta 2015), is also of value as an analytical tool. The concept of social movement unionism is an important framework given this thesis aims to explore social activism in the context of precarious work and climate change, which are topics in which alliances between the union movement and other powerful players can contribute to transformational change. The summary of the key factors of Social Movement theory that are relevant in this thesis are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Summary of Key Factors of Social Movement Theory

Social Movement Theory	Key factor
Relative Deprivation theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Relative deprivation
Structural Functionalism theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Structural deprivation▪ Clear diagnosis (causes) of the problem and plausible prognosis (solutions).
Resource Mobilisation theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Resources being mobilised▪ Mobilising structures
Framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Diagnosis of the issue▪ Prognosis of the solution▪ Motivation to associate with the collective identity
Political Process theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Political opportunities▪ Mobilisation▪ Meanings that people attach to their situations
New Social Movement theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Personal identity and behaviour at the micro level▪ Cultural, economic, and political contexts at the macro-level
Social Movement Unionism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The well-being of society and not just the union's members▪ Alliances are formed for transformational change

Neo-institutional Theory

Principles of Neo-institutional Theory

Neo-institutional theory explains how organisations conform to their social contexts as they seek their legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). The conformity is driven by *coercive*, *mimetic*, and *normative* pressures (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). The *coercive* pressures for organisations to conform come from regulatory bodies and the media (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). The *mimetic* pressures arise in times of uncertainty and result in managers emulating the practices of other organisations in their decision making (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). *Normative* pressures originate from the peer groups (i.e. other people within the same profession) of decision-makers (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). According to the theory, these three isomorphic pressures are evident as the organisational decision-makers strive for legitimacy in their fields (DiMaggio & Powell 1983).

Legitimacy is attained when the actions of an organisation are aligned with the explicit rules and regulations as well as with the implicit norms that are in the social environment in which the organisation operates (Suddaby 2013). Related to legitimacy is the *social licence to operate*, which

is generally used with reference to sectors that have a direct association with natural resources such as mining, forestry, and energy (Raufflet et al. 2013). The social license is a perception that is held by the local community in which the organisation operates, and it grants the organisation the mandate to undertake its activities (Raufflet et al. 2013).

Social Activism and Neo-institutional Theory

From a Neo-institutional theoretical perspective, social activism is an example of an institutional pressure that businesses generally encounter (Campbell 2007). In other words, social movements or social activists are “extra-institutional forces” or external stakeholders whose goals are to provide new business policies or practices by disrupting the existing structures (Schneiberg 2013, p. 654). Social activism therefore entails a competition between social activists and businesses for institutional logics (Schneiberg 2013). Institutional logics refer to the dominant values and ideologies within a society that people use to make sense of reality and determine behaviours that will yield successes (Thornton & Ocasio 1999). As a comparison, institutional logics focus on the dominant values and ideologies, and social activism focuses on how the dominant values and ideologies can be changed (McAdam & Scott 2005).

According to Neo-institutional theory, social activism creates uncertainty and therefore business decision-makers within a sector use each other as points of reference to mitigate the uncertainty, thereby resulting in a diffusion of practices or reforms (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015). In instances where there is a diffusion of reforms, social activists can be viewed as external institutional entrepreneurs (King & Soule 2007). The notion of institutional entrepreneurship is drawn from Neo-institutional theory, which entails social actors using their agency to develop new institutions or change existing institutions (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum 2009). Social activists, who are external stakeholders of businesses and agents of change, can therefore be conceptualised as external institutional entrepreneurs (King & Soule 2007).

More recently, theorists have provided insights on the impacts of institutions or institutional pressures in relation to social movements. More specifically, Amenta and Polletta (2019) concluded that knowledge on how institutions such as the media, businesses and legislature operate is instrumental in influencing the cultural impacts of social movements. For example, Amenta and

Polletta (2019) posited that social movements are most likely to generate cultural shifts by leveraging journalists' desires for novel news stories or accounts that demonstrate both sides of a story. Georgallis and Lee (2020) also shed light on the impacts of institutional pressures from social movements by theorising that social movements lead businesses with different organisational identities to join moral markets (i.e. markets where the primary purpose is to generate environmental and/or social value). For example, social movements can link market opportunities to widely held values and ideologies and thereby alter the perceptions held by managers of businesses on the movement's cause (Georgallis 2017). In such instances, however, Georgallis and Lee (2020) posited that the institutional pressures by social movements did not lead to conformity but to businesses with a wide range of organisational identities. In summary, theorists have posited that cultural impacts of social movements are linked to knowledge on institutions, and social movements are influential in getting businesses with varied organisational identities to enter moral markets.

Businesses Defying and Conceding to Institutional Pressures

Neo-institutional theorists DiMaggio and Powell (1983) indicated that organisations conform to institutional pressures blindly. Pache and Santos (2010) provided further insight into the responses by organisations to institutional pressures by positing that the organisations have agency, and consequently can defy or concede to institutional pressures. Pache and Santos (2010) posited that businesses, in defiance of institutional pressures (e.g. from social activists), can dismiss the demands by their stakeholders, launch attacks against the stakeholders making the demands, and co-opt the stakeholders to influence the sources of the institutional pressures. Pache and Santos (2010) also posited that businesses can concede to institutional pressures, and this can be done acquiescently or as a concession where the businesses partially conform to the institutional demands. Pache and Santos (2013) also posited that some businesses can blend market institutional logics that focus on financial returns and social welfare institutional logics concerned with the environmental and/or social value that is generated. For example, in America between 2001 and 2019, fast-food restaurant KFC has been defying the demands of the social movement organisation, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) for the business to improve the welfare of the animals used in the food it sells (Waldron et al. 2020). On the other hand, a 1997 to 2017 campaign by PETA to improve the welfare of animals used in McDonald's food led the fast-

food restaurant to concede to the institutional demands as a compromise for McDonald's receiving an endorsement from PETA and tapping into the market for plant-based and ethical food products (Waldron et al. 2020).

Summary of Neo-institutional Theory

Neo-institutional theory canvasses the external influences that are experienced by businesses (Lee 2011). The theory focuses on how organisations, in their attempts to seek legitimacy in their social contexts, conform to their social environments (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). The concept of institutional entrepreneurship, which builds on Neo-institutional theory, is also of value because social activists can be viewed as external institutional entrepreneurs (King & Soule 2007). With institutional logics being the predominant values and ideologies (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum 2009), social activism pursues a change in the institutional logics (McAdam & Scott 2005). Theorists have also proposed that the cultural impacts of social movements are determined by the activists' knowledge of institutions such as the media (Amenta & Polletta 2019) and how social movements are influential in getting businesses with different organisational identities to enter moral markets (Georgallis & Lee 2020). Businesses can respond to institutional pressures, such as those from social activists, by either defying or conceding to their institutional demands (Pache & Santos 2010).

Stakeholder Theory

Principles of Stakeholder Theory

In the seminal publication on Stakeholder theory by Freeman (1984), he contended that the organisation and its stakeholders have a reciprocal relationship as stakeholders can influence the actions of an organisation and are influenced by the actions of the organisation. Freeman portrayed this reciprocity in terms of the organisation being at the centre and being surrounded by and connected to stakeholders such as the shareholders, suppliers, employees, customers, managers, and local community (Freeman 1984). With the organisation holding a central position in the relationship, Freeman's stakeholder theoretical framework posits that the core aim of the organisation is to create some form of value for all its stakeholders and not just its shareholders (Freeman et al. 2010).

In practice, the organisation's board and its managers are tasked with the responsibility to create value for the organisation's stakeholders (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997). This task is, however, fraught with complexity as the interests of stakeholders are often divergent (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997). Therefore, Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997, p. 854) made a significant contribution by extending Freeman's stakeholder theoretical framework through identifying how the organisation's decision-makers can prioritise the interests of the stakeholders based on "stakeholder salience". Specifically, Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997, p. 873) asserted that *stakeholder salience* entailed the examination of the "power" of the stakeholders, "legitimacy" of the organisation's actions and "urgency" of the stakeholder's claim. The *power* that stakeholders can exert can be influenced by the resource dependence of the organisation through their control of the resources, with individuals or institutions that control significant resources being given priority in their claims (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997). In the same vein, *legitimacy* addresses the acceptability of an organisation's actions in the environment in which it operates, and *urgency* refers to the criticality of the stakeholders' claims (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997).

Social Activism and the Stakeholder Perspective

The framework proposed by Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) suggests that in the private politics of social activism, a core aim of the social activists is that they are salient (demonstrated by power, legitimacy, and urgency) to the managers of businesses. In terms of power, the managers' perception of social activists' saliency can be determined by the measurable effect that social activism would have on share prices (Cundill, Smart & Wilson 2018). Empirical evidence, which will be covered later on in this chapter, shows that social activists' protests have an adverse effect on the share prices of businesses (King & Soule 2007). Therefore, protests are manifestations of the social activists' power, thereby increasing their saliency to decision-makers in businesses.

The legitimacy of social activists' demands would generally be assessed by managers, based on whether their demands are acceptable within the organisation's social context (Cundill, Smart & Wilson 2018). Therefore, the onus of demonstrating this social acceptability lies primarily with the social activists. Tactics that social activists have used include evidence-based approaches such as where testimonials from victims who were allegedly aggrieved by the businesses were used to persuade managers to concede to the demands put forward by the activists (Briscoe, Gupta &

Anner 2015). The urgency of the social activists' demands identifies whether immediate action is required by a business (Cundill, Smart & Wilson 2018). For example, a business scandal that has not been publicised in the media, can increase the urgency of the social activists' demands as the business attempts to contain the scandal (Cundill, Smart & Wilson 2018).

Summary of Stakeholder Theory

Like Neo-institutional theory, Stakeholder theory also canvasses the external influences experienced by businesses (Lee 2011). Adopting Stakeholder theory to understand the power of social activists as well as the legitimacy and urgency of their claim (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997) is important for unpacking the impacts that social activism has on the decisions made by businesses. Table 2.2 summarises the key factors of Neo-institutional and Stakeholder theories that are used in this thesis to analyse social movements surrounding precarious work and climate change.

Table 2.2: Summary of the Key Factors of Neo-Institutional and Stakeholder Theories

Key factor	Neo-institutional theory	Stakeholder theory
Defying and conceding to institutional pressures	★	
Institutional entrepreneurship	★	
Institutional logics	★	
Legitimacy	★	★
Power	★	★
Social activism tactics	★	★

Resource Dependence Theory

Principles of Resource Dependence Theory

Resource Dependence theory aims to explain how an organisation reacts to its external constraints (Biermann & Harsch 2016). An organisation is an open system that is constrained by its surrounding environment or context (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). The open system approach assumes that the organisation is constrained because of an interdependence with other organisations, for resources that are required for its survival (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). For an organisation to reduce the uncertainty in its context and the level of organisational

interdependence, it has to increase its the power over other organisations and reduce the power of others by acquiring control of the resources (Hillman, Withers & Collins 2009). It is difficult for organisations to reduce uncertainty and interdependence at the societal (i.e. macro) level; however, by acting in their interests and through political means such as lobbying (Hillman, Withers & Collins 2009), they can bring about favourable economic conditions (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978).

Based on Resource Dependence theory, organisations also actively pursue legitimacy with the objective of stabilising the relationships that the organisations have with parties that provide vital resources (Drees & Heugens 2013). The resources can be tangible or intangible, and obtained from stakeholders such as customers, shareholders, suppliers, trade unions, competitors, regulatory agencies, social activists, and non-governmental organisations (Biermann & Harsch 2016). For example, an organisation would be reliant on its investors for capital who in turn expect a return from their investments. Similarly, an organisation would be reliant on customers for sale proceeds from the goods or services it produces, while the customer relies on the organisation for the provision of goods or services.

Resource Dependence Theory and Social Activism

The range of tactics that social activists adopt can be understood by drawing from Resource Dependence theory (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). Social activists with low levels of resource dependence would be most likely to use disruptive tactics such as protest rallies and boycotts to threaten the legitimacy and operations of the targeted businesses (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). Conversely, social activists with high levels of resource dependence would be more likely to use persuasive tactics such as lobbying and issue selling behaviours to convince business managers of the merits of their demands (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). Based also on Resource Dependence theory, social activists find themselves more constrained to voice their grievances or be publicly involved in activism when targeting a business that they are highly dependent on, compared to social activists with lower levels of resource dependence on the business (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). For example, casual employees with limited bargaining power in a business, who are reliant on the wages that they receive for their survival, may be constrained to participate in activism campaigns that target their employers. The key factors pertaining to Resource Dependence theory are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Summary of the Key Factors of Resource Dependence Theory

Key factor	Neo-institutional theory
Enhance autonomy or independence	★
Pursuance of legitimacy	★
Reduce uncertainty	★

Bourdieu's Power Theory

Bourdieu's power framework is another important framework in studying power and conflict in relation to the contextual factors, mechanisms and outcomes of social activism, businesses, and other stakeholders. The research question in a considerable number of Bourdieu's works is: why do social inequalities exist with little resistance (Swartz 1997)? Bourdieu was interested in the tensions between the powerful versus those who are subjugated (Swartz 1997). For example, Bourdieu's first publication is on the French colonisers versus the Algerian locals and is based on his experiences of serving in the French Army in Algeria (Jenkins 2014). Bourdieu's focus on these inequalities stems from the fact that he viewed society as a structured space in which social actors have unequal shares of limited resources and are driven by their own interests in their pursuits to maintain or increase their shares of the resources (Wolf 2018). *Power and conflict* are therefore key attributes of Bourdieu's framework (Wolf 2018). The tensions between the social actors can be unpacked using the concepts of fields, habitus, and capital.

Fields

The notion of change occurring within the fields of businesses is based on the concept of *fields* by Pierre Bourdieu who is recognised as one of the seminal philosophers¹ and sociologists in modern times (Grenfell 2012, p. 16). Fields is a spatial metaphor used by Bourdieu, where each field represents a structured space with power (or capital) that is both limited and unequally shared among the players (i.e. the social actors) (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu's concept of fields was seemingly inspired by theorist and one of the founders of sociology as a discipline, Max Weber (Swartz 1997). Weber and Bourdieu were of the view that society is a complex phenomenon

¹ While Bourdieu was the Chair in Sociology at *Collège de France* and was regarded as an anthropologist, he was originally trained as a philosopher and therefore approached the social sciences with philosophical concerns of "mind, agency [and] personhood" (Jenkins 2014, p. 16).

and cannot be adequately examined by focusing on economic capital (Swartz 1997). Weber, for example, extended economic theory into the realms of religion, and Bourdieu's framework recognised the pivotal role of not only economic capital but also of power and culture (Swartz 1997). Given the complexity of society, Bourdieu seems to have developed his concept of fields in tandem with not only the concept of capital but also of habitus (Wolf 2018).

Bourdieu used the concept of fields to highlight the relational and continuously evolving aspects of how society operates (Wolf 2018). For example, depending on the industries of the workers it represents a trade union may be situated in different fields such as workers' rights, politics, and business. The trade union is likely to employ strategies (according to Bourdieu the strategies are unconscious and own interests-driven) in each of the fields to either maintain or increase its share of capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). A small trade union that represents a few workers in the retail and hospitality sectors is likely to have a smaller share of material and symbolic capital in most fields compared to a larger national trade union and a large business. The small trade union may, however, have a significant amount of symbolic power in the workers' rights field if it succeeds in gaining credibility for its grassroots activism. Notwithstanding that, the small trade union runs the risk of being sidelined or co-opted by other significant players with larger shares of power or capital within the fields.

Habitus

Habitus is essentially "common sense" (Wolf 2018, p. 311); at a deeper level, it is a set of dispositions and actions that are learned and developed over time from experiences (Bourdieu 1993). The sets of dispositions and actions work at unconscious levels and are generally taken for granted (Bourdieu 1993). This means that through habitus, social actors unconsciously develop strategies on how to interact with their social environment (Wolf 2018). It is worth to point out that Bourdieu used the term strategy in his writings to demonstrate that social actors are interest-driven, and their interests lie, for example, in maximising economic and symbolic capital (Swartz 1997). Noteworthy, Bourdieu does not use the term strategy to the general definition focusing on how goals are attained (Swartz 1997). The strategies that social actors unconsciously call upon consequently determine how social actors make sense of their social context as well as their roles and positions within the society (Bourdieu 1993). Consequently, the dominant social actors in a

particular social context are the ones whose core values are unconsciously expressed within habitus (Wolf 2018).

Bourdieu argued that habitus is fairly resistant to change, and this does not mean that it is stable or fixed (Swartz 1997). Habitus can change as there is an ongoing adaptation process that is brought about by social actors experiencing new encounters (Swartz 1997). The process is, however, one that is slow in terms of time and occurs unconsciously for the social actors (Swartz 1997). The argument that habitus can change is, in a way, the foundation of social movements. This is because social movements ultimately endeavour to counter the power structures by challenging and influencing the habitus, thereby changing what is considered acceptable or unacceptable within a social context (Swartz 1997).

Comparable to Bourdieu's habitus is the concept of hegemony. Hegemony describes a condition by which powerful social actors maintain their power over their subordinates not through coercive pressures but by using strategies that are part of their everyday life (Gramsci 1971). These strategies are essentially what is referred to as common sense (Gramsci 1971). Under hegemony, power can be maintained by the powerful social actors through the alliances that are forged with other social actors who have divergent ideologies (Cox 1983).

Capital

Capital, according to Bourdieu, is a multidimensional concept (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Bourdieu was critical of Marxism, arguing that it focuses too heavily on economic capital and fails to provide adequate attention to symbolic power (Swartz 1997). Therefore, Bourdieu distanced himself from Marxism by extending the concept of capital, which is used to explain power (including symbolic power) and status within a society (Swartz 1997). Bourdieu's argument was that people make use of different resources to maintain or increase their standing in the social order (Swartz 1997). Bourdieu defined such resources as capital, and this is more so when they become pivotal resources for which people compete (Swartz 1997). Bourdieu's multidimensional conceptualisation of capital has recently been expanded on in a management context to include different forms of capital, such as *economic, knowledge, social, cultural, institutional, organisational, and reputational* (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020).

Forms of Capital

Critical of Marxism for its heavy focus on *economic capital*, Bourdieu highlighted that economic capital, which can be represented by money and property (Ozbilgin & Tatli 2005), is “at the root of all the other types of capital”, especially in countries that have adopted neoliberal economic policies such as France, the United States (Swartz 1997, p. 79), and Australia (Abbott, Mackinnon & Fallon 2016). The share of economic capital that social actors have determine their positions and degrees of economic power. In relation to knowledge capital, Bourdieu recognised the importance of possessing knowledge and knowing how to use it (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Knowledge capital therefore encompasses having the knowledge that is convertible to power in the fields (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020).

Bourdieu recognises that networks or connections are pivotal for social actors that are endeavouring to challenge the existing power structures with an aim to create systemic change (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). These networks or connections are a part of *social capital*, which Bourdieu defines as the tangible or intangible resources that social actors can mobilise by virtue of being in a network and possessing a relationship (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Therefore, a social actor’s social capital is the summation of the different types of capital that accrue from the social actor’s networks and relationships (Wolf 2018). It is the quality rather than quantity of the relationships of those within a network that is important when the social actors are trying to challenge power structures (Wolf 2018). A similar form of capital is *cultural capital*, which manifests itself in the way social actors present themselves as well as the knowledge and qualifications that the social actors possess (Wolf 2018). In this vein, cultural capital is important as it can influence the economic resources or funding that social actors such as activist groups receive (Wolf 2018). Those with higher cultural capital (e.g. a team of qualified experts) are expected to have access to more economic resources. Cultural capital in the form of knowledge can also enhance the credibility of the claims made by social actors (Wolf 2018).

Institutional capital legitimises the differences in social standings and through it, a social actor can define the rules within the fields (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Institutional capital therefore gives social actors the power to identify the value of each of the other forms of capital within the fields (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Through *organisational capital*, a social actor

has the capacity to control an organisation's resources (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). By the formal authority that social actors possess in an organisation, they have the power to determine how the organisation's resources are allocated, invested, or used (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020).

Reputational capital is linked to Bourdieu's view of symbolic capital (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Reputational capital is determined by the perception of others on a social actor's actions, while symbolic capital is determined by the status of the social actor (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). For example, a company in the Australia Stock Exchange 100 companies can have symbolic capital by virtue of belonging to the elite group of companies (symbolic capital) and this can be independent of its reputational capital.

Summary of Bourdieu's Power Theory

Bourdieu's Power theory is concerned with the tensions within fields that are inherent due to the limited resources in the fields and the different levels of power. These tensions can be unpacked using Bourdieu's concepts of *fields*, *habitus*, and *capital*. *Fields* is used as a metaphor to represent structured spaces in which there are limited resources (or power), where the social actors within each field possess unequal shares of the resources (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). *Habitus* are the dispositions that people develop over time based on their experiences (Bourdieu 1993). Bourdieu used *capital* to explain the power within a field and posited that capital (i.e. power) can manifest itself either as *symbolic*, *social*, *economic*, and *cultural* forms (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992).

Chapter Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to provide a discussion of the contextual factors that can enable social movements to develop, the mechanisms used by social activists, the responses by businesses to the movements and the outcomes of social activism. The discussion draws on the concepts raised by the Social Movement, Neo-institutional, Stakeholder, Resource Dependence and Bourdieu's Power theories. The contextual factors include relative deprivation (Smelser 1962), or the meanings people attach to their situation (McAdam 2017); political and economic opportunities (McAdam 2017) as Social Movement theory posits; as well as the institutional logics (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum 2009) as Neo-institutional theory contends. The mechanisms used by social activists are mobilisation (Jenkins 1983); framing the problem in a clear manner (i.e. the diagnosis

of the problem) and providing a plausible solution (i.e. the prognosis) (Benford & Snow 2000) as Social Movement theory proposes; as well as persuasive and disruptive tactics which, based on Resource Mobilisation theory, are determined by the dependence of the social activists on the businesses that they are targeting (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). Proactively, social actors like businesses can also be agents for change or institutional entrepreneurs, as posited by Neo-institutional theory (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum 2009). According to Neo-institutional theory, in response to the institutional pressures from social activists, businesses can defy the pressures or concede to them (Pache & Santos 2010). Stakeholder theory posits that responses by the businesses to institutional pressures is determined by the salience of the stakeholders in terms of their power, legitimacy of their demands, and the urgency of their claims (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997), as. The outcomes of social activism can generate personal value (Pichardo 1997), organisational changes (Diani 2019) and structural changes (della Porta 2015). Influencing the outcomes of social activism is power. This is based on the argument that social actors have varied levels of power based on their resources and that people or organisations in their pursuit of self-interest seek to either retain or increase the resources that they possess (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The relationships between businesses and social activists can be understood based on the tensions attributable to the limited resources or *capital* in the *fields* (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Moreover, these relationships can be understood based on the predominant *habitus* in the fields that are representative of the values and ideologies of the powerholders (Bourdieu 1993), and of which the social activists are seeking changes. A summary of the theories discussed in this chapter is presented in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Context, Mechanisms and Outcomes of Activism Based on Theories

	Social Movement theory	Neo- institutional theory	Stakeholder theory	Resource Dependence theory	Bourdieu's Power theory
Contextual Factors					
Relative deprivation	★				
Meanings people attach to the situation	★				
Political and economic opportunities	★				
Institutional logics		★			
Social Activism Mechanisms					
Mobilisation	★				
Framing	★				
Activism Tactics	★			★	
Business Mechanisms					
Institutional entrepreneurship		★			
Defiance or concession		★			
Salience of stakeholders: power		★	★	★	★
Salience of stakeholders: urgency			★		
Salience of stakeholders: legitimacy		★	★		
Outcomes of Activism					
Generate personal value	★				
Generate organisational changes	★				
Generate structural changes	★				
Based on power (<i>fields, habitus, and capital</i>)					★

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Introduction

With social activism being intrinsically multi-faceted, the literature on social activism and its influence on businesses and stakeholders is situated in different disciplines. With sociology being the dominant discipline, empirical studies have examined the impetus of activism and activism tactics (e.g. Bartley & Child 2014). In political science, studies have examined social activism in relation to the coercive influence of governments (e.g. McAllister & Snagovsky 2018). Research in the organisational studies discipline has examined the structures and processes of activism (e.g. Kumar et al. 2020). Management, which can be considered a branch of organisational studies, has also examined the influence of social activism on businesses by conceptualising social activists as stakeholders who can be salient to decision-makers (e.g. McDonnell & Cobb 2020). This chapter aims to review empirical studies related to the context, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism. Emerging from the literature review is that social activism influences businesses and decision-makers. However, there is limited empirical research on *how* social activism influences businesses and stakeholders. This research gap exists even more so in relation to Australia, and the social activism surrounding precarious work and climate change.

Context

Impetus for Social Activism

Social Movement theory explains that the driving forces for social movements can be the deprivation people face (Smelser 1962) and the meanings people attach to their situation, including political economic conditions (McAdam 2017). Research underpinned by Social Movement theory has found that the political conditions surrounding the natural environment can be the impetus for an environmental movement (McLean & Fuller 2016). Other research has shown that social issues (Islam & van Staden 2018), and the governance of corporations (Marquardt & Wiedman 2016) can drive social activism. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2, Neo-institutional theory suggests that the institutional logics (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum 2009) can be a driver for social activism.

Political Conditions

Demonstrating that political conditions are an impetus for social activism, analysed survey data collected in Australia by the Climate Commission to investigate the motivations for environmental activism showed that it was primarily driven by activists' dissatisfaction with the federal government's stance on climate change and the failure of the government to take remedial action against climate change (McLean & Fuller 2016). In the same vein, a French study on three social movements indicated that their core rationale for formation and existence was to get the wider French population to reduce their ecological footprint (Dubuisson-Quellier 2013). Other research indicates that the political conditions surrounding the environment can be shaped by the media. This is evidenced by the significant increase in anti-fracking perceptions among the American population after the anti-fracking documentary, *Gasland*, was televised (Vasi et al. 2015). Besides the natural environment and media, political economic conditions have also been found to be a determinant of social activism. Specifically, research found that *neoliberal* political economic conditions had an influence on social activism for the preservation of forests and the rights of workers (Bartley 2003).

Institutional Structures in a Country

Other research that is based on Neo-institutional theory research has found that the institutional structures in a country shape the occurrence of social activism. Specifically, Doh and Guay (2006) examined activism by transnational social movement organisations (SMOs) in the USA and the European Union (EU) in terms of the implementation of policies and found that despite the SMOs operating across national boundaries, they were constrained by the national and regional contexts, in which they were advocating. They concluded that in the USA, religious beliefs were prominent in resolutions of economic and political matters, while in the EU, policy matters and religion were distinct.

Regulations

In a similar vein as the institutional structures, it has been demonstrated empirically how Australian businesses have responded to regulations on workers' rights (Kellner et al. 2016), and climate change (Kumar et al. 2020). In relation to workers' rights, Kellner et al. (2016) focused on the franchising sector and found that despite the high levels of control by franchisors, this did not

translate to franchisees complying with regulations regarding their workforce. Franchisees interviewed for the Kellner et al. (2016) study identified the complexity of the industrial relations system and their heavy workload as the reasons for not fully complying with their obligations. Moreover, the researchers reported that the franchisees suggested that their levels of regulatory compliance could be enhanced if the franchisors provided them with more support on dealing with the industrial relations aspects of their businesses.

Regarding climate change regulations, research based on British data found that the political deadlock from around 2007 to 2017, with regard to laws on fracking, was attributable to the hegemony surrounding fossil-fuels (Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018). Hegemony refers to the control that powerholders maintain not through coercive influence but through unconscious habits (Gramsci 1971), which are like Bourdieu's *habitus*. The hegemony was created due to fracking being linked to economic growth and provision of employment and the gases extracted being viewed as a better alternative to coal (Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018).

In Australia, Kumar et al. (2020) interviewed 17 employees and two industry association representatives in the Australian mining, energy, and chemical sectors. They found that despite industry associations lobbying against carbon pricing, when it took effect in July 2012, all of their sampled businesses reactively took steps to comply with the carbon pricing legislation and, driven by the aim to lower their carbon pricing liability, reduced their energy consumption (Kumar et al. 2020). The indication from these studies on regulation is that it is part of the context and shapes the actions of businesses.

Social Issues as Catalysts

There have been various social issues that have been catalysts for social activism. For example, in the cases of human rights violations whereby workers are exploited in conflict zones where USA corporations source minerals (Islam & van Staden 2018), and similar forms of violations in sweatshops where garment makers for USA corporations are exploited (Bartley & Child 2014). Other social issues that have been drivers of social activism include sexual harassment of workers in a Cambodian and Dutch-based beer manufacturing company (Van Cranenburgh, Liket & Roome 2013); and partners of LGBTQ workers in USA companies not receiving health benefits

on the basis that such benefits would be an attack on traditional family values (Chuang, Church & Hu 2018).

Corporate Governance Issues as a Catalyst

Shareholder activists have joined forces based on environmental and social concerns. For example, they targeted boards of American energy companies to oppose fracking proposals (Neville et al. 2019); and boards of a Dutch company to campaign against human rights violations related to sourcing resources from conflict zones (Akemu, Whiteman & Kennedy 2016). Other research on board composition in the USA has found that low levels of female representation is an impetus for social activism that is financially and/or socially motivated (Marquardt & Wiedman 2016).

In summation, the empirical findings on the impetus for social activism demonstrate that social movements arise due to political economic conditions (e.g. Bartley 2003; McLean & Fuller 2016), with the media playing a key role in terms of bringing awareness to the issue (Vasi et al. 2015). Moreover, the research also demonstrates that institutional structures influence social activism (Doh & Guay 2006) and the issues that activism seeks to address (Kumar et al. 2020).

Social Activism Mechanisms

Based on Social Movement theory, social activism mechanisms are *mobilisation* (Jenkins 1983), *framing* (Benford & Snow 2000; Smelser 1962), and *activism tactics* (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015). Supplementing Social Movement theory is Resource Dependence theory, which explains that disruptive activism tactics such as protests are used by activists when their level of resource dependence on the targeted organisations is low such as an independent social movement organisation (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). On the other hand, persuasive tactics like a private dialogue are used when activists are dependent on the targeted organisation for resources, such as employees reliant on an income from the target (Briscoe & Gupta 2016).

Mobilisation

Mobilisation and Power

Research indicates that social movements face difficulties in mobilisation (Tapia 2013; Yaziji & Doh 2013). Researchers have found that the resources required for mobilisation are withheld from

them by the more powerful individuals and institutions (Yaziji & Doh 2013). Social activists therefore generally work against the dominant values and ideologies that are held in the social environment in which they operate in (Yaziji & Doh 2013). The resources that are available to social movements are therefore limited to those that are controlled by individuals and institutions with similar values and ideologies as those espoused by the social movements (Yaziji & Doh 2013). Evidently, social movements face a challenge in the mobilisation of resources, which is consistent with Bourdieu's Power theory where the social actors are in contestation over the limited resources in a *field*. With these challenges, American research has demonstrated that the resources can be mobilised by formal mobilising structures such as established social movement organisations for LGBTQ advocacy or informal groups, which are based on networks or relationships between the different social actors (Chuang, Church & Hu 2018).

Effective Mobilisation

A study which used survey data from 51 countries suggests that mobilisation is most effective when activists within a social movement are embedded in the broader field in which they are campaigning (Akchurin & Lee 2013). For example, the researchers highlighted the case where a social movement campaigning for gender equality liaised with a professional association and resulted in more publicity on gender equality cases as well as produced evidence-based campaign materials, which in turn served as catalysts for the gender equality movement (Akchurin & Lee 2013). In a similar vein, evidence from the United Kingdom indicates that the existence of a relationship between the social movement and the people that the movement is seeking to mobilise contributes to the efficacy of the social movement (Tapia 2013). In other words, considerations of the affective dimension and, more specifically, "high levels of trust and loyalty" between the social movement and its targeted audience are required for mobilisation by the social movement to be successful (Tapia 2013, p. 671).

Internet Transaction Cost Reduction

Other research shows that the internet significantly reduces the transactional costs of mobilisation of resources by social movements (Gomez-Carrasco & Michelon 2017; Luo, Zhang & Marquis 2016). American empirical evidence demonstrates that stakeholder groups have ready access to internet platforms such as corporate websites and social media platforms where the stakeholders

can instantaneously post their concerns (Kim & Youm 2017). In a different setting, following the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in China, another empirical study found that in a country in which public collective action is limited, social activism via the internet was able to overcome the challenge of mobilising (Luo, Zhang and Marquis 2016). Specifically, through blogs, bulletin boards and social media websites, internet users voiced their expectations for companies to donate towards the relief of the earthquake (Luo, Zhang & Marquis 2016). Rankings of the donations made by corporations were also posted on the internet which in turn had an impact on corporate donations (Luo, Zhang & Marquis 2016). The internet has a prominent role as a driver of social movements largely because it significantly reduces the costs associated with taking remedial action (Luo, Zhang & Marquis 2016). In another setting, an analysis of Twitter posts by consumer associations and trade unions that were critical of actions taken by Spanish banks found that through social media, fragmented stakeholder groups could form a virtual coalition to campaign against the actions of organisations (Gomez-Carrasco & Michelon 2017).

Framing

Framing is another social activism mechanism and, as discussed in Chapter 2, it enables mobilisation by offering people that are facing deprivation, a diagnosis of the problem, and a prognosis with a potential solution (Smelser 1962). Empirical studies corroborate these dimensions of framing. Specifically, research on the global social entrepreneurship movement found that in framing, the diagnosis used by the movement to mobilise resources was that there was “a need for change” and the prognosis included challenging the capitalist structure (Hervieux & Voltan 2018, p.284). Another study based on Italian data found that framing references are changed based on the activists’ interpretations when they did not resonate with the intended social actors, thereby indicating the fluidity of framing (Lee, Ramus & Vaccaro 2018).

Social Activism Tactics

Another social activism mechanism pertains to social activism tactics which, according to Social Movement theory, can be persuasive in that they can convince decision-makers of the merits of the activism demand, and disruptive in terms of the tactics having reputational costs on the targeted business (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). Based on Resource Mobilisation theory, the indication is that

social activists choose between the two types of tactics based on their resource dependence on the business that they are targeting (Briscoe & Gupta 2016).

Non-Market-Based Strategies

Non-market-based strategies encompass activism tactics such as protests, lobbying, media campaigns (Yue, Rao & Ingram 2013), and evidence-based testimonials (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015). Empirical evidence has found that protests lead to a diffusion of organisational practices (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015; Yue, Rao & Ingram 2013). Neo-institutional theory explains that this diffusion arises from uncertainties in the fields of businesses as to the courses of action to take (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015; Yue, Rao & Ingram 2013). Specifically, an analysis of archival data on Target and Walmart in America showed that when social activists' protests focused on established stores, the stores that had been opened more recently would base their responses to the protests on stores that had been operating for longer (Yue, Rao & Ingram 2013). This was especially the case when the protesters had a reputation of using protest tactics. However, if the social activists who targeted one of the stores were from the local community, the fellow retail store would use the protests as a signal to change its practices (Yue, Rao & Ingram 2013). Social movements' use of evidence-based tactics such as testimonial from a person experiencing the injustice that the activists are fighting against, also seems to have the effect of causing an industry-wide spread of the practices that the activists are advocating for (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015).

Indirect Tactics Based on Business Size and Reputation

Empirical research indicates that the size of a business and its reputation influence whether the company will be targeted by activists (Bartley & Child 2014). As an illustration, an American study that examined the anti-sweatshop movement found that the companies that are publicly viewed as having a good reputation and being socially responsible had a very high likelihood of being targeted by the anti-sweatshop movement (Bartley & Child 2014). Examples of these stores include *Gap*, *Nike*, and *Target* (Bartley & Child 2014). In contrast, other large retail stores that had a lower level of brand dominance, such as *Costco* and *Payless Shoes* had a low probability of being targeted by this movement (Bartley & Child 2014).

Targeting organisations with a good reputation might seem counter-intuitive but empirical research indicates that this is used as an indirect tactic to bring about change within the sector (Bartley & Child 2014; Carberry et al. 2019; King 2008; Soule, Swaminathan & Tihanyi 2014). For example, King (2008, p. 409), who found that large companies with a good reputation were targets for social activists, stated: “size and corporate reputation appear to be powerful magnets for attracting unwanted attention from social movement activists”. Bartley and Child (2014) proposed that social activists will target large companies with a good reputation to gain the attention of the sector, investors, and the wider business community. They further asserted that social activists seeking to build their reputational capital would target large companies with good reputations to enhance their activism profile (Bartley and Child, 2014).

Shareholder Activism

Another tactic is the use of shareholder activism, whereby the activists use shareholder resolutions to draw the attention of managers and the public to their Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) concerns (Rehbein, Waddock & Graves 2004). Research shows that large and socially responsible companies in the United States of America, which have significant resources (power), are more likely to engage in dialogue with shareholder activists than let a vote on the resolution occur (Rehbein, Logsdon & Van Buren 2013). Companies with a powerful CEO, specifically one who is also a Board Chairperson, that is CEO duality, have less constraints from institutional investors’ pressures are also most likely to engage in dialogue (Rehbein, Logsdon & Van Buren 2013). Based on Resource Dependence theory, organisations with political capital will want to be autonomous and have control in their social environment (Rehbein, Logsdon & Van Buren 2013). Research also indicates that companies that have limited resources are more likely to be acquiescent to the demands of powerful shareholder activists (e.g. institutional investor activists) (Meznar & Nigh 1995). In Australia, evidence on shareholder activism indicates that while it has been gaining traction since the late 2010s, with climate change being the focus, there has been limited support of the resolutions (de Wit & Luck 2020).

Resource Dependency theory research shows that the organisations that form alliances for shareholder activism are primarily organisations that have limited constraints in terms of resource access. Specifically, research has examined American-based institutional investors and found that

richly resourced institutions such as investment funds and religious organisations were more likely to form alliances for shareholder activism in relation to concerns on human rights and the exploitation of workers (Yang, Uysal & Taylor 2018). Institutions that faced resource constraints such as educational institutions and the research centres were less likely to form alliances (Yang, Uysal & Taylor 2018). The researchers used the number of employees as an indicator for whether the institutional investors were richly resourced or had limited access to resources on the basis that a wealthy institution can employ more people (Yang, Uysal & Taylor 2018). The findings therefore showed that investment funds and religious organisations were the most likely to form alliances with other shareholders and file shareholder resolutions.

Actions of Businesses and Industry Associations

Companies and Markets' Short-term Models

Research by management theorists Wright and Nyberg (2017), which focused on Australian companies, demonstrated that companies and their markets operate based on a short-term model. Specifically, Wright and Nyberg (2017, p. 1642), whose longitudinal data covered the period 2005 to 2015, found that over time the substantive climate action strategies that companies had in place diminished over time, and reached a point where the companies acted based on a “business as usual” principle. The model that the companies used is indicative of a short-term shareholder model focusing solely on the economic dimension and differs from a long-term stakeholder model that seeks to also provide environmental and social benefits (Young & Marais 2012).

Legitimacy

In a similar vein of Stakeholder theory, other research by Ritson, Wilson and Maclean (2015) focussed on Britain's petroleum industry. Their qualitative case study found that the organisations' recognitions of trade unions enhanced legitimacy in the eyes of the organisations' stakeholders (Ritson, Wilson & Maclean 2015). Similarly, Andia and Chorev (2017)'s case study research on the global movement against the tobacco industry found that simultaneous to the campaigns by social activists on the negative effects of cigarette smoking. The tobacco industry funded research institutions to undertake research on the effects of cigarette smoking, findings of which strongly disputed the social activists' claims (Andia & Chorev 2017). In this case, the actions by the tobacco industry to seek legitimacy were not successful as the reputation of the tobacco industry was

tarnished following the revelation of the undue influence that the tobacco companies had on the contested empirical findings (Andia & Chorev 2017).

Other research on legitimacy also found that companies will *concede* to the activists' demands when there is considerable media coverage, and this is done to protect their reputational capital (King 2008). Research that extended this finding found that targeted companies can *defy* the activists' demands by publicly using positive and prosocial claims that demonstrate they abide by the social norms, which is done to protect their reputational capital (McDonnell & King 2013).

Stakeholder Salience

Managers' Ideologies and Salience

Research on stakeholder salience has found that the ideologies of managers of businesses seem to impact their perceptions of the salience of social activists. For example, in the USA, CEOs who appeared to be aligned with progressive ideologies (as they consistently donated to the Democratic party) were found to be more supportive of the rights of LGBTQ community in comparison to the conservative CEOs (Briscoe, Chin & Hambrick 2014). Extending on these findings, an analysis of longitudinal data on large America companies showed that the political ideologies espoused by organisations have an influence on whether the organisation will be receptive to the demands and concerns made by social activists (Gupta & Briscoe 2020). The organisations that are associated with liberal (i.e. progressive) political ideologies were found to more receptive to activists than those that are associated with conservative political ideologies. As an illustration, *Nike*, a company that espoused liberal political ideologies, was generally receptive to the social activists that challenged the company (Gupta & Briscoe 2020).

Managers' Perception of the Claim

In terms of managers' perception of claims made by social activists, research demonstrates that these claims can change based on media coverage. Specifically, research by Fassin, de Colle and Freeman (2017) on managers in an Italian brewery found that, following media coverage on a campaign by activists to stop the closure of a brewery plant, their perceptions of a trade union and non-governmental organisation as passive and dormant stakeholders changed. Fassin, de Colle and Freeman (2017) operationalised the increase in the salience of the activist groups based on their

ability to have meetings with the board of directors. Prior to the media coverage, the activist groups had not had any meetings with the board, and therefore the indication was that the media coverage enhanced the salience of the stakeholders (Fassin, de Colle & Freeman 2017).

Salience of the Social Activists and the Impact of Social Media

In terms of the impact of social media on the salience of social activists, empirical evidence indicates that social media websites have compounded the complexity managers encounter in determining the salience of the stakeholders (Kim & Youm 2017). Previously, large public regulatory bodies such as governments, the International Standard for Organization (ISO) and the United Nations (UN) were perceived as being salient stakeholders, as conformance to policies, laws and regulations that were provided by these bodies gave organisations legitimacy in their societies (Avetisyan & Ferrary 2013). However, subsequent empirical evidence has shown that individuals can readily and instantaneously use the internet to voice their protests against companies, and generally, when these online protests are in large volumes, individuals who might otherwise have been considered insignificant in corporate decision making, become salient stakeholders in managerial decision making (Kim & Youm 2017).

Salience of the Social Activist and Competitive Advantage

Other research indicates that there is a relationship between the salience of social activists and the competitive advantage of the targeted business. Specifically, a Canadian study examined why businesses paid their workers a living wage (Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015). The qualitative study found that businesses did this because they perceived themselves as fair employers, and to gain a competitive advantage over the competitors within their sector (Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015). The findings therefore suggested that the salience of the social activists is enhanced when their demands are linked to the competitive advantage of targeted businesses (Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015).

Co-opting

Co-opting is another action of business and industry associations that has been empirically examined. One of the studies, which is based on Dutch data, indicates that collaborative work between social activists and industry association contributes to a mutual co-optation (Van Wijk et

al. 2013). Specifically, Van Wijk et al. (2013) found that while a SMO had seemingly less power than an industry association, it was the industry association that was co-opted by the SMO in the process of the two parties collaborating with each other. An industry association conceding to the demands of the SMO, could lead to the industry association failing to act in the interests of its members (Van Wijk et al., 2013). The researchers also found that while the industry association had struck a close bond with the social activists and did not act in the interests of its broader membership base, it did not receive a backlash because it was already a reputable organisation in the field.

A similar finding in terms of social activists not being co-opted by the seemingly more powerful player is evident in a study by Grant and Vasi (2017), which examined SMOs established to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the energy industry in America (Grant & Vasi 2017). Their findings showed that less powerful SMOs were not co-opted by the powerful energy companies (Grant & Vasi 2017). Specifically, even in areas in which there were a large presence of fossil-fuel energy companies, the SMOs still contributed to a reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions in those areas (Grant & Vasi 2017). In relation to precarious work, no Australian empirical study was found in the industrial relations literature that examined unions being co-opted by business or managers on issues such as the better off overall test (BOOT). The BOOT requires employees to be ‘better off’ under an enterprise agreement than they would be under their respective employment Award. Media reports (Coorey 2020; Haydar 2020) state that some businesses have been paying their workers based on employment agreements negotiated with unions that fail the BOOT. Recent industrial relations literature that has not been empirically tested (Birch & Preston 2020; Macneil, Bray, & Spiess 2020) has highlighted the decreasing influence of Australia’s union movement, which might make unions more susceptible to being co-opted by large businesses.

Entrenching Power

In the same vein as co-opting, businesses, in response to threats from social activism, have used tactics that aim to entrench power. A study that supports this assertion focuses on the American co-operatives that were formed by producers and consumers as an alternative to companies (Schneiberg 2013). Using longitudinal data, the study found that companies believed that their legitimacy was threatened by co-operatives and hence they launched attack tactics, which included

lobbying for legislation that would weaken the co-operatives, denying the cooperatives access to important resources that they needed for their operations, and tarnishing the reputation of co-operatives and their organisers (Schneiberg 2013). In a similar vein, in Australia, empirical research has found that mining companies were influential in preventing the implementation of a Resource Super Profits Tax, which was an issue that also led, in 2010, to a change in government from one led by Prime Minister Rudd to another led by Prime Minister Gillard (Murray & Nyberg 2020).

In summation of the actions of business and industry associations, the indication is that Australian companies have been operating on a short-term shareholder model in relation to climate change (Wright & Nyberg 2017). Moreover, the evidence demonstrates that stakeholder salience (Gupta & Briscoe 2020), legitimacy (McDonnell & King 2013, and power (Schneiberg 2013) are determinants of the actions of business and industry associations.

Outcomes

Social Movement theory research has demonstrated that the outcomes of social activism are at individual (Pichardo 1997) or personal level. At a meso-level, the outcomes can pertain to individual organisations (Diani 2019), and at a macro-level to structural outcomes (della Porta 2015).

Individual Outcome

Wage Increases

An individual outcome of social activism is an increase in wages of unionised workers in the retail and hospitality sectors in the USA (Wilmers 2017). Likewise, in Australia, research has found that unionised workers earned higher wages than their non-unionised counterparts (Nahm, Dobbie, & MacMillan 2017). Noteworthy is that empirical research has found a causal link between unions activism and increases in the wages of the unionised workforce (Wilmers 2017), which demonstrates that *social activism influences businesses, and stakeholders* such as workers.

Organisational Outcomes

Corporate Governance

Research indicates that social activism influences corporate governance. Specifically, American companies were affected by social movements, and found that directors were most likely to resign from their board positions if a social movement targeting their companies matched with their personal values and ideologies (McDonnell & Cobb 2020). This means that misalignments of the values and ideologies of directors to those underpinning the social movement decreased the propensity of directors to resign from their positions (McDonnell & Cobb 2020). As an illustration, directors who politically identified with conservative ideologies, such as the right to carry firearms, were more likely to leave their board positions when activists espousing conservative ideologies targeted their companies than when activists were promoting progressive issues on gender diversity and workers' rights (McDonnell & Cobb 2020).

Financial Performance

Research has found that social activism has not only influenced the share price (King 2008), but also the long-term market value of a company (Lewis, O'Donovan & Willett 2017). An Australian study analysed annual reports, legal reports, media reports and the websites of environmental activists in relation to the impact that environmental activism had on *Gunns Ltd.*, a wood processing company based in Tasmania, that was liquidated in 2011 (Lewis, O'Donovan & Willett 2017). The findings from the mixed-methods case study showed that aspects pertaining to social activism (e.g. a lawsuit that the company had against social activists in 2004/2005) had a significant effect on the long-term market value of *Gunns Ltd* (Lewis, O'Donovan & Willett 2017). These findings demonstrate that *social activism influences businesses*.

Structural Outcomes

Contributing to Social and Environmental Value

The first structural outcome is that through social unionism, forms of social and environmental value have been generated. Specifically, in the early 1970s, the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia, which was a maritime trade union that was part of the anti-apartheid social movement, exerted substantive influence on the South African Government by mobilising the Australian port workers to refuse to unload South African cargo (Cole & Limb 2017). In a similar vein, in the

1970s, the Australian Builders Labourers' Federation, a trade union whose membership consisted of construction workers, initiated the world's first "green bans" (Burgmann 2008, p. 65). The "green bans" enforced by the unionised construction workers meant that they refused to work on projects that were ecologically and socially unsustainable (Burgmann 2008, p. 64). The Australian Builders Labourers' Federation formed alliances with local communities and environmental organisations with various successful outcomes (Burgmann 2008). Examples of these outcomes are protecting trees in the Sydney Botanical Gardens from being cut down for the construction of a parking bays for the Sydney Opera House, and stopping the redevelopment of The Rocks, the site of first European Settlement in Sydney, due to the negative impact the redevelopment would have had on the low-income earners who lived close to the site (Burgmann 2008). Research from overseas has also found environmental value from activism. For example, environmental activism had led to the implementation of wind-power energy in the USA (York, Hargrave & Pacheco 2016).

Regulations

An American research by Klutzz (2019), in which longitudinal data from 2009 to 2016 on the regulation of fracking was analysed, found that anti-fracking social movements influenced state governments' regulation of the extraction of natural gas and crude oil through fracking (Klutzz 2019). The findings demonstrated that of the 34 American states that were analysed, the presence of anti-fracking SMOs, coupled with strong economies, were predictors of the decisions by the state governments to regulate fracking (Klutzz 2019). This finding provides further evidence of the influence of social activism on decision-makers.

Limited Changes to Bargaining Agreements

Australian empirical research by Markey and McIvor (2019) found that there were few clauses in bargaining agreements that contained substantive climate change commitment clauses. The researchers concluded that the limited substantive climate action in many of the trade unions can be attributed to the ambiguity of the bargaining provisions in the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth), trade unions' limited resources to devote to the issue, low bargaining power of the trade unions and organisational cultures that do not support the radical changes required to address climate change (Markey & McIvor 2019).

Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives

There is an indication that social movements can be a catalyst for multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs). Specifically, the findings in a study on corporate social innovation by Carberry et al (2019, p.1097) indicated that SMOs “played a key role in promoting and popularizing” an MSI, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). The GRI aims to enhance organisations’ accountability and, transparency by providing common standards that the organisations across the world can use to report on their environmental, social, and economic impacts.

Research Gap

Most of the empirical studies canvassed in this review were conducted in an American context, with a focus on either the context (e.g. McDonnell & Cobb 2020), or social activism and business mechanisms (e.g. Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015; Gupta & Briscoe 2020). A few studies were identified that examined precarious work (Kellner et al 2016; Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015) and climate change (e.g. Kumar et al. 2020; Wright & Nyberg 2017) in terms of the context or the mechanisms. Emerging from the literature review is a paucity of studies that examine how social activism influences businesses and stakeholders, and specifically, in relation to the context, mechanisms and outcomes of social activism surrounding precarious work and climate change in an Australian setting.

With reference to Table 3.1, no study was identified that simultaneously examined the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism. This paucity is more so in relation to precarious work and climate change in an Australian context. Addressing this paucity is of importance given that it provides an understanding on how business and its stakeholders are responding to precarious work and climate change. Industrial relations theorists have identified precarious work in Australia, and specifically in relation to migrant workers as a “critical issue for scholarship” (Wright & Clibborn 2019, p.157). In a similar vein, management theorists have highlighted that, “of all challenges facing humanity, none is more profound than climate change” (Wright & Nyberg 2017, p. 1633). Consequently, there is considerable value in gaining an understanding on *how* social activism that focuses on precarious work and climate change influences business. This thesis therefore aims to address this gap by exploring the context, the mechanisms used by the social activists, businesses, and their representatives, as well as the

outcomes of social activism for businesses and their stakeholders. This will be done by exploring the social movements surrounding precarious work and climate change, in an Australian setting.

Table 3.1: Overview of Empirical Studies' Research Dimensions and Regions Sampled

Empirical Research Dimension	Empirical Studies	Geographical region (and frequency)	Precarity and Climate Change Focus
Context	Akemu, Whiteman and Kennedy (2016); Carberry et al. (2019); Chuang, Church and Hu (2018); Doh and Guay (2006); Dubuisson-Quellier 2013; Islam and van Staden (2018), Kellner et al. (2016)^{AP} ; Kumar et al. (2020)^C ; Marquardt and Wiedman (2016); McLean and Fuller (2016)^{AC} ; Neville et al. (2019); Nyberg, Wright & Kirk (2018)^C ; Van Cranenburgh, Liket and Roome (2013); Vasi et al. (2015); York, Hargrave and Pacheco (2016)	Australia (2); Cambodia (1); France (1); European Union (1); Netherlands (2); USA (8)	Climate change (3); Precarious Work (1)
Social activism mechanisms	Akchurin and Lee (2013); Bartley and Child (2014); Briscoe, Gupta and Anner (2015); de Wit & Luck (2020)^{AC} ; Gomez-Carrasco and Michelon (2017); Grant and Vasi (2017); Hervieux and Voltan (2018); Kim and Youm (2017); King (2008); Lee, Ramus & Vaccaro (2018); Luo, Zhang and Marquis (2016); Tapia (2013); McDonnell and King (2013); Rehbein, Logsdon and Van Buren (2013); Van Wijk et al. (2013); Vasi, Walker, Johnson and Tan (2015); Wilmers (2017); Yang, Uysal and Taylor (2018); Yaziji and Doh (2013); Yue, Rao and Ingram (2013)	Australia (1); Canada (1); China (2); Global (1); Italy (1); Netherlands (1); Spain (1); Western Europe (1); UK (2); USA (13)	Climate change (1)
Business Mechanisms	Andia and Chorev (2017); Bartley and Child (2014); Briscoe, Gupta and Anner (2015); Briscoe, Chin and Hambrick (2014); Fassin, de Colle and Freeman (2017); Grant and Vasi (2017); Gupta and Briscoe (2020); Kellner et al. (2016); Kumar et al. (2020); McDonnell and King (2013); Mezner and Nigh (1995); Murray & Nyberg (2020)^{AC} ; Ptashnick and Zuberi (2015)^P ; Rehbein, Logsdon and Van Buren (2013); Ritson, Wilson and Maclean (2015); Schneiberg (2013); Van Wijk et al. (2013); Wright and Nyberg (2017)^{AC} ; Yue, Rao and Ingram (2013)	Australia (2); Belgium (1); Canada (1); Global (1); Italy (1); Netherlands (1); USA (13)	Climate change (2); Precarious Work (1)
Outcomes	Bartley (2003); Burgmann (2008) ^A ; Cole and Limb (2017) ^A ; King and Soule (2007); Klutzz (2019); Lewis, O'Donovan and Willett (2017) ^A ; Markey and McIvor (2019)^{AC} ; Wilmers (2017)	Australia (4); USA (4)	Climate change (1)

The superscript representations are as follows: A for Australia, C for climate change, and P for precarious work.

Research Questions

The overarching research question is, *how does social activism emerge and consequently affect businesses and its stakeholders?* There are four subsidiary research questions: first, *how does the context enable social activism?* Second, *how do social activists use a range of mechanisms for change?* Third, *how do businesses and their representatives respond to social activism?* Fourth, *how do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?*

Chapter Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to present a review of empirical research on the influence of social activism on businesses and stakeholders. The impetus for social activism, as discussed in Chapter 2, include deprivation people face, the meanings people attach to their situation, political economic conditions, and institutional logics. The findings from the empirical studies examined in this chapter highlight that the key contextual factors are political economic conditions, and institutional structures, with social activism arising due to environmental, social, and corporate governance issues. Regulation, which is a sub-set of institutional structures, is also a key contextual factor that influences corporate actions. In terms of social activism mechanisms, empirical evidence demonstrates that power is a determinant of mobilisation, that effective mobilisation can be achieved by building relationships, and that the internet has reduced the transaction costs of mobilisation. For framing, it enables mobilisation through a process of diagnosing the issue and providing a potential solution to the problem. The empirical evidence also highlights the tactics used, which include non-market strategies such as protests, boycotts, and lobbying. The Australian literature on shareholder activism indicates that it is gaining traction in relation to climate change. Regarding the actions of businesses and stakeholders, the evidence demonstrates that they are determined by stakeholder salience and legitimacy. The empirical studies also demonstrate that the power dynamics have a role in the actions of businesses and stakeholders. Empirical research also demonstrates that the outcomes are at individual, organisational and structural levels. These key factors are summarised in Table 3.2. The findings on outcomes also indicate that social activism influences businesses. However, there are limited empirical studies that have examined *how* social activism influences businesses in Australia, particularly in relation to precarious work and climate change.

Table 3.2: Summary of Empirical Research

Research Dimension	Key Factor
Contextual factor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Political economic conditions▪ Institutional structures including regulation.▪ Power dynamics between stakeholders
Social activism mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mobilisation with power including social capital or social networks as a determinant.▪ Framing▪ Non-market strategies such as protest, boycotts and lobbying
Business mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Salience of stakeholders▪ Legitimacy
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Individual such as wage increases▪ Organisational such as changes to board structure.▪ Structural such as in generation of environmental and social value.

A visual representation of the conceptualisation of the contextual factors, mechanisms used by social activists, business mechanisms, and outcomes, based on Chapters 2 and 3, is presented in Figure 3.1.

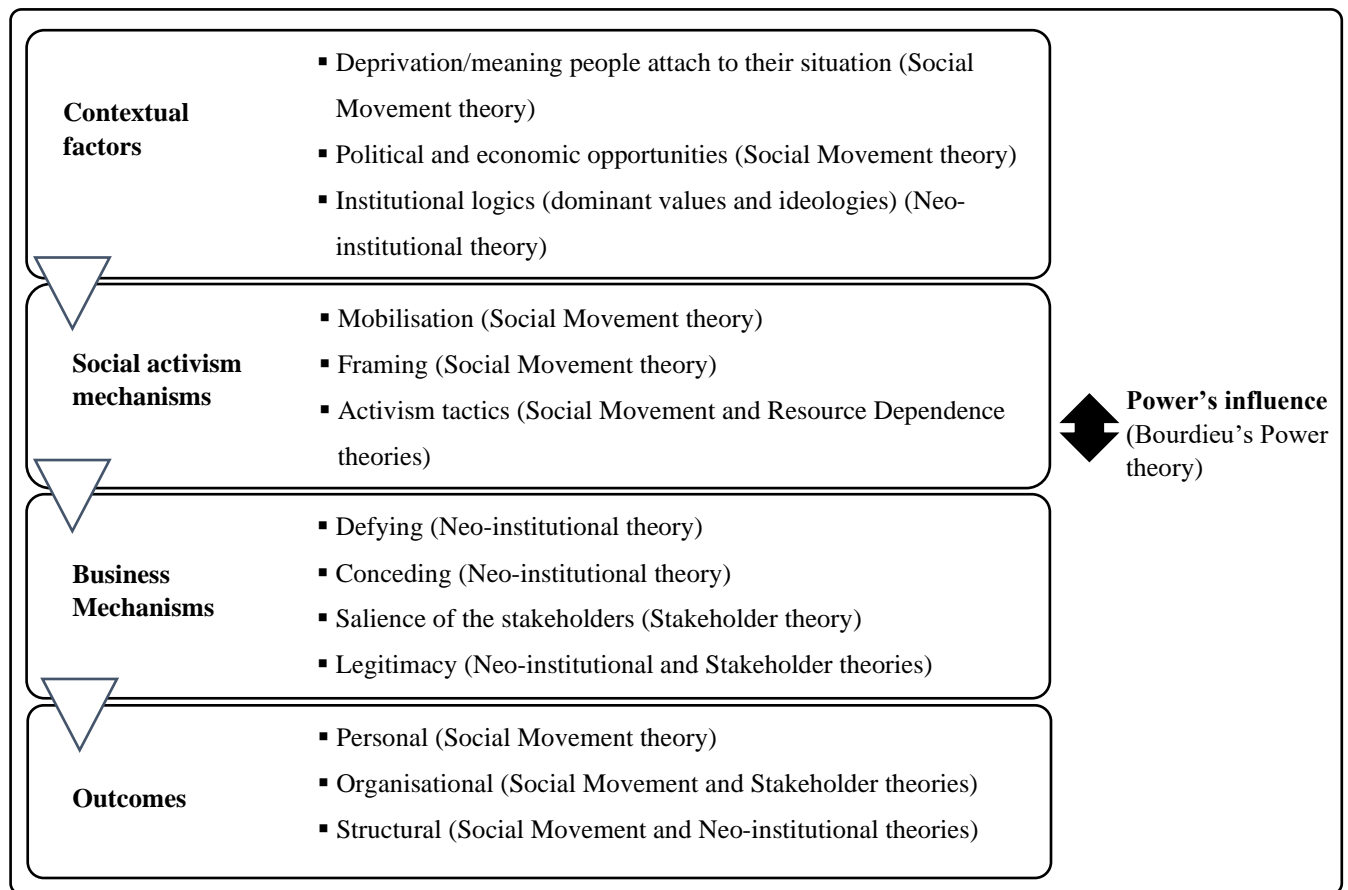


Figure 3.1: Context, Mechanism and Outcomes Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the qualitative cross case study methodology used for this research. The core rationale for the use of a qualitative cross case study is its congruence with the aim of the thesis and the research questions (Morse et al. 2002). The aim of this thesis is to explore the contextual factors of social activism, its mechanisms and the outcomes for businesses and stakeholders. The focus is on the social activism surrounding precarious work and climate change, within an Australian context. The research question arising from this aim is: *how does social activism emerge and consequently affect businesses and its stakeholders?* The four subsidiary research questions are: first, *how does the context enable social activism?* Second, *how do social activists use a range of mechanisms for change?* Third, *how do businesses and their representatives respond to social activism?* Fourth, *how do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?*

As already highlighted, the two cases being examined focus on social activism in Australia for the rights of precarious work and climate change. There is value in having a comparison of diverse cases because similarities in themes can be identified (George & Bennett 2005). Consequently, this will assist in identifying the factors that explain the phenomena being investigated (George & Bennett 2005). Case study methodologies are used to address research studies that investigate the various factors that can explain conditions that have occurred and therefore the questions are framed based on *how* (Yin 2014). Case studies are also used to examine phenomena where it is difficult to isolate the context (Yin 2014). In this research the context is of value, given the first subsidiary research question focuses on the contextual factors. In the exploration of the precarious work and the climate change cases, there are a variety of factors that address the research questions and hence a qualitative cross case study methodology is suitable for this thesis.

This chapter begins by highlighting the paradigm that underpins the thesis and thereafter examines the ethical considerations. The data collection methods are also discussed, and the chapter concludes with an overview of this study's methodology.

Paradigm

Understanding the paradigm of a research study involves answering the question: what is the philosophical worldview that informs the research (Creswell 2014)? This thesis is informed by an interpretivist paradigm. Unpacking this paradigm requires an understanding of the philosophical concepts of ontology and epistemology. Ontology assists in addressing the underlying assumptions about how reality is viewed (Crotty 1998). An interpretivist paradigm views reality as being socially constructed, subjective and consisting of multiple perspectives (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba 2011; Wahyuni 2012). Epistemology assists in explaining how knowledge is acquired (Crotty 1998). The epistemology of an interpretivist paradigm holds that the phenomena being studied are inextricably linked to the context and hence, knowledge is generated by uncovering how the phenomena react to the context (Creswell 2013; Dean 2018). Contrasting with an interpretivist paradigm is a positivist paradigm. The ontology of a positivist paradigm is that there is one reality that can be captured (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba 2011). Its epistemology provides that the one reality can be captured objectively through true or false hypotheses and be quantified (Krauss 2005).

Identifying the underpinning paradigm also entails the understanding that the social world that the research is pursuing should be deduced from observable facts (a positivist paradigm) or be based on the participants' own understandings (an interpretivist paradigm) (Leitch, Hill & Harrison 2010). Using an interpretivist paradigm means a recognition of the complexity, contentiousness, and dynamism of the social world, which therefore enables a researcher to view the social world holistically, gain the realities of the different social actors, interpret their perceptions appropriately and provide thick and rich descriptions that capture the perspectives of the social actors (Leitch, Hill & Harrison 2010). The research questions in this thesis point towards an interpretivist paradigm where a holistic view in terms of the context, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism, is needed from the different stakeholders. In addition, given precarious work and climate change are complex and contentious topics in an Australian context, obtaining the different perspectives, interpreting these perceptions, and presenting thick and rich descriptions will address the research questions.

For this thesis, the qualitative comparative case study methodology fits within an interpretivist paradigm. The thesis acknowledges two philosophical assumptions that govern it. First, there are multiple perspectives that inform its aim and research questions. Second, the phenomena being explored (i.e. social activism, precarious work, climate change and for-profit businesses) need to be done by examining their contexts. Using an interpretivist paradigm therefore means that the focus is not on generalisation of the findings, but in providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being explored (Denzin & Lincoln 2017).

Ethics

The ethical dimension needs to be considered and addressed in every empirical study, irrespective of the methodology, paradigm, or data collection methods (Ciuk & Latusek 2018). The need to consider and address the ethical dimension must go beyond the approval of the project by an ethics review committee, the data collection, analysis and reporting of findings, and how the data will be managed after the findings are reported (Ciuk & Latusek 2018). One way to classify the ethical dimension of a qualitative study is by differentiating between “procedural ethics” and “ethics in practice” (Guillemin & Gillam 2004, p. 263).

Procedural ethics involves completing a form that requires the researchers to consider and address ethical issues in the project, which is then submitted to a relevant ethics review committee (Guillemin & Gillam 2004). For this thesis, a comprehensive online form that required the researchers to consider and address ethical issues that pertain to the PhD project, was completed. The form was submitted to the La Trobe University Human Ethics Committee, who approved this project on 7 June 2018. The research project was assessed as being of negligible risk.

The mitigation of the negligible risk that illegal activities would be uncovered falls under the second classification, *ethics in practice*. The notion of ethics in practice covers the regular issues that arise when conducting research, and after the research has been completed (Guillemin & Gillam 2004). Therefore, *ethics in practice* entails first, ensuring that the participants provide informed consent; second, de-identifying the participants to protect the identity of the participants (Ciuk & Latusek 2018); and third, ensuring that the various data sources are stored and managed ethically after the completion of the project.

Informed Consent

In terms of informed consent, the participants were provided with an information statement (Refer to Appendix B) that highlights the aims of the research and what participation in the research project entails. The information statement also states that the participation is uncoerced and that the participants declare their willingness by signing and dating a consent form (Refer to Appendix C). All the prospective participants contacted were above 18 years and were advised that they can withdraw from the study at any point during the research, by notifying either of the researchers and that they would not incur a penalty for their choice to withdraw.

De-Identifying Participants

Ethics requires that researchers do not cause any harm to their participants, the organisations that they are studying or any associations of the participants (Ciuk & Latusek 2018). Therefore, the names of the participants, their organisations and associations have been de-identified. The transcripts and analysis files have been de-identified by omitting the participants' names and their organisations to protect the identity of the participants. Pseudonyms are used in this thesis, and complete citation details of the secondary data analysed that contain the names of the participants, their organisations or associations are not provided in this thesis.

Data Management

Ethics requirements extend to the management of the participants' data, which is important because the identification or disclosure of the participants and their organisations goes against the declarations made to maintain their privacy and confidentiality (Ciuk & Latusek 2018). The transcripts, audio-recordings and the participants' consent forms are stored only in a research repository folder provided by La Trobe University, and which is backed-up in a secured La Trobe University server. The repository folder can only be accessed by the Chief Investigator who manages its access, the Associate Investigator, and the Student Researcher. The data will remain in this repository for a five-year archive period.

Overall, *procedural ethics* and *ethics in practice* always requires treating the participants with “respect, dignity and care” (Pearson, Albon & Hubball 2015, p. 3), which are values at the heart

of this research. Another important consideration is the paradigm that governs this thesis, which is covered in the next section.

Data Collection Method

Research Design and Interviews

Based on the aim of the thesis and the research questions, this research is exploratory by design, which contrasts with a confirmatory research design. In an exploratory research design the focus is on how and why theories explain phenomena and to provide novel explanations (Reiter 2017). Contrastingly, in a confirmatory research design the aim is to test hypotheses (Reiter 2017). Generally, exploratory research designs utilise a qualitative methodology, with interviews being a widely used research method (Creswell 2014). Interviews are a data collection method that is consistent with an interpretivist paradigm (Patton 2014). That is, interviews in an exploratory research design study consist of open-ended questions, with the interviewer being interested in the perspectives, knowledge, values, and beliefs of the interviewees (Patton 2014). The data collected from interviews therefore consist of quotations that contain sufficient information, which is then interpreted by the researcher (Patton 2014). Hence, interviews as a data collection method are aligned with an interpretivist paradigm, which values the contexts of the phenomena, and the multiple perspectives of reality.

Semi-Structured Interviews with Narrative Questions

Semi-structured interviews, which provided flexibility to deviate from pre-determined questions, were conducted for this thesis. Semi-structured interviews, which consisted of open-ended questions that are determined prior to the interview, were used to gain in-depth knowledge (Creswell 2013). For this research, an interview schedule that contains the main pre-determined open-ended and probing questions that would be posed to participants was developed. The initial questions that were posed to the participants were narrative, or storytelling, questions. Narrative questions can be used to elicit responses from the participants that capture their own perspectives, values, and beliefs (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015). A narrative question would therefore be in the form of: can you tell me about...? (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015). In this thesis, an example of a narrative question posed to a social activist is: can you tell me about your experience in activism? An example of a narrative question posed to a manager is: can you tell me about your work at the

organisation? The semi-structured interviews for this thesis therefore began with broad questions, with the probing questions becoming more precise, based on firstly what the interviewee says and secondly on what is contained in the interview schedule.

Analysis of Documents

Using documents that pertain to the phenomena being analysed is a technique used to triangulate or corroborate interview data (Patton 2014). For this thesis, 64 documents were used to extract background information and corroborate claims made by the interviewees. For example, reports from the Australian Bureau of Statistics were used to obtain information on the context. Publicly available data sources such as media reports, organisation websites, annual reports, Government Inquiry reports, social media postings, and court records were used to support the claims made by the participants. As stated earlier in this chapter, to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, citation details of these documents are not provided if it is deemed to contain identifying details of the participants.

Purposeful and Theory-Based Sampling

Purposeful sampling is commonly used in traditional qualitative methods (Creswell 2013). It entails that participants are non-randomly and intentionally requested to participate in the study, on the basis that each participant has the capacity to provide rich and pertinent data (Patton 2014). Theory-based sampling is also a non-random sampling technique where the participants recruited represent theoretical constructs that are pivotal for the research topic (Suri 2011). Purposeful and theory-based sampling therefore require some prior theoretical understanding about the research topic (Robinson 2014). For this thesis, it is noted that precarious work in Australia is a complex and important topic, that is linked to wage stagnation (Stanford 2018), the living wage (Thorntwaite 2017), and wage theft (Chalmers 2019; Evans 2019; Stein & Ogilvie 2020). The key players therefore include, business owners, precarious workers, industry associations, government, trade unions and other social advocacy groups. Likewise, climate change matters in an Australian setting are seen as complex and significant topics (Nyberg, Spicer & Wright 2013; Wright & Nyberg 2017). The key players in the issue include business whose externalities directly or indirectly have negative impacts on the environment, activist groups that can either have conservative or progressive ideologies that pertain to climate change, and government.

In the data collection phase, the different social actors who were above 18 years of age; that were involved in social activism for the precarious work case, and the climate change activism case were purposely sought to participate in the research. The participants therefore consisted of social activists or advocacy groups for both cases, precarious workers for the first case and for-profit business representatives for both cases. For the precarious work, the groups that seemingly have diametrically opposite views are the trade unions, charities, and precarious workers on one end and the industry associations and business owners on the other end. For climate change, businesses classified as high risk (e.g. in the construction, energy, and resources sectors) (Young & Marais 2012) and conservative groups (e.g. a Conservative Think Tank), were expected to have different views from the climate change activists. Some businesses in the financial sector that are classified as low risk (Young & Marais 2012) were also purposely sought to capture the complexity of climate change.

Conceptual Depth

Conceptual depth is the stage at which there is an adequate and in-depth understanding of the categories that are being explored, and it can be used to guide a qualitative study on when to stop data collection (Nelson 2017). Conceptual depth is used as an alternative to data saturation, which is considered an ambiguous concept and has hence been used in qualitative studies inconsistently (Saunders, Sim, Kingstone, Baker, Waterfield, Bartlam, Burroughs & Jinks 2018). Data saturation arose from Grounded theory as a methodology and refers to the point at which data collection ceases because no new themes emerge (Glaser & Strauss 1967). However, more recent work highlighted a limitation of such an approach. Specifically, there is always a possibility that a new theme will emerge from further data collection and therefore it ends up becoming counter-productive to pursue data collection (Corbin & Strauss 2014). Empirical research on data saturation of PhD theses in the United Kingdom has been undertaken (Mason 2010). The results were that from a sample size of 179 PhD theses in the social sciences that used a qualitative case study methodology, the mean sample size for these theses was 36 participants, the mode was 40 participants, and the median was 33 participants (Mason 2010). Of importance in this thesis is gaining an adequate and in-depth understanding of categories that have emerged from the interview data. Hence, conceptual depth (Nelson 2017), was used in this thesis to determine the number of participants that were interviewed.

Participants in the Precarious Work Case

For the case on social activism for precarious work, in total, 21 participants representing 18 organisations were interviewed, and these frequencies are presented in Table 4.1. The interviewees were three Business Owners, six Casual Employees, two senior representatives of Charities, one Human Resource (HR) Manager, one Independent Contractor, four senior representatives of Industry Associations, two representatives of Trade unions and two Founding Directors of a whistleblowing consultancy. De-identified information that provides further details on the businesses and industry associations is provided in Table 4.2, precarious workers in Table 4.3, and activist groups in Table 4.4. The activist groups such as the unions, consist of activists, and the social movement surrounding precarious work encapsulates the activists and activist groups. Importantly, precarious workers have been identified as either international students or domestic students. This identification is informed by Australian empirical evidence, which has shown that workers in precarious roles are at risk of being exploited based on their ethnicity and status of the job but not based on their gender (Boucher 2019). The participants in the precarious work case are representative of the key players in the issue, with government as an exception. Government officials were contacted and requested to participate in the study but declined on the basis that they were constrained by time.

Table 4.1: Participant Numbers in The Precarious Work Case

	Interviewees	Organisations Represented by Interviewees
Business Owners	3	3
Charities	2	2
HR Manager	1	1
Industry Associations	4	3
Precarious Workers	6	6
Trade Unions	2	2
Whistleblowing Consultancy	2	1
Total	21	18

Table 4.2: De-identified Industry Information in the Precarious Work Case

Participant/ Organisation	Sector	Role	Gender	Background Information on Organisation
Business owner 1	Cleaning	Franchisor	Male	Owned 75 Franchisees in Australia
Business owner 2	Hospitality	Owner	Male	Employed 4 casual workers
Business owner 3	Retail	Owner	Male	Employed 24 workers
HR Manager	Retail	HR manager	Male	Employed 35,000 including contractors and franchisees
Independent Contractor	Hospitality	Independent Contractor	Male	International tertiary student
Industry Association 1	Industry association	CEO	Female	First interviewed industry association advocating mainly for franchises
Industry Association 2a	Industry association	Director of Industrial Relations	Male	Second interviewed industry association advocating for businesses in Australia
Industry Association 2b	Industry association	Associate Director of Industrial Relations	Female	Second interviewed industry association advocating for businesses in Australia
Industry Association 3	Industry association	Manager of Industrial Relations	Female	Third interviewed industry association advocating for businesses in Australia

Table 4.3: De-identified Information on Workers in the Precarious Case

Participant/ Organisation	Sector	Role	Gender	Background Information on Participant
Precarious Worker 1	Hospitality	Casual employee	Female	Casual worker and domestic tertiary student
Precarious Worker 2	Hospitality	Casual employee	Female	Casual worker and domestic tertiary student
Precarious Worker 3	Retail	Casual employee	Male	Casual worker and domestic tertiary student
Precarious Worker 4	Hospitality	Independent Contractor	Male	Independent contractor and international tertiary student

Participant/ Organisation	Sector	Role	Gender	Background Information on Participant
Precarious Worker 5	Hospitality	Casual employee	Male	Casual worker and international tertiary student
Precarious Worker 6	Retail	Casual employee	Male	Casual worker and international tertiary student
Precarious Worker 7	Hospitality	Casual employee	Male	Casual worker and international tertiary student

Table 4.4: De-identified Information on Activist Groups in the Precarious Case

Activist Group	Sector	Role	Gender	Background Information on Organisation
Charity 1	Charity	Director of Policy	Female	Charity advocating for vulnerable workers and people
Charity 2	Charity	Chair of Board	Male	Religious institution and charity advocating for vulnerable workers
Trade Union 1	Trade Union	Executive Member	Male	National trade union
Trade Union 2	Trade Union	Executive Member	Male	Trade union advocating for progressive issues
Whistleblowing Consultancy 1a	Whistle-blowers Consultants	Founder	Male	Whistleblowing consultancy for exploited workers
Whistleblowing Consultancy 1b	Whistle-blowers Consultants	Founder	Female	

Participants in the Climate Change Activism Case

For the climate change activism case, a total of 16 participants were interviewed as shown in Table 4.5. The interviewees were an Aboriginal Activist; an Environmental Advisor and a Sustainability Manager at two Engineering companies. A Strategy Manager, two founders and one Sustainability Investments Manager at four financial companies were also interviewed. Other business representatives were a Sustainability Manager at a manufacturing company, a Head of Sustainability at a mining company and an Executive Manager in HR, Sustainability and Risk at another mining company. For the social activists and advocacy groups, an Executive Manager, a Director of Environment, a Strategist and two Campaigners at five Social Movement Organisations

(SMOs) were interviewed. Lastly, a Research Consultant at a Conservative Think Tank was interviewed. Activist groups such as the SMOs consist of activists. The activists and the activist groups are constituents of their relevant social movement. For example, progressive activists in the social movement for climate action, and the conservative think, in a movement for climate inaction. De-identified background information on the advocacy groups is provided in Table 4.6 and similar information on the companies is tabulated in Table 4.7. Like in the precarious work case, the interviewees are representative of the key players in the issue, except for government officials who stated that they could not participate in the study due to the time constraints they faced.

Table 4.5: Participant Numbers in the Climate Change Case

	Interviewees	Group/Organisations Represented by Interviewees
Aboriginal Activist	1	1
Engineering Companies	2	2
Financial Companies	4	4
Manufacturing Company	1	1
Mining Companies	2	2
Social Movement Organisations	5	5
Think Tank	1	1
Total	16	16

Table 4.6: De-identified Background Information of Activists in the Climate Change Case

Activist	Activist/Activist Group	Participant's Role	Participant's Gender	Demonstrations of Activism
Aboriginal Activist	Social activist	Activist and Senior Manager	Male	Advocating for the rights of Aboriginal communities, conservation, and climate change action
SMO1	Local environmental NGO	Executive Officer	Male	Campaigning for climate action at a local level
SMO2	Shareholder activism NGO firm	Director of Environment	Male	Filing shareholder resolutions in support of the <i>Paris Agreement</i>

Activist	Activist/Activist Group	Participant's Role	Participant's Gender	Demonstrations of Activism
SMO3	International environmental NGO	Strategist	Male	Campaigning against powerful industry associations' vested interests in fossil fuels
SMO4	Local social activism campaign organiser	Campaigner	Female	Campaigning against construction of a coal mine by MiningCo1
SMO5	Shareholder activism NGO firm	Campaigner	Female	Campaigning for divestment of fossil fuels in FinancialCo4
Think Tank	Conservative Think Tank	Consultant	Male	Lobbying for the repeal of section 487 of the EPBC Act on activism

Table 4.7: De-identified Background Information on Companies in the Climate Change Case

Company	Employees in Australia ^a	Participant's Role	Participant's Gender	Revenue ^a	Demonstrations of Activism
EngineeringCo1	2647	Environmental Advisor	Female	756 million	EngineeringCo1 and its contractor were targeted by activists regarding a waste management proposal EngineeringCo2 was targeted by activists for being a contractor of MiningCo1 FinancialCo1, FinancialCo2, FinancialCo3 and ManufacturingCo1 participate in activism as they are members of the <i>Not Business as Usual</i> alliance, which supports the <i>School Strike for Climate</i> movement
EngineeringCo2	7469	Sustainability Manager	Male	1.2 billion	
FinancialCo1	30	Strategy Manager	Male	710 million (managed fund)	
FinancialCo2	1	Founder	Female	-	
FinancialCo3	7	Founder	Female	-	
ManufacturingCo1	139	Sustainability Manager	Female	22 million	
FinancialCo4	700	Sustainability Investment Manager	Male	40 billion	FinancialCo4 has been targeted to by social activists to divest from fossil fuels.
MiningCo1	58	Head of Sustainability	Male	15 million	MiningCo1 has been targeted by social activists opposing construction of its coal mine

Company	Employees in Australia^a	Participant's Role	Participant's Gender	Revenue^a	Demonstrations of Activism
MiningCo2	3418	Executive Manager	Male	635 million	MiningCo2 has been targeted by social activists opposing construction of a gold and copper mine

^a Source: Company 360 for the financial year ending Dec 2019 or June 2020 except for FinancialCo1 (sourced from company website), FinCo2 (sourced from interview) and FinCo3 (sourced from interview).

Interviewing the Participants

The semi-structured interviews with initial narrative or story telling questions were audio-recorded; the average duration of the recording was 46 minutes (ranging between 26 minutes and 91 minutes as shown in Table 4.6). The interviewees were given the option to choose the interviewing mode that would best suit them; that is either, face to face, a telephone interview or via an internet video call. The interviewees were also requested to select a venue that was most convenient for them. Overall, for the precarious work case, 16 interviews were face to face, four were telephone interviews and one was conducted via an internet video call. For the climate change activism case, 14 interviews were conducted on internet video calls and two were face to face interviews. Eight of the interviews were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore a face-to-face meeting for an interview was not an option available to the interviewees. Empirical evidence shows that when giving a personal account, richer data can be obtained from telephone compared to face-to-face interviews (Irvine, Drew & Sainsbury 2013). Considering that the topics being discussed were potentially sensitive, having telephone interviews created a sense of anonymity, making interviewees more likely and willing to share more information (Drabble et al. 2016). Seemingly, the two founders of the Whistleblowing Consultancy might have perceived such a sense of anonymity, but not the casual employee whose interview was at a coffee shop. Two other telephone interviews were conducted; and these were with the Chair of the Board of a Charity and the Manager at one of the Industry Associations.

Interview Transcriptions

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The word count for the transcripts on the precarious work case is 124,157 and for the climate change case is 92,722 as shown in Table 4.8.

The total word count for transcripts that were analysed is 216,879 Four interviews (Business Owner 2, Business Owner 3, HR Manager and Precarious Worker 7) were transcribed by a professional transcribing service and the other 31 interviews were transcribed by the Student Researcher. The interviews were transcribed in their entirety within 10 days from the date of each interview and emailed to the respective participant for checking. All participants were requested to review the transcript, reflect on it, and notify the Student Researcher, the Chief Investigator or Associate Investigator of the need for any amendment, preferably within seven days from the date they received their transcript. For the first case study, two of the 21 interviewees (Industry Association 3 and Charity 2) submitted requests for minor changes to be made to their transcripts; for the second case study two of the 16 interviewees (SMO3 and MiningCo2) submitted requests for changes to be made to their transcripts.

Table 4.8: Data on the Interviews

Social activism for Precarious Work Case				Climate Change Activism Case			
Participant	Date of interview	Duration (minutes)	Word Count	Participant	Date of interview	Duration (minutes)	Word Count
Business owner 1	2-Nov-18	28	3165	Aboriginal Activist	29-Apr-20	52	7569
Business owner 2	21-Feb-20	39	6925	EngineeringCo1	11-Apr-20	51	8133
Business owner 3	12-Mar-20	47	6684	EngineeringCo2	29-Apr-20	52	7152
Charity 1	25-Feb-19	63	8673	FinancialCo1	11-Oct-19	43	4777
Charity 2	9-May-19	36	3210	FinancialCo2	21-Oct-19	37	4627
HR Manager	14-Mar-20	62	8440	FinancialCo3	25-Nov-19	34	4733
Industry Association 1	14-Aug-18	31	3245	FinancialCo4	22-Jun-20	29	3806
Industry Association 2a	17-Jan-19	74*	8620	ManufactureCo1	22-Oct-19	30	4625
Industry Association 2b	17-Jan-19		1907	MiningCo1	30-Apr-20	50	7029
Industry Association 3	8-Feb-19	36	4184	MiningCo2	28-May-20	71	8981
Precarious Worker 1	30-Nov-18	59	8409	SMO1	9-Oct-19	45	7163
Precarious Worker 2	24-Jan-19	30	5043	SMO2	11-Oct-19	37	4799
Precarious Worker 3	24-Jan-19	36	5461	SMO3	30-Oct-19	45	5981
Precarious Worker 4	5-May-19	60	8872	SMO4	30-Oct-19	30	4224
Precarious Worker 5	8-May-19	27	3939	SMO5	11-Nov-20	30	3577
Precarious Worker 6	8-May-19	26	3371	Think Tank	6-May-20	43	5546
Precarious Worker 7	29-Feb-20	48	6723				
Trade Union 1	26-Sep-18	55	6648				
Trade Union 2	31-Jan-19	65	7612				
Whistleblowing Consultancy 1a	31-Jul-18	91*	5433				
Whistleblowing Consultancy 1b	31-Jul-18		7593				
Total Word Count			124157				92722

*The interviews with the Director and Associate Director of Workplace Relation at Industry Association 2 were held together as they requested, and likewise, the interviews with the two Founding Directors of the Whistleblowing Consultancy were held concurrently based on their request.

Triangulation and Crystallisation

Triangulation and Crystallisation mirror each other in their methods but differ based on their underpinning paradigms (Tracy 2010). In qualitative studies, triangulation assumes that when at least two data collection methods, theories and types of data converge towards the same interpretation or conclusion, then credibility has been achieved (Flick 2004). Triangulation as a concept was developed in a realist paradigm, where the intention was to eliminate subjectivity; therefore, the underpinning paradigm of triangulation is that there is only one reality (Tracy 2010). In both triangulation and crystallisation there is significant value in using different data collection methods, theories, and types of data because it enables a researcher to view the different facets of complex social problems to enhance the understandings that a researcher is seeking (Tracy 2010). Therefore, the only difference between the two concepts is that triangulation is underpinned by a realism, while crystallisation is underpinned by interpretivism (Tracy 2010). Given this research is underpinned by interpretivism, the process of enhancing the credibility of the research is aligned with crystallisation.

Crystallisation was used through thick descriptions, diverse interview accounts, and through supplementary data sources. Thick descriptions, which are essentially the interviewees responses to the open-ended, storytelling telling questions demonstrate credibility as the assertions that are being made when the data is being reported are supported by the interviewees' accounts (Tracy 2010). Credibility is demonstrated in this thesis by the diverse interviewees who agreed to participate in the study. The participants also received their transcripts within 10 days from the date of the interview and were given the opportunity to reflect on their transcripts and make amendments. While interviews were the main data source for this research, documents were also used for supplementary and complementary purposes.

Coding

The de-identified interview transcripts were imported into NVivo 12Plus, which was used to manage the data and facilitate coding. The coding process entailed three main steps, which are firstly, the identification of initial categories; secondly, a refinement of the categories; and thirdly the creation of links between the categories (Grodal, Anteby & Holm 2020). Firstly, codes that represented the categories were coded in-vivo, that is, based on the phrases or words used in the

transcripts, and descriptively with reference to an interpretation of what the participants were describing (Saldaña 2016). Figure 4.1 shows the first order categories that were generated for the precarious work case, and Figure 4.2 shows the first order categories that relate to the climate change case. Secondly, the refinement entailed combining some categories, deleting some unnecessary categories, and splitting some categories (Grodal, Anteby & Holm 2020). This step resulted in the second-order themes that are also shown in the data structures illustrated in Figures 4.1 and 4.2. The third step resulted in the combining of the themes to generate the aggregate dimensions, context, mechanisms, and outcomes. This step also entailed conducting a cross case analysis, that is presented in Chapter 9. Refer to Appendix D for examples of the codes.

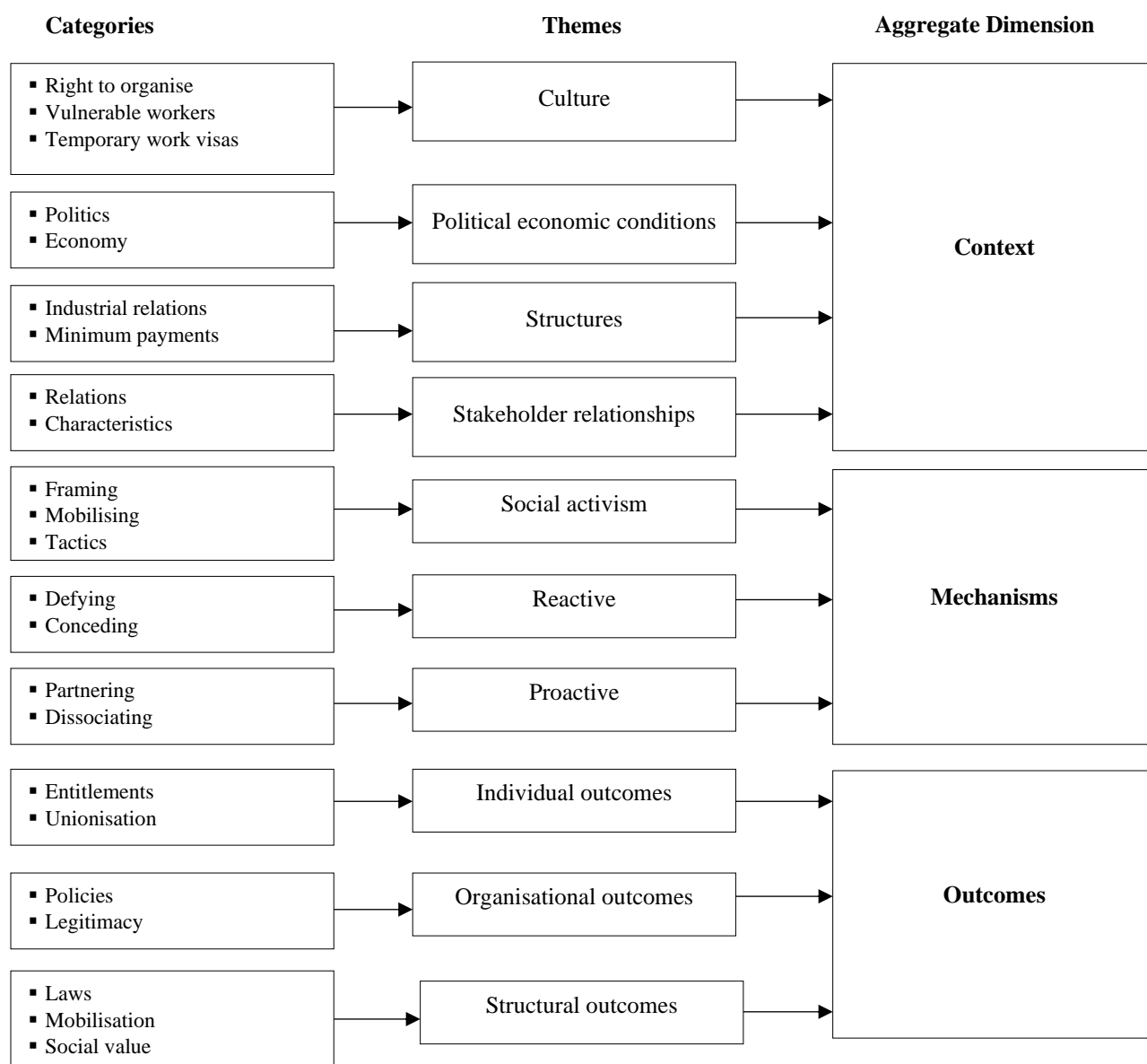


Figure 4.1: Precarious Work Case Data Structure

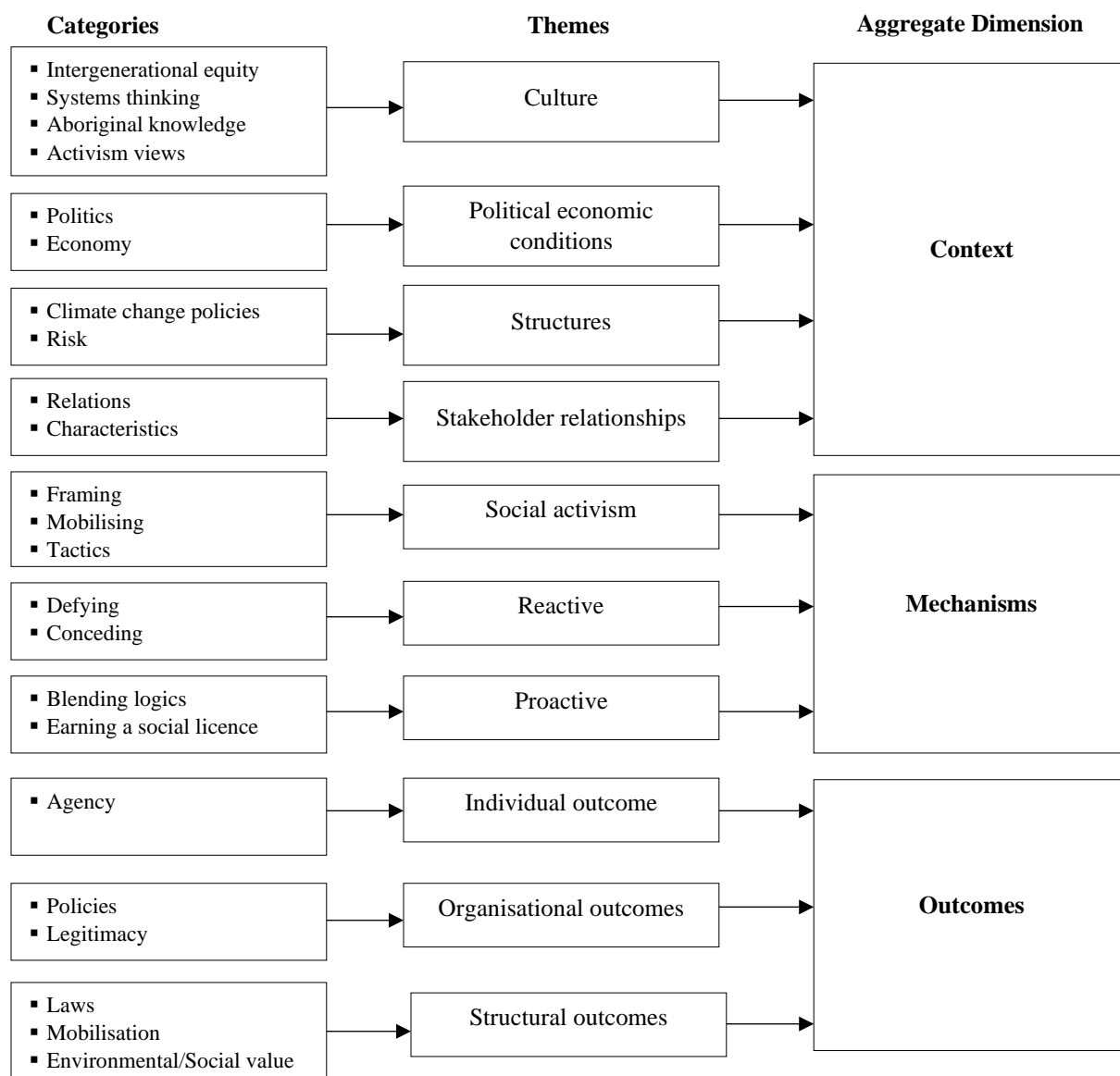


Figure 4.2: Climate Change Case Data Structure

Chapter Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to present the qualitative cross case study methodology used in this research. The interpretivist paradigm that underpins this research was highlighted and contrasted with a positivist paradigm that would generally be used in a study that uses a quantitative methodology. The ethical considerations were also canvassed in this chapter. It was

highlighted that *procedural ethics* and *ethics in practice* were pivotal considerations in this research. Subsequently, the data collection method was described. It was argued that based on the research questions, this research has an exploratory design. This design was contrasted with a confirmatory design that is used to test hypotheses. As it is an exploratory design, interviews with narrative questions were used as the primary data collection method. Documents were also used in this research as a data source.

The purposeful and theory- based sampling technique that was used to source participants was also discussed in this chapter. *Conceptual depth*, which entails gaining enough participants that can adequately explain the categories was used in this research. This led to 21 participants for the precarious work case and 16 participants for the climate change case. Triangulation and crystallisation were discussed in this chapter. It was highlighted that though these two concepts have similar methods, their underpinning paradigms are different. Triangulation was developed based on a realist paradigm, which aims to eliminate subjectivity. Eliminating subjectivity would be in misalignment with the interpretivist paradigm and hence it was highlighted that crystallisation is used in this study to enhance the credibility of the research. Specifically, documents were used to supplement and complement the interview data; the interviewees were from different stakeholder groups; they were provided with their transcripts for review and different theories were drawn on to inform this thesis.

CHAPTER 5: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS IN THE PRECARIOUS WORK CASE

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the contextual factors in the precarious work case. The factors will be useful in addressing the subsidiary research question, *how does the context enable social activism?* This chapter discusses the findings from the analysis of interview data from 21 participants as well as documents which supplement the primary data. The documentary evidence includes media releases, organisational reports, organisational websites, relevant postings on social media and relevant publications. As stated in Chapter 3, citation details of the documents are not provided where it could lead to participants being identified. The themes that emerged from the data are *political economic conditions, structures, culture, and stakeholder relationships*. The chapter is organised based on these four themes.

Political Economic Conditions

Social Movement theory proposes that the political conditions in any society vary over time and it is these variations, for example, a change in economic conditions due to regulations, that cause social activists to mobilise around an issue, and form a collective identity (McAdam 2017). In Australia, the political conditions changed significantly in 1983 with the Accord and the beginning of considerable deregulation. The political economic conditions are therefore analysed beginning from 1983. The analysis at the outset is based on secondary data and examines, first the Accord; second, enterprise bargaining; third, conservative ideologies; and fourth, wage stagnation.

The Accord

Between 1983 and 1996, the Australian Labor Party and the peak trade union, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), formed a social partnership in a bid to resolve economic and industrial relations problems that had been plaguing the country (Dow & Lafferty 2007). The social partnership was referred to as the Prices and Incomes Accord or, simply, the Accord (Briggs 2002). More specifically, when Bob Hawke was the Prime Minister, the Accord was formulated, with its short-term goal being to counter stagflation (Wright 2014). With stagflation, high unemployment rates are experienced in tandem with high inflation rates. From an industrial relations perspective,

a key feature is unrestrained bargaining by trade unions that want wage increases that are on par with inflation (Wright 2014). Such inflationary and wage pressures had a part to play in the toppling of Whitlam's Labor Government in 1975, as well as the 1981-1982 recession, which had led to the loss of about 100,000 manufacturing jobs (Wright 2014).

The agreement by the trade unions to hold back pursuits of wage increases that were above the indexed increases set by the Federal Industrial Tribunal was therefore the basis of the Accord, as it sought to counter stagflation. It was anticipated that the wage restraint would lower labour costs, leading to economic growth through increases in business investment and the creation of jobs (Wright 2014). The Accord was successful in countering stagflation as, within the three years of its implementation, it facilitated the creation of approximately 500,000 jobs (Wright 2014). Despite the favourable employment rates, there was a decline in real wages across the country. For example, while the ordinary time wages for adult males increased by 6.4 per cent each year from 1984 to 1990, price inflation increased by 7.3 per cent each year during the same period (Hancock 2014). The ACTU, other trade unions, and workers in general, supported the Accord despite the decline in real wages as the federal government enhanced the social safety net by implementing policies such as Medibank (currently referred to as Medicare), free education, and contributions to superannuation funds and taxation reliefs, which increased the disposable incomes of workers (Abbott, Mackinnon & Fallon 2016).

Besides countering stagflation, a broader goal of the Accord was to enhance Australia's international competitiveness without significantly compromising the employment and living standards of its people (Dow & Lafferty 2007). This goal was pursued by the Hawke and Keating Labor Governments. They gained support from the union movement for their neoliberal reforms such as the privatisation of public enterprises including the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Qantas, the de-regulation of the financial markets, the floating of the exchange rate and the establishment of the National Competition Policy (Collins & Cottle 2010).

The unprecedented direct involvement of the ACTU as a party to the Accord in pivotal national policies, arguably granted the union movement power to shape the country's economic and social system (Briggs 2002). This power was demonstrated in ways such as the ACTU being consulted

by the government on matters like the ACTU having a representative in the board of the Reserve Bank of Australia (Wright 2014). Moreover, the Australian Manufacturing Council, which was established to make Australian manufacturers more competitive and export-oriented, consisted of representatives from the unions, the manufacturing businesses, and external experts (Wright & Lansbury 2014).

Enterprise Bargaining

Industry associations were not formal parties of the Accord but these associations and the businesses that they represent were generally satisfied with the stable and certain economic and industrial relations systems that came about from the Accord (Bray & Walsh 1995). In general, their satisfaction began to lessen in the late 1980s as they took a view that an industrial relations system that is market-based would generate greater benefits for them than under the Accord (Bray & Walsh 1995). The Keating Labor Government and the union movement also gained a similar stance as in 1991, when enterprise bargaining was legislated. Finally, in 1993, the Accord was modified for enterprise bargaining to have a central role in the industrial relations system (Briggs 2001). Subsequently, in enterprise bargaining agreements where a group of employees that could be represented by a trade union for wage increases were limited to instances whereby improvements in productivity or efficiency could be shown (Wright & Lansbury 2014). Awards, which set out the minimum standards for all the different occupations and industries were the basis for enterprise bargaining agreements and provided a safety net for wage increases for employees who were not in enterprise bargaining agreements (Wright & Lansbury 2014).

The adoption of enterprise bargaining began the process of unravelling an industrial relations system in which trade unions and workers had considerable bargaining power, to replace it with a system that tips the balance more to the individualisation of work. Specifically, like the industry associations and employers in the late 1980s, the Keating Labor Government argued that the labour market should respond to changes in the market with minimal government intervention to increase productivity, efficiency, and economic prosperity (Collins & Cottle 2010). This view was also held by the Coalition Government led by Prime Minister John Howard, which was elected in 1996, and consequently led to the termination of the Accord (Collins & Cottle 2010).

Conservative Political and Economic Ideologies

In 1996, when the Coalition Government, which consisted of the conservative Liberal and National parties, was elected, it abandoned the moderate economic, political, and industrial relations ideologies that had been held by the previous Coalition Government (1975 to 1983) led by Prime Minister Malcom Fraser (Woodward 2010). The Howard Coalition Government ridiculed moderate ideologies as being obsolete and detrimental for economic growth. Instead, the Coalition Government had close associations with powerful right-wing lobby groups such as HR Nicholls Society, whose disdain for trade unions and industrial tribunals is documented (Smith & Marden 2008). Specifically, the radical conservatives believe that trade unions and industrial tribunals should be eliminated from the labour market as they fail to provide optimum economic and social outcomes (Cooper & Ellem 2008). This means that matters pertaining to pay and working conditions should be left to employers and workers, without any external interference from trade unions and industrial tribunals (Cooper & Ellem 2008).

The conservative ideologies held by the Howard Coalition Government translated to radical changes in the industrial relations laws. More precisely was the enactment of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* (Cth) and its subsequent amendment *Workplace Relations Act Amendment (Work Choices) 2005* (Cth) (Cowling & Mitchell 2007). At the core of these legislation were provisions that essentially attenuated the power of the union movement. In the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*, this was done with the establishment of an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA) system that replaced the almost century-old tradition of collective bargaining with individual bargaining between employer and employee (Waring & Burgess 2006). The Howard Coalition Government was re-elected in 2004 and subsequently, under *Work Choices*, the unions' right to access their members' workplaces was rescinded (Bowden 2011). Additionally, the Australian Fair Pay Commission (AFPC) was established as an institution that determines the wage rates of Australian skilled and unskilled workers (Woodward 2010). This responsibility had previously been held by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC), which was the federal industrial relations tribunal that had provided a safety net for worker, especially those on low wages (Cowling & Mitchell 2007). Establishing the AFPC was based on the Howard Coalition Government's perspective that the wage rate increases under the AIRC were exceedingly generous and had an adverse effect on employment growth (Waring, de Ruyter & Burgess 2005). The AIRC

in its annual wage rate determinations had made its decisions based on submissions by trade unions, industry associations and the federal government, but with the establishment of the AFPC, the prerogative of the minimum wage rate became one-sided in favour of employers (Forsyth 2006). The AFPC had the discretion to decide how often wage hearings were held (i.e. not necessarily annually as was the case with the AIRC) and what evidence it accepted when determining the wage rates (i.e. it did not have to be from trade unions and industry associations) (Forsyth 2006).

The Australian Labor Party led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd won the 2007 federal election partly due to considerable dissatisfaction among Australians with the implementation of *Work Choices* (Wilson & Spies-Butcher 2011). Subsequently, the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) replaced *Work Choices*, which translated to a re-emergence of awards as the instrument to determine wage rates and working conditions. The AFPC was also resolved, to be replaced with the Expert Panel in the Fair Work Commission (FWC), which is the current federal industrial relations tribunal (Abbott, Mackinnon & Fallon 2016). The FWC's Expert Panel was tasked with providing a safety net when setting the national minimum wage rates and it is required to consider economic and social factors to corroborate the decisions that it makes (Abbott, Mackinnon & Fallon 2016). Examples of economic factors that the Expert Panel considers in setting the wage rates are the consumer price index and employment growth. The social factors that are considered include considering the needs of those on low wages as well as groups such as the disabled, under-18 workers and those who require training (Abbott, Mackinnon & Fallon 2016). In determining wage rates, the Expert Panel's consideration of economic and social factors contrasts with the one-sided prerogative used by its predecessor, the AFPC.

Wage Stagnation

In more recent times, despite the consideration of economic and social factors by the FWC's Expert Panel, the national minimum wage has not been based on it providing a living wage, which has been an issue of concern for charity C1 and union TU2. A longitudinal quantitative analysis (2000 to 2018) of wages in Australia using Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data found that there was a deceleration of wage growth from 2013 to 2018 (Stanford 2018). These longitudinal findings support C1 and TU2's concerns on wage stagnation. As shown in Figure 5.1, Australia's

production growth rates were increasing in the period that wage growth was decelerating. This contradiction was highlighted by the Executive at TU2 who explained the impetus for TU2's campaign for fair wages, as follows:

If you look at the graph that shows wage growth and productivity growth, you will see there comes a point about 2013, where the two lines have been roughly going at the same pace, productivity then starts to go like this [The Executive showed an upward movement with his arm], wage growth starts to go flat. So, essentially fair pay is that working people should share in the gains of their productivity (TU2 2019).

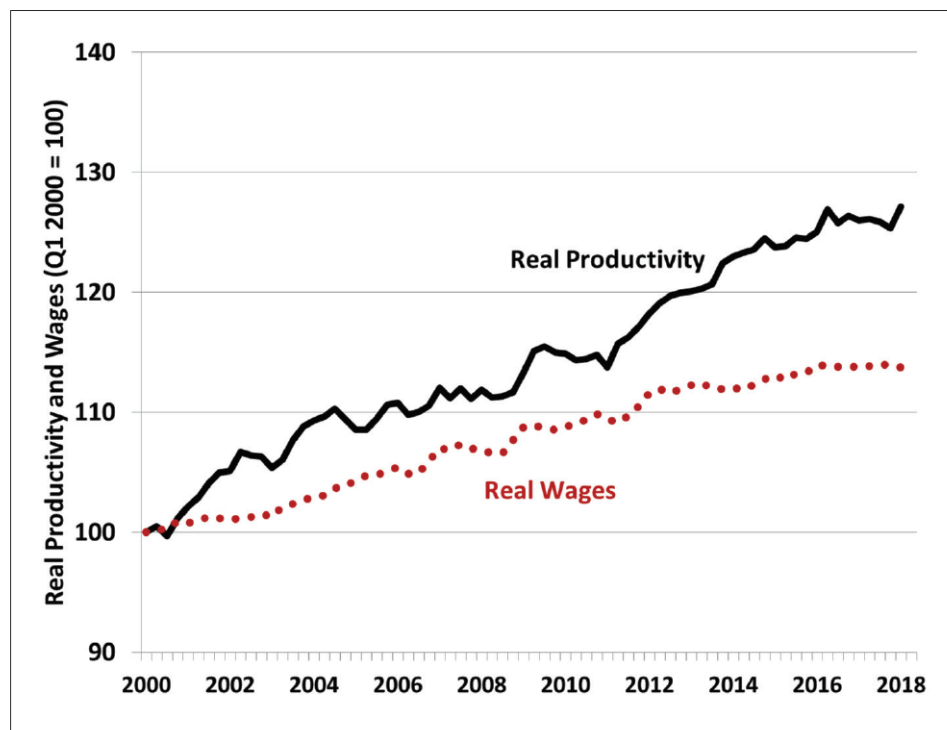


Figure 5.1: Real Wages and Real Labour Productivity in Australia Between 2000 And 2018
(Source: Stanford 2018, p. 33)

Wage stagnation also emerged as an issue of concern in a survey conducted by trade union, TU2 and it became the primary basis of its campaign for fair wages run. TU2 surveyed 60,000 members and 3,500 respondents from the public and found that a main issue of concern for 80 per cent of the respondents was that despite consistent increases in the national minimum wage rates, their wage rates had not increased in line with the cost of the living. An Executive at TU2 explained their findings as follows:

We have to remember that the campaign came out of a survey of 60,000 union members and then on top of that research with the general public. We did one piece of research that was absolutely eye-opening. It was a major poll of three and a half thousand people. And 80 per cent of them said they had not had a pay rise in the last 12 months, which it was really interesting. One, showed the depth of feeling about stagnant wages and increased cost of living (TU2 2019).

In the months preceding the 2019 federal election, Australia's wage stagnation provided political and economic opportunities for TU2 to campaign for workers to receive adequate compensation. An Executive at TU2 explained that the period prior to the election gave the union the opportunity to increase the saliency of Australia's wage stagnation, and used it as the basis to campaign for a change from a Coalition Government to a Labor Government, as shown in the following quotation:

The election is then an opportunity to say, to engage with the broad public again, to say, these are issues, you know, these are issues, you are living them, you are telling us they are issues, here are the solutions that we have put forward, here are the political parties' positions on those issues (TU2 2019).

The participants from the industry associations (IA2a, IA2b and IA3) believed the trade unions, especially TU2 took advantage of the political situation to launch campaigns that focused on the wages and stability of jobs while also campaigning for a change in government:

...it has to be understood what they [TU2] are campaigning for. Now, to them a change of government is both a means and an end... You are talking to us four or five months from an election in which they have absolutely invested millions of dollars to secure a change outcome and in which they are making claims in a highly politicised context, which we viscerally disagree with (IA2a 2019).

Likewise, the Senior Manager at IA3 stated:

They [TU2] have received, levels of media attention, particularly around election...We have found that this campaign, in some ways a little surprising in that, the rules that the unions are calling for change are in fact from a Federal Labor Government (IA3 2019).

In summation, the 1983 Accord between the ACTU and the Australian Labor Party countered stagflation, and in later years facilitated a safety net for Australians in the form of services such as Medicare and superannuation. The union movement was influential in the Australian economic and social systems while the Accord was in place. However, in the early 1990s, enterprise bargaining gained prominence in the industrial relations system as the Keating Labor Government

held a view that a market-based industrial relations system (i.e., free from government regulation) was the best system for Australia. This view by the Keating Labor Government mirrored the one held by industry associations. The Howard Coalition Government elected in 1996 also made radical industrial relations changes and one of these changes was *Work Choices*, which reduced unions' right to access their members workplaces. These radical industrial relations changes were influential in the change of government to the Rudd and Gillard Labor Government in the 2007 federal election. Under the Labor Government, the FWC's Expert Panel was established to determine the national minimum wage rates by basing their decisions on economic and social conditions. In more recent times, there has been wage stagnation as the consistent annual increases in wage rates by the Expert Panel were not at a similar rate as Australia's production growth, which had been steadily increasing. More recently, wage stagnation enabled political and economic opportunities for social activism and specifically, the campaign by TU2 for fair wages and a change of government in the 2019 federal election.

Emerging from an examination of the political economic conditions is that politicians seemed to have acted in the interests of their political parties, and possibly on their own interests, to protect, increase or retain political capital. Based on Bourdieu's Power theory, political capital is a source of power and includes the different types of capital namely economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational, and social (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020).

Structure

Structure consists of the laws, regulations and policies that constrain behaviour (Scott 2008). Given social activists promote changes or advocate against changes in businesses and society, structure is a focal point for activists seeking to address environmental and/or social issues (Mena & Waeger 2014). In this case study, social activists (TU1, TU2, C1, C2, WC1a & WC1b) and precarious workers (PW1, PW4, PW5, PW6 & PW7) stated that there was inadequate protection of vulnerable workers. This view can be corroborated by the findings of the 2018 Victorian Inquiry into penalty rates and fair wages. A contrary view was held by one business owner and four representatives of the industry associations who were of the view that there were excessive and rigid laws, regulations and policies that were largely detrimental to the financial performance of small businesses. There was an indication by some of the employers and their representatives (BO1, R1's HRM & IA) that

the industrial relations legislation was very complex and seemingly led to incidences of non-compliance with the regulations such as wage underpayments. The indication is therefore that the structure has facilitated incidences of workers being underpaid or not receiving their entitlements. Part of the structure is the national minimum wage rate set by the FWC's Expert Panel, of which some of the activists (C1, C2, TU1 & TU2) have been campaigning for it to be aligned with a living wage. The *inadequate legislation, complex system*, and the *minimum wage as a living wage* are the categories that are explored in relation to the third theme on structure.

Inadequate Regulatory Protection

Based on interview data, social activists in activist groups (TU1, TU2, C1, C2, WC1a & WC1b) believed that there was an inadequate level of regulatory protection and were therefore pursuing greater restrictions to protect vulnerable workers against exploitation, with slight differences in their scopes. An Executive at TU1 argued that while wage theft was discovered in some of the franchised outlets (e.g., FR1), a private company, is unlisted in the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX), the effects had not been as large as some of the ASX listed companies (e.g., FF1, R2 & R3) that had been underpaying their employees covered by enterprise agreements:

In many ways they [FR1 and other non-ASX listed businesses] have caught the raw end of the stick... whereas at [R2] and [FF1] have legally engaged in moral wage theft by having these agreements with [TU3], costing workers thousands of dollars across a year (TU1 2018).

Through these enterprise agreements, workers in the ASX listed companies were paid less than they would under their relevant Awards, and therefore fail the better off overall test (BOOT). Section 193 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) relates to the BOOT, and it requires the terms of enterprise agreements to place workers in a better position than they would have been under a relevant Award.

The 2018 Victorian Government's Inquiry found that the reduction in penalty rates by the FWC had a detrimental impact on "thousands" of precarious workers in Victoria (Penalty Rates and Fair Pay Select Committee 2018). A recommendation by the inquiry was that the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) be amended to protect precarious workers:

The state government should advocate to the Federal government to amend the *Fair Work Act 2009* [Cth] to ensure employees covered by an enterprise agreement will not receive a rate of

pay, casual loading or penalty rates below the national minimum wage order or relevant award (Penalty Rates and Fair Pay Select Committee 2018, p. 70).

In the Inquiry, industry associations argued that the reduction in penalty rates enables economic growth. The Inquiry, however, reported that there was no evidence to support this link. The Inquiry's recommendation demonstrates an inadequate protection of workers covered by enterprise agreements.

Moreover, unions and the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) seem to have limited powers in terms of protecting vulnerable workers. This has been highlighted by unions, such as TU2, that want the union movement to have greater power to inspect the wage records of businesses, and to have the right to enforce compliance of workers' rights in businesses (TU2 Wage Theft Report 2018). A Founding Director of a whistleblowing consultancy, who wanted the FWO to have the power to compel businesses to respond under oath to breaches of industrial relations (IR) laws, highlighted that there were inadequate laws to protect vulnerable workers from being exploited (WC1a article 2016).

Five of the precarious workers (PW1, PW4, PW5, PW6 & PW7) believed that the current laws do not protect them adequately. For example, the following is a narration by PW1 on her rights as a casual worker, after being unfairly dismissed from her previous casual role for raising a health and safety concern with her manager:

I looked into my rights as an employee and unfortunately, there was not much that I could do about it because I was still in a probationary period. They had a six-month probationary period and so I had only been working with them for four months... I did go to HR and the only thing that I sort of did have, I guess a bit of leverage with them, was that I found on Fair Work that I could apply that complaining about the H&S [health and safety] issue had led to my dismissal (PW1 2018).

A contrasting view that IR laws were adequate was held by a business owner and industry associations (BO1, IA1, IA2a, IA2b and IA3). Specifically, BO1 was of the view that there had been too many changes to the Franchising Code of Conduct, and this had brought about uncertainty in managing his 75 franchisees. As shown in the following quotation, this argument by a business owner also reflects the complexity of the IR system:

With too major changes to the franchising code of conduct in the last 10 years. That each [change] provides legal accountabilities for businesses delivers uncertainty and a lack of clarity as to what the requirements may be (BO1 2018).

The industry associations believed that the status quo should be maintained in relation to the IR laws. For example, the Senior Manager stated, in relation to IA3, that her organisation believed there were adequate laws to protect precarious workers in the gig-economy, such as PW4, who was an independent contractor for OFD1:

Our view is that the existing regulatory framework actually has the flexibility to support employees or contractors in the gig economy (IA3 2019).

IA1's CEO was the only participant to discuss the *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) Act 2017* (Cth), which was enacted as an amendment to the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) to protect vulnerable workers. The CEO claimed that the amendment was adequate and, as shown below, supported her claim by highlighting that there had been no reports of wage theft in franchises since the amendment was enacted:

Well, I think it is probably important to note that since implementation of the *Vulnerable Workers Act*, there has not been a franchise business that there has been a complaint that has been brought against and sustained (IA1 2018).

After the interview, many incidences of wage theft have been reported, which will be examined later in this chapter. The recurrence of underpayments despite enacted legislations that protect vulnerable workers supports the argument that the regulatory system has been inadequate to protect vulnerable workers. Specifically, this has been the case with the *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) Act 2017* (Cth), which provided civil penalties for employers in breach of enterprise agreements and Awards but did not criminalise wage theft. The 2018 Victorian Government Inquiry into penalty rates and fair wages recommended that the Victorian Government criminalise dishonest and deliberate underpayments of wages and entitlements (Penalty Rates and Fair Pay Select Committee 2018).

Complex Industrial Relations System

The complexity of the industrial relations system was identified by three participants (BO1, R1 HRM & IA1) who linked it to a failure by businesses to comply with industrial relations regulations. As shown in the following quotation, the BO1 believed that the lack of readily available information that explains the complex Awards, the regulations on the minimum wage

and the rights of workers in a franchise; partly contributed to the incidences of wage theft by franchisees in retail and hospitality sectors:

We have heard of operators, ... where they have exploited people in terms of employees...
So, if you have a consistent code that everyone understands and continues to understand, [it]
is a critical aspect in order to make sure there is a clear understanding of every one of the
parameters (BO1 2018).

R1's HR Manager also highlighted that the Awards can be very complex with different groups of workers being regulated by different instruments. This complexity unsurprisingly presented in a large organisation like R1 with approximately 35,000 workers. In small businesses this complexity can still be noticed, but they are in a more challenging situation than large businesses, because they have access to fewer resources to understand the different instruments. In the quotation below, the HR Manager explained this complexity and provided an example of a restaurant that he was aware of, where the entitlements of four workers were governed by different instruments:

The Awards can be ridiculously complex. So, I think there is some argument for some rationalisation. I was talking to a guy who ran a restaurant, and he had one person who came in and filled in for other people, and depending on who they filled in for, their rate of pay was different...He only had four staff. I thought it was somewhat ridiculous (R1 2020).

This view of small businesses having a limited pool of regulatory compliance resources was also held by an industry representative, and specifically the CEO of IA1:

[One challenge facing the franchising sector is] industrial relations, including the complexity of the system, which is particularly challenging for small businesses that often lack the compliance resources that larger organisations have to stay up to date and aware of regulatory and compliance obligations within the franchise sector (IA1 2018).

For the precarious workers, while there are numerous Awards and enterprise agreements, a few (two out of seven) identified the instruments that governed their entitlements. These were PW1, employed to work in H1, who stated, "we go by the Sports and Leisure Industry rates" (PW1 2018). and PW3, employed by FR1 who highlighted, "I am under the Fuel Retail Award" (PW3 2019). One other precarious worker believed the rules and the regulations that were meant to protect him, were unclear. The precarious worker, who voluntarily stated that he was 24 years old, attributed the uncertainty of the rules and regulations to him and his colleagues, as "people do not know much about rules and regulations, because we are of a young age" (PW7 2020).

Some news outlets have also reported on the link between the complexity of the industrial relations system and wage theft in the franchising, hospitality, and retail sectors. These links are captured in a report by Hannan (2020) in the conservative newspaper, the Australian who stated that “retailers insisted complex awards were the cause of most of the underpayments”. Likewise, Kelsey-Sugg and Arnold (2018) in the government funded and independent news outlet, ABC News stated, “Australia's complex awards system is a real barrier to workers being paid properly by small businesses; the head of Australia's industrial relations umpire says” (Kelsey-Sugg & Arnold 2018).

There is agreement between government officials and the FWC, that the complexity of the industrial relations is a justification for underpayments in small businesses but not in large businesses. A Federal Attorney General is quoted as follows:

...all of these incredible, in some cases colossal mistakes, errors and failures of large, sophisticated businesses is because the system is all too hard is something that I fundamentally reject (Hannan 2020).

Likewise, the FWO was quoted as stating, “to blame complexity, from some of the most sophisticated organisations in Australia, is just something that I fundamentally do not accept” (Hannan 2020).

Minimum Wage as a Living Wage

Activist groups (C1, C2, TU1 and TU2) argued that the national minimum wage rate is not at par with the living wage. Based on the living wage principle, the focus is not only on workers covering a person’s subsistence costs, which is the focus of the minimum wage, but also providing a wage at a level through which capabilities (e.g., self-determination, self-efficacy, job satisfaction and life satisfaction) are encouraged and enabled (Carr et al. 2016). For example, if self-determination as a capability was considered, workers’ autonomy would be valued and reflected in the national minimum wage rates, instead of the focus being only on a person’s ability to cover subsistence costs (Carr et al. 2016). Likewise, a living wage rate would also increase worker self-efficacy, or belief that they have the capacity to use their skills for meaningful work (Carr et al. 2016). The focus on workers’ capabilities, in addition to their ability to have wages that merely cover their cost of living, is illustrated by a perspective provided by C1 where the Director of Policy at the charity explained the prominence that her organisation gave to human dignity:

Whatever, we are looking at, it does come back to dignity. And so, when we are talking about job security, that is about the nature of the work where the people are paid properly, whether it is secure, because living with constant insecurity really can erode people's dignity. And dignity also goes to the policies or the interventions that we put in place to try and improve these things (C1 2019).

When explaining that the FWC should consider the living conditions when setting the minimum wage, C2 had a similar stance on the emphasis being on the quality of the jobs:

I think it's pretty clear that it means that they [the FWC] have to take into account the living conditions of families and not that they are obliged to set a minimum wage that is sufficient say for families with no children but to take into account the living conditions that the average family, the average worker with children, dependent children (C2 2019).

Trade union (TU1 & TU2) campaigns have also focused on the national minimum wage rate failing to be based on the principle of the living wage. For TU1, it has stated in its website that it is campaigning for a living wage. TU2 stated in a media release that while there have been increases in the minimum wage rate under the FWC, the rate is still insufficient to eradicate poverty in Australia (TU2 Media Release 2019). Noteworthy is that Australia and New Zealand were the first countries to implement the living wage principle (Nolan 2014). In Australia, the principle was implemented following the Harvester Judgement in 1907, which provided a benchmark for decent wages to cover a family of two adults and two children (Nolan 2014). According to TU2, in a report that was published on the living wage in Australia, the living wage principle is no longer used by the FWC in determining the national minimum wage rate (TU2 Living Wage Report 2017).

Contrary to the four organisations that are in support of the living wage, the industry associations (IA2 & IA3) oppose not only the implementation of the principle but also the FWC's minimum wage rate system. IA2 and IA3 argued that the system was detrimental to small businesses in Australia which lack the resources to meet the pay demands set by the minimum wage system:

It is the small businesspeople, the small businesses in retail and hospitality that are finding it increasingly difficult to stay open and employ people and being asked to pay more for work to be done for them every year (IA2a 2019).

The quotation below by IA3 is also critical of minimum wage increase as it puts pressure on the resources of small businesses:

Obviously, bigger businesses have to some extent, greater resources, and capacity to, provide the programs or certain benefits in organisations. But when it comes to debates over what our minimum safety net should look like, for employment entitlements and employer obligations, the needs of small businesses need to be considered. And so, we [IA3] regularly put forward considerations about small businesses (IA3 2019).

In summation of the structure in the precarious work case, a focal point of social activists in this case study has been the regulatory system, with the participants highlighting that the industrial relations laws, regulations, and policies are complex and voluminous. However, the social activists identified that there has been a gap in the regulatory system, in that it has not protected vulnerable workers such as through criminal sanctions of deliberate and dishonest underpayments of wages and entitlements. In addition, social activists have campaigned for the national minimum wage rate set by the FWC to be a living wage, such that workers should receive a wage that can sustain the workers and their dependants, as well as encourage and enable the workers to have meaningful lives. There is resistance to the application of the living wage principle on the basis that it is detrimental to small businesses that constitute most of Australia's business sector. The basis for this claim is that small businesses lack sufficient resources to pay workers at a rate that is higher than what they have been paying.

Culture

In the social movement literature, culture is conceptualised as the symbolic representations of rules and practices in society, or the perspectives that are often taken for granted, that focus on how institutions do and should operate (Amenta & Polletta 2019). This conceptualisation of culture is similar to Bourdieu's *habitus*. Specifically, culture can be viewed as the predominant *habitus* in a social context, with *habitus* representing the dispositions that people unconsciously use, which in turn guide their behaviour (Bourdieu 1993). The culture or predominant *habitus* in the precarious work case is examined based on the *right to organise*, *vulnerable workers' advocacy*, *workers' views on precarity*, and *workers on temporary visas*.

Right to Organise

Workers and employers have the right to organise. This is supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that all workers and employers *have the right to organise and*

collectively bargain (United Nations General Assembly 1948). Moreover, Section 346 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) (the Act) provides this protection:

A person must not take adverse action against another person because the other person: (a) is or is not, or was or was not, an officer or member of an industrial association; or (b) engages, or has at any time engaged or proposed to engage in industrial activity...

While the right provided by the Act might be interpreted as protection of an individual's rights, the Act does provide that if Section 346 is contravened, a *collective*- based enforcement is available in the form of the FWC (Bogg 2017). In line with this is a collective identity represented by unions mobilising workers and industry associations representing employers. The right to organise was highlighted by two participants (IA2a & C1), one of them a Director of Workplace Relations at an industry association (IA2a) stated:

The rights of employees to associate and form trade unions and for those trade unions to be able to pursue interests of employees, a *fundamental human right*, which we are, we could not be more supportive of and in turn our right to join as business and pursue our collective interests, equally supported by them (IA2a 2019).

Another, the Director of Policy at a charity (C1) also highlighted the right to organise and the charity's support of *organisation* around a collective identity:

We are very supportive of organisation as a matter of principle, we are very supportive of the *right to collectively organise*. So, does not mean that we support whatever unions do, but we support the notion that unions are important and that they exist (C1 2019).

Apart from the two participants who identified the right to organise, some participants expressed support for a collective identity although not necessarily of unions. This was evident in the interviews with business owners (BO2 & BO3) who believed that unions can be *self-serving*. Specifically, the owner of a restaurant (BO2) highlighted his support of a non-union based collective identity:

To be honest, I'm not a huge fan of the trade unions. I like the idea- the ideology of a trade union is good but what you actually see in practice, they tend to be more *self-serving* for their own positions, in my experience (BO2 2020).

A business owner of pharmacies (BO3) was also supportive of the collective identity but critical of the union movement:

I think trade unions have been their own worst enemies because they *have not always put the welfare of the workers first*... trade unions have got a huge role because there are a lot

of unscrupulous employers out there. To me, that is their role. Their role is to protect their workers from unscrupulous employers (BO3 2020).

The support for a collective identity demonstrates the value placed on the well-being of the collective. Advocacy for the vulnerable workers is also indicative of actions to enhance the well-being of a group rather than an individual.

Vulnerable Workers Advocacy

The social activists in this case, consisting of charities, trade unions and a whistleblowing consultancy (C1, C2, TU1, TU2, & WC) have been advocating for the rights of vulnerable workers including *low-income earners*, *young workers in the retail and hospitality sectors*, *franchisees*, and *franchise workers*. The protection of the rights of vulnerable workers, who include low-income earners; young workers in the retail and hospitality sectors; franchisees; franchise workers; and workers on temporary visas, are based around collective values and specifically, the promotion of the rights of all workers.

Low-Income Earners

First, advocacy of low-income earners reflects collective values; for example, charities advocating for low-income earners who, because of being on the fringes of society, have limited bargaining power. The focus on low-income earners is shown in the following quotation by the Director of Policy at C1:

The focus of what we do is around advancing issues to do with people who are on low income, who are living in poverty, or are otherwise experiencing social marginalisation or exclusion in some form or another (C1 2019).

Likewise, the Board Chairperson of C2 also highlighted the charities focus on low-income earners, particularly those with children:

There are many children living in poverty, too many children living in poverty in wage dependent families. I think the main issue is to get that fact out to the public. In our case, with wage advocacy to impress that upon the Fair Work Commission (C2 2019).

Young Workers in Retail and Hospitality Sectors

A second manifestation of collective values is by the trade unions. Specifically, union TU1 represents workers in the retail and hospitality sectors, many of whom are young. The union argues

that these workers have been frequently exploited by their employers; for example, a failure to pay the workers their entitled penalty rates. TU1 is a national union and therefore represents a wide range of workers. TU3 also represents workers in the retail and hospitality sectors, but TU1 has differentiated itself by stating that it supports progressive values, while TU3 has been espousing conservative values. An Executive at TU1 explained it as follows:

Despite having a very young membership and a very gendered female membership, it [TU3] has maintained very strong anti-women and anti-same sex positions for a very long time...it has run an anti-same sex marriage campaigns and it has run anti-abortion, and anti-IVF campaigns (TU1 2018).

Franchisees and Franchise Workers

A third way that collective values are demonstrated is the whistleblowing consultancy's advocacy for franchisees and franchise workers. The whistleblowing consultancy is most like TU1 as it is a small firm advocating for workers in large businesses and relies considerably on grassroots activism. The whistleblowing consultancy was established in 2017 and as shown in the following quotation, the identified motive to start the firm was altruistic:

If you see an old lady drop her purse, you tell her she dropped it, pick it up and give it back to her. I did not see an old lady drop her purse. I saw people being underpaid, and I felt like I had an obligation to do something about it. Just as any [person] on the street (WC1a 2018).

In summation, the views surrounding the protection of the rights of vulnerable workers, who include low-income earners, young workers in the retail and hospitality sectors, franchisees, and franchise workers, were based around protecting the rights of the collective.

Workers' Views on Precarity

The seven precarious workers described their views on *job security*, *unsatisfactory wage rates*, and the *responsibility of risk* associated with their jobs. First, while their employment arrangements were not stable, all the workers stated that *job security* was important. For example, PW4, who was working as an independent contractor for the online food delivery service OFD1 stated:

I think it [the job] is not stable... when you have different shifts every week, you do not know how much money you are going to receive the next week. So, that is why I do not feel it like a stable job and for me, *it would be really awesome to have a stable job* (PW4 2019).

Second, five of the seven workers stated that they were receiving *unsatisfactory wage rates*. The indication was that satisfactory or fair wages enabled job security. For example, PW1 explained her dissatisfaction as follows:

This employment survey that we do every year, every time, every single year, the biggest issue has been pay, and every year management says, we know this issue, we know that you feel that the pay is the issue, unfortunately, we can't do anything about it (PW1 2018).

The exceptions were PW2 and PW3, who reported that they were satisfied with their pay. PW2 and PW3 who were Australian citizens and university students working at franchises FF1 and FR1, respectively. They highlighted that they were not economically dependent on their wages, for example, PW3 stated, “I work just to like, help myself because, like, I am a student and I live with my friends, so I don't have any financial difficulties” (PW3 2019).

For one of the precarious workers (PW4), the *risk* associated with precarity was prominent in his discussion. Unlike the other six workers, PW4 was an independent contractor. PW4 explained that despite having private health insurance, which is required for a student visa, he was concerned about his safety and the health costs that he would incur if he were injured:

Sometimes you go back home feeling really bad because you worry that you can be in an accident. And if something happens to you, you have to cover it. Students have an insurance, it is a must to apply to the student visa, we need the insurance, but I don't know if the insurance will cover me everything if I have an accident (PW4 2019).

The precarity experienced by PW4 seemed to have been exacerbated by his status as a worker on a temporary visa.

Workers on Temporary Visas

Senate Inquiry

Workers on temporary visas are also vulnerable workers, as highlighted by the 2016 Senate Inquiry into the exploitation of workers under temporary visas, whose findings exposed systemic wage underpayments in a franchised retail store (Education and Employment References Committee 2016). For example, a worker who worked “between 10.00pm and 7.00am” was paid “\$10 per hour” (Education and Employment References Committee 2016, p. 226). The worker was not paid for “94 hours” and on querying his manager, was told that the “the owner was busy, and people were not getting paid” (Education and Employment References Committee 2016, p. 226).

Emerging from the Senate Inquiry was the finding that the workers were not aware of their rights under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth). The Senate Inquiry therefore recommended that new visas, “issued pursuant to a Free Trade Agreement” explicitly state that the visa holder has the same rights and protections as an Australian worker (Education and Employment References Committee 2016, p. 261). The Senate Inquiry also highlighted that universities have a “duty of care to their international students” and recommended that universities develop campaigns around international students’ rights and protections while working in Australia (Education and Employment References Committee 2016, p. 318).

A Founding Director of a whistleblowing consultancy, WC1a, who made a submission to the Senate Inquiry into the exploitation of workers under temporary visas, explained in an interview that he began investigating FR1 in 2012. Specifically, WC1a became friends with a worker at FR1 store near where he lived. WC1a, in a submission to the Senate Inquiry, stated that his friend at the FR1 store appeared to be working “a never-ending shift” and was only earning “\$12 per hour” (WC1a Senate Inquiry Submission 2015). WC1a, when interviewed, stated that he initially thought that the underpayment was unique to his friend, who was an Indian international student. However, after speaking with other workers, he found out it was a systemic issue of underpayment of workers and falsification of records by franchisees:

I initially thought it was one person being underpaid and I wanted to help him. You know, an Indian student, and I wanted to help him, and then I realised as I got into it more, that it was not just him, it was everybody, and you just cannot walk away once you start, because there is nobody else helping them (WC1a 2018).

Workers on Temporary Visas Exploitation

The interview data revealed that other workers (PW5, PW6, PW7 and PW4) who were on temporary visas had similar experiences. PW5, who worked at FF6 and later at FF3, was not paid based on an Award or enterprise agreement while at FF6 but voluntarily stated that he was instead paid \$12 per hour in cash. Likewise, PW6, who worked at R4, was also paid \$12 per hour in cash. PW5 and PW6 stated that they were not aware of any steps to protect their work rights, such as through the FWO. They believed that underpayments were prevalent in Australia, and that as temporary residents they had limited rights, with statements like, “I have seen a lot of my friends working [and being] underpaid” (PW5 2019) and “in Australia international students do not have

many rights” (PW6 2019). PW5 and PW6’s wage rates were below the national minimum rate but since they were economically dependent on their wages and had limited options for more stable and better paying jobs, they remained in the jobs:

I knew that I was being underpaid but I still [continued] working there because I did not have any other job. No other option. I had to support myself financially (PW5 2019).

PW7, working at FF4, was in an equally vulnerable position; he stated that one of the challenges he had in his role was being rostered for shifts because he believed that his manager discriminated against international students like him in the rostering:

Getting enough shifts is also a big problem, they don't give us enough shifts. Sometimes the manager maybe is kind of racist and they don't give enough shifts to the international students, they give them mostly to the local students (PW7 2020).

PW4, an independent contractor, explained how he was reliant on the income he received from his food delivery work to pay for his subsistence costs and fees at a catering school:

I think the job affects me in a mental way. Because you are thinking all the time about the money. And if you do not have the money, you feel stressed or nervous or anxious. So, that is why I feel really bad sometimes. It is like, I cannot get the money, I need the money because I have to pay my school [fees] (PW4 2019).

Evidently, a temporary work visa compounded the precarity of the interviewed workers.

Advocacy for Workers on Temporary Visas

The only interviewees who stated that they had advocated for workers on temporary visas were WC1a and WC1b. The Executive at TU2 explained why their social advocacy group avoided dealing with the issue of temporary residency, despite it being widely reported in the media (e.g. Cloughton & Goetze 2018; Honeywood 2018). Specifically, as shown in the following narrative, trade unions avoided temporary residency issues for fear that opponents of the union would use the incidences of exploitation for political leverage:

I would say we walk a very, very fine line and very difficult to articulate line around migration... And we are very conscious that in those sorts of discussions there is obviously a job security issue, [and] there is obviously a fair pay issue. In those sorts of discussions, the potential for what I would say are negatively motivated people to engage in racism, xenophobia, to try and get leverage fear for a political outcome is very high (TU2 2019).

While TU2 has seemingly not been overtly advocating for temporary migrants, for fear that its members would be against it, it has been active in advocating for fair wages and job security which, if implemented would be collectively beneficial for all workers in Australia.

In summation, the advocacy for all workers in Australia, including those temporary visas, and the right to organise reflect collectivism. The actions seem to benefit a social group rather than an individual. The workers perceived that their jobs are precarious in terms of their uncertainty and especially so for international students. An independent contractor, on the other hand, perceived precarity from the risk perspective. Some unions, as social advocates, do not prioritise the needs of international students but appeared to be worried about the political ramifications from their members, for supporting them.

Stakeholder Relationships

Bourdieu's Power theory uses *fields* as a metaphor to represent a context with limited resources, in which there are tensions between different social actors as they attempt to increase or maintain the resources that they possess (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). In the precarious work case, the indication is that there are tensions between first, activist groups and employers; second, franchisors, franchisees, and their workers; third, between unions and industry associations; and fourth, between unions and government.

Tension Between Activist Groups and Employers

There is evidently tension between activist groups including the charities (C1 & C2), the trade unions (TU1 & TU2) and the whistleblowing consultancy (WC) on one end, and employers on the other end. The activist groups have been campaigning for workers to be paid based on a living wage, and/or for workers to receive their entitlements in incidences where they had been underpaid. The employers seem to have greater bargaining power than the activist groups and the employees that they advocate for. This is demonstrated by large companies such as retail outlets R2 and R3 and franchise FF1, that co-opted union TU3 to maintain enterprise agreements that fail the BOOT for several years, and placed workers in *worse off* situations than if they were covered by their respective Awards. Based on reports from ABC News and Fairfax Media, as well as an executive at TU1, the large companies in turn saved on wage costs. Seemingly, the tensions are

representative of collectivism on one end, as the activist groups advocate for vulnerable workers, and neoliberalism on the other end, as employers focus most on their financial bottom lines.

Tension Between Franchisors, Franchisees, and their Workers

There is tension between franchisors, franchisees, and their workers as demonstrated by the Franchising Inquiry 2019 findings and the interviews with three participants (WC1a, WC1b & TU1). The Inquiry's Report and the two participants' narratives highlighted structural power disparity between franchisors on one end, and franchisees and their workers on the other. This arise from the franchisors being the business owners who have control over the franchise agreements and the operations of the franchises, while the franchisees must pay for the franchise's expenses such as wage costs (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services 2019). Moreover, the Franchising Inquiry reported that industry association, IA1, which represents the interests of franchises in Australia, had been involved in developing regulations that were largely beneficial to franchisors, at the expense of franchisees (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services 2019). As shown in the following quotation, the Franchising Inquiry highlighted the power imbalance between the franchisors and franchisees and recommended collective bargaining by the franchisees to address the imbalance:

The committee recommends that the Government... make it lawful for all franchisees to collectively bargain with their franchisor... This would provide a significant mechanism to address the power imbalance between franchisees and franchisors (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services 2019, pp. xviii-xix).

The onerous relationship between franchisors and franchisees has also been identified as another reason for franchisees to exploit their workers. In the following quotation, WC1a explained the findings from investigations that he had conducted on claims that FR1 was underpaying its workers and falsifying records:

The profit split was too in favour of [the FR1 franchisor] and not enough money went to the franchisee. As a result, because they were not making much money, they were forced to underpay their workers to survive (WC1a 2018).

TU1 also highlighted the power disparity between franchisors and franchisees, as shown in the following statement:

I do not know if this is expected of a union, but our approach is really that the franchising of the business is really directed at exploitation of the franchisee. So, these franchisees that work ridiculous hours trying to make their business successful (TU1 2018).

Tension Between Industry Associations and Unions

The tension between industry associations and unions is represented by differences in ideologies. The industry associations on one hand seem to believe in neoliberalism; they expect benefits to trickle down on the population, with a focus on economic growth and free markets. This is captured, for example, by their desire for an industrial relations system that is more reliant on demand and supply, than the national minimum wage:

We are critics of that minimum wage setup, we get damaging outcomes from it, but it is an independent wage set.... If it is broken for anyone, it's the small businesspeople, the small businesses in retail and hospitality that are finding it increasingly difficult to stay open and employ people and being asked to pay more for work to be done for them every year, then they are able to take to take in increase in prices (IA2a 2019).

In contrast, the ideologies of the unions, whose executives were interviewed, align more with collectivism, as they seek to ensure a fair distribution of the profits that have been largely allocated to business owners and managers. This difference in ideologies is captured by the following quotation by an Executive at TU2:

Essentially, the reasoning is that they have a very neoclassical, neoliberal view of economics... But we understand that, as I said, fair pay is not about everybody gets paid the same dollar amount for every single job and business owners get the same wages as their employees, it is about saying there needs to be an equitable distribution of the productivity (TU2 2019).

Tension Between Unions and Government

There also appears to be tension between unions and the Federal Government which, like the tension with the industry associations, seems to be based on different ideologies. The Government seems to have a neoliberal view focusing on economic growth, while unions such as TU1 and TU2 have been pursuing the collective interests of their members, and benefits for Australia's working population, respectively. An Executive at TU2 stated that the governing Liberal-National Coalition party was not ready to work with the union movement, with an indication that the Government, like the industry associations, gave prominence to neoliberalism, which led to wage and job security related issues for union members. The union therefore campaigned for a change in government in the 2019 Federal election to address the industrial relations issues facing the country:

The Liberal national parties are not prepared to engage with our platform... and so, it is clear to us, it's clear to our members that there needs to be a change of government. So, the election is then an opportunity to say, to engage with the broad public again, to say, these are issues, you know, these are issues, you are living them, you are telling us they are issues, here are the solutions that we have put forward, here are the political parties' positions on those issues (TU2 2019).

In summation, tensions between the different players seem to be determined by power disparities in the structures for franchisors, franchisees, and their workers. Tensions between industry associations and government as well as unions and other activist groups, appeared to be represented by a tussle between collectivism and neoliberalism.

Sectors with Reports of Underpayments

Due to the power differences between the stakeholders, there seemed to have been varied sectors in which there were underpayments of wages and entitlements. The media reported underpayments in a charity, cleaning companies, franchises, restaurants, retail outlets, transport companies and universities, as shown in Table 5.1. In some of these organisations, underpayments were deliberate and dishonest, for example, in a cleaning company, franchises, restaurants and universities, workers. Vulnerable workers such as international students, were paid below regulated rates based on sham contracting in some instances and in others enterprise agreements that failed the BOOT. In contrast, for some of the organisations, underpayments appeared to be unintentional, such as in a charity, transport companies and some retail outlets. These instances involved either the use of wrong wage determination instruments or reporting changes by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), that had unintended effects on salaries paid out (Chalmers 2019; Evans 2019).

Table 5.1: Illustrations of Underpayments Based on Sectors

Sectors	Illustrations of the Underpayments
Charity	Underpayments for 1.5 years due to allocating workers to the incorrect Award (Chalmers 2019).
Cleaning	International students from Brazil, Colombia, India, and Philippines were underpaid between \$18 and \$25 per hour for cleaning, but they should have been paid approximately \$46 for some shifts (Australian Broadcasting Corporation News 2018b).
Franchise (general)	Firstly, FF2, FF3, FF4 and FF5 entered into enterprise agreements TU3 that failed the BOOT, and a 2016 Fairfax Media investigation exposed the underpayment of workers in these businesses (De-identified reference). Secondly, a franchise failed to pay its workers the minimum wage rate, casual loading entitlements and penalty rates (Ryan 2019). The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) reported that about half of the underpaid workers were migrants or young people (Ryan 2019).
Hospitality (restaurants)	The employer underpaid \$7.8 million by not paying some workers their penalty rate entitlements and incorrectly entering the annual salaries for some workers into the payroll system (Chalmers 2019).
Retail	First, like the underpayments in the FF2, FF3, FF4 and FF5, R2 and R3 entered into an enterprise agreement with TU3 that failed the BOOT (De-identified reference). R4 underpaid about 5700 workers approximately \$300 million, being wages they would have received under the Awards that covered them (De-identified reference).
Transport	Underpaid 3,300 workers approximately \$3 million for six years due to a payroll system error that did not pay the workers for an extra day in each leap year (Evans 2019).
University	Tutors were ordered to reduce the number of hours that they claim for marking students' assessments which amounted to tutors being underpaid approximately \$6,000 per semester (Duffy 2020).

The interviewed business owners (BO1, BO2 & BO3) did not report any incidences of underpayments or exploitation of precarious workers in their businesses. There were, however, incidences of underpayments in their sectors. For BO1, a franchisor with 75 cleaning companies, there were reports of deliberate and dishonest underpayments in the franchising and cleaning sectors. For BO2, the owner of a small restaurant, there were reports of underpayments in similar restaurants. For BO3, a retired owner of retail pharmacies, there were also reports of underpayments in another retail pharmacy chain.

In summation of the stakeholder relationships, tensions between the different stakeholders indicate that the neoliberal values that the Government, franchisors, large businesses, and industry associations espouse are dominant. Charities, unions, and a whistleblowing consultancy desire more of a predominantly collectivist habitus, whereby the interests of the vulnerable workers are considered and protected. As part of the stakeholder relationships, there have also been incidences of power imbalances that have resulted in workers being exploited and underpaid. This seems to be an issue especially regarding international students who might not be aware of their rights as workers or who fear their visas will be jeopardised if they report incidences of exploitation to authorities.

Chapter Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to present an analysis of the contextual factors for social activism in the precarious workers case study. Emerging from this analysis are contextual factors pertaining to *culture*, *political economic conditions*, *structure*, and *stakeholder relationships*. *Culture* appears to be underpinned by a collectivist principle. This principle is noticeable in workers having the right to organise and social activists advocating for vulnerable groups. Notwithstanding the *collectivism* underpinning the culture, current *political economic conditions* are aligned with *neoliberalism*. The stances held by the governments have changed over time as the politicians at times seemed to act in the *interests* of their parties, and potentially themselves, by protecting or gaining *political capital*. Political capital is used here to refer to a combination of the different types of capital (e.g. economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational and social) (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). This means that the *structure*, and specifically, the laws, do not adequately protect vulnerable workers. The laws have also been identified as being too complex by some participants (e.g., a business owner and an industry association CEO). In terms of *stakeholder relationships*, when considering the relationship between franchisees and franchisors, and employees and employers, it is evidently characterised by a *power imbalance*. A summary of the contextual factors is presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Summary of Contextual Factors in the Precarious Work Case

Theme	Categories	Underpinning Principles
Political economic conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Politics and the economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neo-liberalism ▪ Self-interest and political capital
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regulations ▪ Minimum payments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collectivism ▪ Neo-liberalism
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Right to organise ▪ Advocacy for Vulnerable workers ▪ Workers on temporary visas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collectivism
Stakeholder relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social actors' power ▪ Social actors' characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Power imbalance

CHAPTER 6: MECHANISMS AND OUTCOMES IN THE PRECARIOUS WORK CASE

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the findings on the mechanisms and outcomes in the precarious work case. Analysing the *mechanisms* entails identifying the elements or processes that potentially explain the links between the context and the outcomes (Mayntz 2004). The subsidiary research questions associated with this chapter are, first, *how do social activists use a range of mechanisms for change?* Second, *how do businesses and their representatives respond to social activism?* Third, *how do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?* The findings in this chapter, like in the preceding chapter, are based on interview data and documents that provide background information and corroborate the claims made by the interviewees. From an analysis of the data and documents, the emergent categories that pertain to the social activism mechanisms are *framing*, *mobilising*, and *activism tactics*. In terms of the actions by businesses and their representatives in social activism, the data indicates that *dissociating* and *partnering* were proactive responses, while *defying* and *conceding* were reactions to activism. The outcomes of activism at *individual*, *organisational* and *structural* levels are also explored in this chapter.

SOCIAL ACTIVISM MECHANISMS

Based on Social Movement theory, social activism mechanisms include *framing* (Benford & Snow 2000), *mobilising* (McAdam 2017), and *activism tactics* (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015). This section is structured based on these three mechanisms.

Framing

Social movement literature posits that when framing, social activists strive to make their targeted audience sympathetic to their cause by making them feel aggrieved or threatened by an issue, and hopeful that by joining the social activists' collective identity, they can resolve the issue (McAdam 2017). In this case study, the issues pertaining to the rights of precarious workers are framed based on morality, power imbalance and reputational capital (i.e., past successes).

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Morality

One way that the issues pertaining to precarious work have been framed based on morality is using the terminology *wage theft* to describe underpayments by businesses. This descriptor of underpayments has been contentious. Specifically, the terminology has been prominently used by Trade unions (TU1 & TU2) and media outlets (the conservative newspaper, the Australian and the independent and government funded media outlet, ABC News). However, the whistleblowing consultancy Founding Directors (WC1a & WC1b) and Government Inquiries have rarely used the term. Moreover, Industry associations (e.g. IA3) have been critical of the terminology.

TU1 described enterprise agreements entered by retailer (R2), franchised fast food restaurants (FF1 & FF3) with another trade union (TU3) that failed the Better off overall test (BOOT) under Section 193 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth). Specifically, a TU1 Executive indicated that while there had been considerable attention given to the incidences of wage underpayments in a franchised retail store (FR1), whose workers were paid based on Awards, businesses such as FF1, FF3 and R1 had entered into enterprise agreements that, though legal, were unethical:

[Franchised retail store FR1] generally doesn't have enterprise agreements. They are generally on the award and the award conditions and in many ways... in many ways they [FR1] have caught the raw end of the stick because [at businesses FF1, FF3 and R2] where these employers have legally engaged in *moral wage theft* by having these agreements with [Trade Union 3], so they are able to not pay penalty rates on weekends or whatever it is (TU1 2018).

Likewise, TU2 described the wage underpayments as wage theft and linked the action to morality. Specifically, as illustrated in Figure 6.1, an Executive at a union linked wage theft to morality by referencing the Pope. It has been reported that the Pope did not directly condemn “wage theft” but in a translation of an Italian report, condemned employers who did not pay their fair share of taxes and failed to give their workers superannuation and leave entitlements (Australian Broadcasting Corporation News 2018a).



Figure 6.1: Framing of Moral Wage Theft
(Source: A Union Executive's Public Twitter Account)

Besides the unions, a State Government Parliamentary Inquiry and the media have also used the term *wage theft*. The Australian Newspaper and ABC News have used the term *wage theft* in reports documenting the deliberate underpayments by businesses. Likewise, in Queensland, Australia, a 2018 Senate Inquiry explicitly used the phrase *wage theft* to identify the Inquiry (Education Employment and Small Business Committee 2018). The Senate Inquiry into the exploitation of workers under temporary visas also used the term to refer to underpayments (Education and Employment References Committee 2016). These two Inquiries recommended that workers on temporary visas should be educated on their rights and protections in the workplace. In the 369-page report, the 2019 Franchising Inquiry, which canvassed the incidences of wage theft, only used the terminology the term *wage theft* five times. Moreover, a Federal Parliamentary Inquiry, identified in the Australian Parliamentary website as the Senate Inquiry into “unlawful underpayment of employees’ remuneration”, is due to submit its report by June 2021, WC1a and WC1b did not use the term in their interviews. The term is also rarely used in the whistleblowing consultancy’s website, and in the few times it was used; it has been done to highlight systemic underpayments. The term *wage theft* therefore seems to be predominantly used by the unions, media, and a few State Government Inquiries.

The charities in this case study (C1 & C2) also framed their advocacy work based on morality. For C1, it was based on the principles that recognised the “dignity” of every human (C1 2019), and for C2, based on “fundamental human right”. In summation, *wage theft* has been used to capture the immorality of the deliberate and dishonest underpayments. However, there has been some

criticism that the term is emotive and does not accurately depict the issue of wage underpayment. Dignity as a fundamental human right has also been used, specifically by the charities in framing their advocacy work in employment relation matters.

Power Inequalities

Trade unions have used power inequalities in Australian society as a framing reference. An illustration of the power inequalities is the use of the term *fat cats* as a descriptor of power. The term is also an in vivo category used by a Director of Workplace Relations at an industry association (IA2a) to represent a view held by the union movement on senior executives' salaries. The Director at IA2a was of the view that senior executives' high remuneration packages were unrelated to the wages of workers who received considerably less wages as claimed by the union movement. He further stated that if workers' wages were increased, the small and medium sized businesses would be negatively affected:

...when the union say *fat cat* businesses made huge profits...it suits [TU2's] campaign to beat up on corporate *fat cats* and big business, but the true impact of what they are talking about will be felt in the small and medium sized enterprises and they can't afford the policies that they are going for (IA2a 2019).

Industry associations IA2a, IA2b and IA2 were critical of a campaign by TU2, that referred to workers not earning decent wages while senior executives were receiving considerably higher salaries. IA2a and IA2b stated that the salaries of the senior executives were unrelated to the wages of other people as shown in the following quotation:

We get very angry when we see the unions point to corporate profits of businesses and try and pretend that is what employers are earning generally (IA2a 2019).

Likewise, IA3 stated that the industry association believes that TU2's campaign, which frames big businesses as having excessive power, is a radical strategy used to mobilise young people to join the union movement for the union to earn economic capital and remain relevant. IA3 explained this assertion as follows:

In terms of how we would characterise [TU2's] campaign, it's polarising, more extreme than previously... that it seems to have a broader focus, aimed at the new generation or millennials or the people entering the workforce as well as existing workers (IA3 2019).

The descriptor of senior executives and their large salaries as *fat cats* was used in a campaign for the Living Wage by unionists in Victoria, Australia. The unionists framed the disparity between the average annual income of a senior executive in a large corporation in comparison with the average yearly salary. They asserted that it is feasible for the living wage principle to be applied across the working population in Australia. As captured in the campaign's poster in Figure 5.2 the senior executives are represented by a morbidly obese cat.



Figure 6.2: Framing by Victoria's Unions Using the Term "Fat Cats"
(Source: Victoria's Unionists Public Facebook Page, posted on 5 November 2019)

In summation, the activist groups in this case study have utilised framing that is based on morality and power inequalities. The trade unions, media outlets and charities have used a framing reference that is based on morality. For example, *wage theft* has been used by TU1 and TU2 to describe intentional and dishonest wage underpayments. Trade unions have also used framing that is based on power inequalities. Specifically, in a campaign for all workers to receive a living wage, senior executives of large corporations, who received large sums of remuneration, were associated with *fat cats*. These framing references have seemingly been crafted to generate anger against unethical activities and inequalities, and to provide hope that through a collective identity, the issues can be redressed.

Mobilising

Resource Mobilisation, a sub-set of Social Movement theory, posits that resources are necessary for social movements to achieve their aims (McCarthy & Zald 1977). These resources can be conceptualised based on political capital, or more precisely, *economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational* and *social* types of capital, which are sources of power (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Specifically, economic capital describes the capacity to obtain financial resources; institutional capital gives social actors the power to determine the rules in a field; by accessing knowledge capital, the information that the social actors mobilise is a source of power; reputational capital enables social actors to use their credibility to enact power; and social capital refers to social ties that enhance the ability of social actors to exercise power (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). This section examines social activists' mobilising efforts in terms of economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational, and social types of capital.

Mobilising Economic Capital

The financial resources that social activists mobilise to undertake their activism are from different sources, such as memberships, donations, and consultancies. Charities C1 and C2, which are registered as charities are funded by a religious institution and donations. Union TU1 is funded by its members and donations and it has highlighted in its website that its donors are supportive of progressive causes. Union TU2, which manages a large superannuation fund together with industry association IA3, is funded by its affiliates. The whistleblowing consultancy is a private company, and it derives its income from consultancy work for franchisees, franchisors, and industry associations.

C1 differs from C2 in that while C2's economic resources were devoted to making submissions to the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to advocate for structural changes to wages based on the living wage principle, C1 allocated fewer resources to this form of advocacy. As shown in the following quotation, this was because the organisation had limited resources (economic capital) to recruit skilled people (knowledge capital) to prepare the labour intensive FWC submissions:

So, one way that we could actually be involved there [in relation to the minimum wage] is provide submissions to Fair Work Commission when they are for example, looking into setting the minimum wage or award wages or things like penalty rates...it is not because we don't want to, it's probably more just we haven't had the resources. We are pretty under

resourced in the policy advocacy space and providing submissions to say the Fair Work Commission, you need to do a fair bit of work to do that (C1 2019).

C1 does not allocate financial resources for the FWC submissions but focuses more on providing direct financial assistance to marginalised people and low-income earners.

The Whistleblowing Consultancy, which had two employees, is a significantly smaller organisation than C1. According to WC1b, due to limited financial resources (economic capital), the Consultancy took advantage of the reactive tendency of some companies to source informants for their investigations:

We wanted to talk to as many people as we could, but we had limited resources and we thought the best way to have everybody know what we are doing is to announce it and then let the company tell everybody not to talk to us and therefore ensuring everybody knows what we are doing (WC1b 2018).

Hence, even though WC1a and WC1b have limited financial resources (economic capital), they were able to acquire information from the exploited workers (knowledge capital).

Mobilising Institutional Capital

Institutional capital gives the social actors the power to determine the rules in their fields. Of the eight advocacy groups, TU1 was the only one that had sought change in the sector in which it operated. As stated earlier, TU1 was established as a progressive trade union in the retail and hospitality sectors to counter a large conservative trade union that had been representing workers in these two sectors. Specifically, an impetus for the establishment of TU1 was that TU3's campaigns were oriented to a conservative ideology, which did not serve its young and female membership base well. An Executive at TU1 stated, "despite having a very young membership and a very gendered female membership, [TU3] has maintained very strong anti-women and anti-same sex positions for a very long time" (TU1 2018). The Executive also quoted a Fairfax Media newspaper as stating in 2016 that:

The broader union movement would be much better off with a progressive union representing these [young and exploited] workers even if [that union] would be much smaller [than TU3] (Fairfax Media newspaper 2016).

Mobilising Knowledge Capital

Mobilising knowledge capital entails gaining access to information that the advocacy groups use to exercise power. In the interviews, the representatives of trade unions and the whistleblowing consultancy referred to mobilising information through *professionals*, *social media*, and *traditional media* as a component of their advocacy. TU1 mobilised information through *social media*. The trade union had limited resources and therefore used Facebook to not only build the knowledge of young workers in the retail and hospitality sectors on solidarity through the union movement but also to find out about the experiences of the young workers. A TU1 Executive highlighted this as follows:

We use Facebook a lot to share information. So, images of our members and the stories they have...That campaign sort of overarching is about sharing information with members and dealing with all the issues so that members are well informed about them and [being] able to continue to spread information about what is been going on (TU1 2018).

Due to TU1's limited resources (economic capital), it did not have a department that focused on engagement with stakeholders (e.g. the media). Contrary to this, TU2 had a department that focused on monitoring the public's sentiment on industrial relations and managing the union's relationship with its stakeholders. TU2 used this form of media monitoring to gauge the sentiment in *traditional media*, and to establish the narratives that the union needs to change:

So, in the media monitoring on the issue of wage theft, that is an issue that organically keeps coming up. Talkback radio, local television, local newspapers, letters to the editor...So, we look at that, and we are, okay, that's clearly an issue...So, for us, there is like a recognition of general public awareness of issues, but also potential for us to see what narratives we need to counter that might be taking hold of the general public that we wouldn't agree with, or issues we might need to clarify, or we might need to engage with a group of people (TU2 2019).

The Whistleblowing Consultancy also used traditional media to mobilise information for its social advocacy. The credibility (reputational capital) of the investigative journalists that WC1a and WC1b worked with in uncovering the wage underpayments in FR1 and FF1 was identified as a key factor that determined whether the social advocacy would be successful:

If you do it [collaborate] with a strong journalist, somebody who has a lot of influence, and a lot of power in their reporting in the way that they write and, in the way, that they conduct their journalism that is almost all you need in order for your advocacy to be successful (WC1b 2018).

Mobilising Reputational Capital

Reputational capital, which is generated after social actors are successful in an undertaking, improves credibility (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020); it was mobilised by the whistleblowing consultancy, which is a small-sized advocacy organisation. Specifically, the consultancy's website highlighted that WC1a and WC1b's work in helping to uncover wage underpayments in franchises FR1 and FF5, stood them in good stead to seek advocacy and provide consultation services for clients in the franchising sector and the broader business community. WC1b highlighted the value of their reputation, which was gained through maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of their informants and cultivating trust:

Talking to us is like talking to a brick wall, if that is what the person wanted. We are very strict about what we keep confidential and that is how we have a good reputation in this industry. People trust us because we don't tell the company that we are talking to them. We don't tell anybody that we are talking to them unless it's discussed and agreed upon (WC1b 2018).

Therefore, the reputation that WC1a and WC1b had cultivated from their past successes were pivotal for their advocacy and consultancies.

Mobilising Social Capital

The social ties that form when social actors mobilise social capital enable them to exercise power through various networks and alliances. In relation to the smaller activist groups, TU1 formed alliances at a grassroots level with the local community to recruit members. The whistleblowing consultancy WC cultivated relationships with investigative journalists who assisted in exposing wage underpayments. As shown in the following quotation, this collaboration enabled a diffusion of the information on the issue (e.g. wage theft) as well as its seriousness, which resulted in businesses that had exploited workers being held accountable:

That is why [the investigative journalist] is such a dream to work with, because she has such high standards in her journalism and gets it right so that the company is forced to face Parliamentary Inquiries. They are forced to face tough questions from other journalists, and they are forced to address their network in a way that is a lot more responsible than what they were perhaps previously doing (WC 2018).

For the larger activist groups, charity C1 worked with a union to bring to the fore the issue of social inequality. The two activist groups asserted that the inequalities were attributable to the rights of

workers being stripped away during the Howard Coalition Government period (Australian Financial Review 2018). Social ties between two groups that might be considered as adversaries were also present. Specifically, industry association, IA3, and trade union, TU2, not only co-own a superannuation fund but also developed a report in support of temporary migration in Australia (IA3 & TU2 statement 2018). This social partnership was not received favourably by TU2's members, as shown in the following quotation by a Senior Executive of the Union:

The migration one is interesting too because we worked with [a not-for profit organisation] and [IA3] on a statement on migration last year... it probably got the strongest negative reaction from the public to anything in the entire time that I have been involved with [Trade Union 2] (TU2 2019).

In summary, all the eight social advocacy groups mobilised economic capital (financial resources), institutional capital (the ability to set the rules in the field), knowledge capital (information), reputational capital (credibility) and social capital (e.g. social partnerships) exercise power in their roles. The mobilising of capital is shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Overview of Mobilising Capital in the Precarious Work Case

Type of Capital	Activist Group
Economic	C1, C2, TU1, TU2 & WC
Institutional	TU1
Knowledge	TU1, TU2 & WC
Reputational	WC
Social	C1, TU1, TU2 & WC

Social Activism Tactics

The tactics used by the social advocacy groups were persuasive and disruptive tactics. Persuasive tactics were the most salient form, with all the social advocacy groups using the tactic to lobby with parliamentarians; seek legitimacy from the public; persuade exploited franchisees as well as workers; and lobby with the FWC. Disruptive tactics were used by the trade unions and the whistleblowing consultancy but not by the two charities. The interview data and documentary evidence reflected that grassroots activism and social movement unionism used both persuasive and disruptive tactics.

Lobbying with Parliamentarians

A charity (C1) and trade union (TU2) engaged in lobbying with parliamentarians. C1's lobbying aimed to promote policies underpinned by principles which governed the charity, that of common good, social justice and human dignity for all:

[As the Director of Policy] I would be thinking strategically around how to communicate our message and how to influence decision-makers, primarily the government, to focusing on our own priorities and social justice mission (C1 2019).

TU2's rationale for lobbying with parliamentarians is that the politicians are powerholders who, although driven by self-interest, want to be perceived as having leadership roles in resolving issues experienced in their electorates. Therefore, as illustrated by the following quotation by an Executive at TU2, lobbying for the unions entails convincing parliamentarians that an issue, which is a focus of the union's campaign, is favourable to the public:

There are political parties, political candidates, convincing them of the issues, convincing them of the popularity of the solutions to those issues and convincing them that it's a good opportunity for them to appear to be leading on those issues. So, with politics, it's always a case of you've got to, if you want to make something popular (TU2 2019).

Seeking Legitimacy from the Public

Furthermore, the public determines the legitimacy of TU2, thereby making the public one of its key stakeholders on whom support is required to achieve their purposes. As shown in the following quotation, TU2 pursuing its legitimacy from the public is an important aspect in its pursuit of structural change:

To change the industrial relations laws, which are fundamentally the framework that determines how jobs exist in our marketplace, and our economy and the wages that apply to those, we have to do a few things. So, the first player is the general public. We actually need to, and it still continues to be an ongoing thing, we need to convince the general public of our view (TU2 2019).

Persuading Exploited Franchisees and Workers

The Whistleblowing Consultancy needed to gain the trust of the exploited workers and specifically, franchisees and their workers, to advocate for them. Gaining this trust entailed that the exploited workers had the capacity to tell the two Founding Directors of the Consultancy the

truth about their experiences without any fear of reprisal. As shown in the following reflection by a Founding Director of the Consultancy, the fear experienced by the exploited workers was the most significant and prominent challenge that the two Founding Directors encountered in their social advocacy:

A lot of franchisees were absolutely terrified to talk to us and tell us the truth. ... I think if there was one thing we could change; it would be how to address that people are not as scared. How we could change that, I don't know. But I think that was like the one roadblock that we were constantly meeting, was just the fear in franchisees (WC1b 2018).

Representations to the FWC

Social activists (TU1 & C1) lobbied the FWC on issues related to enterprise agreements and child poverty. Specifically, prior to the establishment of TU1 in 2016, the interviewee representing this union represented a casual employee of R1 in a case heard before the FWC, in which the employee asked for the enterprise agreement to be set aside because it failed the BOOT. The FWC Decision, which was not fully cited because it would identify the interviewee, stated that the casual employee contacted the TU1 Executive following a Facebook post on an article that the Executive had written in a Fairfax-owned newspaper. In the article, the Executive had written about how R1's employees might have been worse off on the enterprise agreement with R1 and TU3 than an Award. In his interview, TU1 discussed how he had assisted the R1 casual employee:

I helped that worker to do that [case before the FWC] across 2015 and 2016. That case was won in May 2016. By then they had been about 14 months of media and the team at Fairfax had won Walkley awards over it. And there was lots of TV and print media as well as online media about these rotten deals, which have been undercutting the minimum, but that have been between the major employers and [Trade Union 3] (TU1 2018).

Charity C2 believed that the FWC had the power to alleviate child poverty in Australia. Therefore, it tried to persuade the FWC to increase the national minimum wage rate to cater for a family (two adults and two children) instead of a single individual as was the case at that time. C2 presented this argument in its submissions to the FWC's annual wage review (C2 FWC wage review submission 2019; 2020). The C2 Board Chairperson discussed the organisation's belief in terms of the power of the FWC to alleviate poverty:

There are a lot of working families living in poverty, even when there is a full-time worker in the family. And as a consequence of that, more concerning, there are many children living in

poverty, too many children living in poverty in wage dependent families. I think the main issue is to get that fact out to the public. In our case, with wage advocacy to impress that upon the Fair Work Commission, which I should add has been reluctant to take any responsibility for the unacceptable level of child poverty in working families (C2 2019).

In summation of the persuasive tactics, six of eight activist groups used the lobbying tactic. As shown in Table 6.2, lobbying with parliamentarians and the FWC was dominant.

Table 6.2: Summary of Persuasive Tactics

Persuasive Tactic	Activist Group
Lobbying with parliamentarians	C1 & C2
Lobbying with the FWC	C2 & TU1
Persuading exploited workers and franchisees	WC
Seeking legitimacy from the public	TU2

Disruptive Tactics

Disruptive tactics were used by the trade unions and the Founding Directors of a whistleblowing consultancy (TU1, TU2, WC1a & WC1b). Traditional forms of media, and specifically newspapers and television, were used by TU1, WC1a and WC1b to create a reputational cost for businesses that had exploited franchisees and their workers. Specifically, an Executive at TU1 worked with Fairfax Media to reveal that large businesses such as FF1, R2 and R3 had established enterprise agreements with TU3 that resulted in casual workers in these businesses failing to receive their penalty rates. Likewise, WC1a and WC1b worked with Fairfax Media and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News to reveal that workers in a franchised retail chain FR1, were deliberately underpaid. By creating reputational costs for the respective businesses through disruptive tactics, the bargaining power of TU1, WC1a, WC1b, and the workers that they represent was strengthened:

And then I just kept gathering evidence and thought, well, if they [FR1] are not going to address it, I'll go to the media and I contacted [an investigative journalist] and asked if [the journalist] was interested in the story and [the journalist] is from the Age at Fairfax Media and we actually spent about eight months you know on and off working. And... did a joint venture with ABC (WC1a 2018).

Union TU2 used protest rallies as a disruptive tactic. In late 2018 and early 2019, prior to the 2019 Federal election, protest rallies were held across Australia (TU2 website 2019). A news report stated that the Melbourne protest rally was the largest of 14 rallies held in early 2019, and that it resulted in the city centre being at a standstill while protesters rallied (ABC News 2019). The Executive at TU2 did not indicate that the protest rallies aimed to create significant costs for businesses by stopping their operations, but asserted that the rallies demonstrated the political capital and legitimacy of the union:

If you look at the participation say in the rallies last year, you know, very big rallies. You know, the Premier of Victoria [was part of] the final rally in an election campaign. So, that says that there is political value in being associated with us. Now, if the general public were very opposed to unions, that would not happen (TU2 2019).

Overall, the disruptive tactics used by TU1 and the whistleblowing consultancy subjected FR1, FF1, R2 and R3 to negative media attention with reports in the newspapers and television on their exploitation of some of their workers. The protest rallies organised by the TU2 officials were also disruptive and provided favourable optics for the union movement. Table 6.3 provides an overview of the social activism tactics used by activist groups.

Table 6.3: Overview of the Precarious Work Case Activism Tactics

Activism Tactic	Activist Group
Disruptive	TU1, TU2 & WC
Persuasive	C1, C2, TU1, TU2 & WC

Grassroots Activism

Grassroots activism was used by a trade union (TU1) and whistleblowing consultancy (WC) to mobilise capital. Of the eight activist groups, union TU1, and WC had the least access to resources. The indication was that they faced constraints in terms of sourcing economic capital, given they were new entrants in the social advocacy space and were therefore still trying to build their reputational capital. Though TU1 and WC had built their social capital through alliances with the community and news outlets such as Fairfax Media, their alliances were not with large and powerful institutions such the one between TU2 and IA3, which jointly managed a large

superannuation fund. Executives at TU1, WC1a and WC1b stated that they did not have as much power derived from the various forms of capital as larger advocacy groups, and hence their strength was in mobilising social activists at the local level. TU1 did not want to form an alliance with other institutions not only because it had only been established two years prior to the interview, but also because of the limited levels of capital and power that it possessed as a small and newly established advocacy group; it was at risk of being co-opted by the larger institutions. An Executive highlighted that despite the limited levels of power and capital relative to other advocacy groups, TU1 mobilised social capital through grassroots activism:

We [TU1] don't look to build a coalition of activities with other organisations. We see that at this stage of, less than two years old, that is not going to be particularly fruitful ... We have a large network of supporters and activists [at a local level] who we draw on (TU1 2018).

The grassroots activism tactics identified by TU1 and the WC were holding community rallies, dropping leaflets in letter boxes, and relying on the reactive nature of companies for the diffusion of information. Union TU1 used community rallies and leaflets in its grassroots activism while the WC relied on the reactive nature of businesses to diffuse information. Specifically for the WC, informants contacted the firm after their investigations were inadvertently publicised by franchisors. The whistleblowing consultancy WC, with limited financial resources (economic capital), relied on reactive responses by some companies for the Consultancy to mobilise knowledge capital for grassroots activism. An overview of grassroots activism is presented in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Overview of the Grassroots Activism in the Precarious Work Case

Social Advocacy Group	Limited Forms of Capital	Types of Capital Possessed	Grassroots Activism Tactic
TU1	Economic capital and reputational capital are limited since the Union was established relatively recently.	Social capital arising from ties with the community	Community rallies and leaflets on the campaigns.
WC	Economic capital and reputational capital were limited since the Consultancy was established relatively recently.	Social capital arising from ties with investigate journalists	Diffusion of information about the whistleblowing consultancy due to the reactive nature of companies.

Social Movement Unionism

In social movement unionism, trade unions' strategies focus not just on bargaining for their members wages but also on furthering social and/or environmental goals that pertain to the wider society. Trade union TU2, fitted this criterion on social movement unionism, but TU1 does not. As of November 2020, TU2 represented 1.8 million workers in Australia (TU2 website 2020), which indicates that it had access to information (knowledge capital) on the social and environmental concerns of a large sample of the Australian population. For example, as stated earlier, a campaign for a fairer industrial relations system was based on research that sampled its members. Union TU2's survey research showed that despite consistent increases in the national minimum wage rates for employees covered by Awards, most of the surveyed participants had not received a wage increase despite an increase in the cost of living:

And 80% of them said they had not had a pay rise in the last 12 months, which it was really interesting. One, [the research] showed the depth of feeling about stagnant wages and increased cost of living. And secondly, it [the finding] was interesting because statistically it was not possible. There had been an increase in the minimum wage, an increase in award wages, and that makes up more than 20% of the workforce (TU2 2019).

TU2's campaign was therefore not just localised to its members but had broader societal implications, which would be in alignment with the notion of social movement unionism.

Social movement unionism on precarious workers seemingly requires access to economic capital and reputational capital. TU2 owned, with IA3, a large superannuation fund, indicating that it had the economic capital to focus not only on wage bargaining for members. TU2 was also established in the 1920s, and since then, it had been involved in some movements that sought to redress social inequalities (TU2 website 2020). For example, TU2 organised boycotts of South African products in Australia in support of the anti-apartheid movement (TU2 website 2020). The success of TU2's social activism tactics (e.g. the boycotts) and its ability to operate for over nine decades indicate that it had reputational capital. Contrary, TU1 had limited financial resources (economic capital), having been established considerably more recently than TU2, as stated earlier. The focus of TU1 was therefore on advocating for its members in the retail and hospitality sectors. Demonstrating this, the TU1 website as of November 2020 stated, "we are running campaigns developed by members, for members and with members... We fight for every member" (TU1 website 2020).

In summation, the social activists' mechanisms are framing, mobilisation of capital, persuasive tactics, disruptive tactics, grassroots activism, and social movement unionism. Framing and the mobilisation of resources and persuasive tactics were used by all eight activist groups. Disruptive tactics were used by the TU1, TU2, WC but not by C1 and C2. Grassroots activism was used by TU1 and WC. Social movement unionism was evident only in terms of TU2. Table 6.5 provides the summary of these social activists' mechanisms.

Table 6.5: Social Activism Mechanisms in the Precarious Work Case

Mechanisms	Activist Group
Framing	C1, C2, TU1, TU2 & WC
Mobilisation	C1, C2, TU1, TU2 & WC
Persuasive tactics	C1, C2, TU1, TU2 & WC
Disruptive tactics	TU1, TU2 & WC
Grassroots activism	TU1 & WC
Social movement unionism	TU2

INDUSTRY MECHANISMS

The industry mechanisms include the actions of businesses and industry associations. Businesses and industry associations can form cross-sector *partnerships* in pursuit of institutional change (Van Wijk et al. 2013). Businesses can also *dissociate* from threats to protect their legitimacy (Durand & Vergne 2015). *Partnering* and *dissociating* were found to be *proactive actions* taken by businesses and industry associations in this case study. In addition, research based on Neo-institutional theory also explains that *defying* and *conceding* can be *reactive responses* by organisations to institutional pressures (Pache & Santos 2010), as demonstrated in this case study.

Proactive Actions

Dissociating

Proactively, the business owners (BO1, BO2 & BO3) dissociated themselves from businesses within their industries (i.e. franchising, hospitality and retail pharmacies), which had been targeted by social activists campaigning against deliberate and dishonest wage underpayments. Large businesses such as franchises FR1, FF1, FF3, and FF5, as well as retailers R1, R2, and R3, were targeted by trade unions TU1 and TU2, and the whistleblowing consultancy. The business owners

who operated smaller businesses were not directly targeted by either of the interviewed activists for issues on exploitation of workers through wage underpayments or enterprise agreements that failed the BOOT. However, as these small businesses were in sectors, which had been implicated by extensive media reports to have intentionally and dishonestly underpaid their workers (e.g. Australian Broadcasting Corporation News 2018b; Chalmers 2019), the owners dissociated their businesses from them. Specifically, BO1, a franchisor, dissociated his business from franchises that had reportedly underpaid their workers and falsified records. He believed it was important to send a clear message to prospective franchise investors:

The companies that have been involved in missteps or dishonesty are those that are completely unrelated to what we do. Some of them are food supermarkets related businesses, some are petrol dispensing businesses, some are small cafes in chains and groups. So, while bad publicity about franchising can impact on everyone, it is important to make sure that the message goes out to those inquiring about franchising or inquiring into franchising that the missteps are unrelated to us (BO1 2018).

For BO2, who owned a small restaurant, his business decisions were based on legislative compliance considerations. In the following quote, BO2 distanced his business from other businesses that might have been involved in wage underpayment:

I would always do whatever I had to do by the letter of the law. So, that was never on the table, I never had to worry about that. And I knew that I was managing the staff in a very respectful way (BO2 2020).

For BO3, who owned pharmacies, his decisions seemed to be based on normative considerations. He asserted that he paid his employees “were paid *fairly* and most of them...paid *above the award*” (BO3 2020). The interviewed business owners dissociated themselves from businesses within their industries that had been implicated in allegations of wage underpayments based on economic interests (i.e. BO1), compliance (i.e. BO2) and normative considerations (i.e. BO3).

Partnering

Another proactive action by businesses and industry associations was the forming of cross-sector partnerships. These partnerships tended to be formed to entrench power that limits change, and/or to increase power that can redress industrial relations issues. Specifically, large businesses such as franchise FF1, as well as retailers R2 and R3, collaborated with trade union TU3 to negotiate for enterprise agreements that were legal and reduced the wage costs of the businesses but failed the BOOT. This means that the workers in the large businesses would have been in better off positions

under their respective Awards than under the enterprise agreements. An Executive at TU1, whose union campaigned for the enterprise agreements that failed the BOOT to be set aside, claimed that this collaboration was also beneficial for TU3 as the businesses would recruit union members on their behalf. Newspapers also reported the collaboration between large businesses and TU3 (e.g. The Sydney Morning Herald 2016; The Australian 2019). The collaboration was beneficial for the large businesses as they reduced wage costs. Union TU3 also benefited with an increase in membership base through workers that were covered by the enterprise agreements negotiated with the businesses.

Another form of collaboration that was a proactive response to activism was between franchisors and franchisees. This is evident in narratives of the Founding Directors of the whistleblowing consultancy (WC1a & WC1b) about their investigations of wage underpayments in franchise FF1. Specifically, WC1a and WC1b contacted FF1 franchisees, and word got around to the franchisors that they were conducting investigations. With WC's past successes (i.e. reputational capital), their investigations on FF1 would have been of concern to its franchisors. The FF1 franchisors selected a few franchisees to provide WC1a and WC1b with favourable portrayals of FF1 in return for favours beneficial to the franchisees, such as lower franchise costs. WC1b explained this as follows:

The response from [FF1 franchisor] was interesting in the sense that we heard that franchisees were told not to talk to us... there were a small number of franchisees that [the FF1 franchisor] was happy for them to talk to us, and these are the franchisees... are often given incentives or, reduced royalties, things like that, stores for a reduced price below the market value... [the FF1 franchisor] was sending all of these favourite franchisees to us, writing to us and trying to get them to meet with us so that they could try and put a stop to any imminent scandal that was about to be exposed (WC1b 2018).

This partnership demonstrates a large business seeking to protect its legitimacy.

A partnership can also be formed to enhance power and address industrial relations issues. This is demonstrated by a partnership between industry association IA3 and TU2. As highlighted earlier, IA3 and TU2 are advocacy organisations with considerable amounts of financial resources (e.g. from the large superannuation fund that they jointly own). Hence, though they might not need to join forces to increase their pool of financial resources, they might do so to increase their

institutional capital. That is, given that industry associations represent employers' interests while unions generally represent the unionised workers, institutional capital enables these social actors with different interests to change the industrial relations field in which they operate. An example of an industrial relations issue that IA3 and TU2 have partnered in is in 2018 when they jointly wrote a policy paper supporting permanent migration. They recommended that limits be set on temporary migration given that workers on temporary visas were highly susceptible to exploitation. More recently, in 2020, Executives at union TU2 and industry associations IA2 and IA3 were part of a tripartite group that also consisted of government officials whose aim was to reform Australia's industrial relations system, such as through a simplification of the Award system. In this partnership, like in the one on migration between TU2 and IA3, the goal seemed to be to gain institutional capital that would enable changes to the industrial relations system.

In summation of the proactive actions, dissociation seemed to have been done for economic, legislative, and normative reasons. Dissociation also seemed to have been done because the businesses were in stigmatised sectors (Durand & Vergne 2015). In terms of partnering, the parties entered the relationships seemingly to obtain institutional capital for a tripartite group, and to gain better outcomes such as a reform to the industrial relations system for the tripartite group, lower wage costs for large businesses and a protection of legitimacy for franchisors. A summary of the proactive actions is presented in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Proactive Actions in the Precarious Work Case

Proactive action	Industry Representatives
Dissociating	BO1, BO2 & BO3
Partnering	FF1, IA2, IA3, R2 & R3

Reactive Responses

Defying

Businesses and industry associations that pertain to this case study took a defiant stance to first, setting aside enterprise agreements; second, pressures by social activists for wage underpayment issues to be addressed; and third, similar pressures from social activists for structural changes. The businesses defied pressures to set aside enterprise agreements and to address wage underpayments

because their legitimacy did not appear to be threatened. The defiance to pressures calling for structural change by industry associations seems to be shaped by the context in terms of maintaining the status quo in stakeholder relationships.

Defying Calls to Set Aside Enterprise Agreements

The large retailer R2, and large franchised food restaurant FF1, were defiant of setting aside their enterprise agreements. Specifically, R2, in response to the application by a casual employee to set aside an enterprise agreement that failed the BOOT, refused to abide, and at the FWC argued that the Executive at TU1, and not the casual employee, was the true applicant. Hence, they argued that the enterprise agreement could not be set aside because Section 604 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) required the applicant to be a “person aggrieved”, which the TU1 Executive was not. A court transcript that is publicly available demonstrates the argument by R2.

For FF1, a class action that consisted of its worker was filed in the Federal Court in June 2019. The report on this filing stated that the franchisors had “engaged in misleading or deceptive conduct” given they had instructed all franchisees to pay their workers based only on the enterprise agreements (The Sydney Morning Herald June 2019). This was despite the enterprise agreements not passing the BOOT. Prior to the court filing, TU1 had applied with the FWC for the FF1 enterprise agreement to be set aside with FF1 being initially defiant on the matter, as indicated by the following narrative by a TU1 Executive:

So we got the termination application in for [FF1 worker name omitted]. And then we just fought, and fought and fought, and would not and would not settle and would not sit back. And so from mid-August, after eight years of this disagreement being allowed to persist, from mid-August, we had a hearing in September, we had a hearing to determine the matter set for the first of November (TU1 2018).

These findings highlight that the business was defiant prior to their legitimacy being threatened by media exposure on the enterprise agreements.

Businesses Defying Pressures from Activists to Address Wage Underpayments

Businesses (FR1, FF1, FF5 & IA1) were also defiant of pressures from social activists (WC1a & WC1b) to address wage underpayments. Specifically, prior to the revelation of wage theft in a private and franchised company FR1, and formation of the Independent Panel, a Founding Director

of the whistleblowing consultancy, WC1a, sent an email to the CEO of the company advising him of the evidence, collected from franchisees and their workers, that showed incidents of wage theft. Subsequently, a FR1 lawyer contacted WC1a offering to help him and the franchise workers with FWO claims. WC1a responded that he was not looking for help in lodging the FWO claims but wanted FR1 to resolve the systemic wage underpayments that he had uncovered from the informant franchise workers. The FR1 franchisor and lawyer, however, ignored the issue of systemic wage underpayments that had been brought to their attention as shown in the following quotation:

And then they wrote back and said all we not offering to help with Fair Work, you misunderstood. It could not have been clearer, so they can kind of do some backflip. Anyway, so it is a bit of backwards and forwards with the company who didn't want to know anything about it really (WC1a 2018).

Likewise, FF1 was also defiant of the wage underpayment concerns that WC1a and WC1b had provided to them. WC1a, who was investigating allegations of wage theft by franchise workers, organised to meet with the FF1 CEO, whose company was not only franchised but also Australia Stock Exchange (ASX) listed. WC1a stated that he believed the CEO had agreed to meet with him because of reports of his 2015 advocacy work, in collaboration with Fairfax Media and ABC News, for FR1 franchisees and their workers, to uncover incidences of wage theft at FR1. This indicates that WC1a had gained reputational capital following the news coverage of wage theft at FR1. The Founding Director stated that in the meeting with the FF1 CEO, he asked about allegations of wage underpayments by his FF1 informants. As shown in the following quotation, the CEO denied these allegations but there was indication, based on the CEO's reaction, that he was aware of the allegations:

And I asked [the CEO] about that [allegations of wage underpayments], if there was any truth to it. And very quickly, his demeanour changed towards me, and he got really offended and really agitated and you could tell like he was strongly denying it, but I felt like his body language said yes, we absolutely [know] that and how dare you ask (WC1a 2018).

Like FF1, FF5 is also an ASX listed company. However, the two companies' responses to the investigations by WC1a and WC1b were different. For FF5, WC1a and WC1b reported that it was only until they were close to completing their investigations on allegations by franchisees that the franchisors were exploiting them by selling the franchise products at significantly marked up prices

that the franchisors became aware of the investigations and told their franchisees not to contact WC1a and WC1b. As shown in the following quotation by WC1a, the late awareness is attributable to a lack of concern for the reputational capital of the franchise brand:

We [the Founding Directors] thought that was really strange that you know, we just finished our investigation and only now has the company become aware, and only now is the company alerting their franchisees...But the one thing we were told over and over again was that [the franchised restaurant] just does not care. They do not care about their brand, so they go and acquire a brand, they let it die and then they go and acquire another brand to make up for the fact that that one died (WC1a 2018).

The ambivalence by the FF5 franchisors to the FF5 brand is surprising given that it is an ASX listed company, with investors expecting the company to protect its brand. Findings from the Franchising 2019 inquiry, however, corroborated that FF5 franchisors were not really concerned about the reputation attached to their brand. Specifically, the Franchising inquiry found that FF5 had been involved in a process of “churning and burning” (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services 2019, p. 20). In “churning”, the franchisors continuously sold unprofitable franchise outlets and in “burning”, they frequently opened new franchises that had low likelihood of being profitable. These processes contributed to the company’s aim of earning the upfront franchise fees (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services 2019, p. 20). Franchised and incorporated restaurant chain FF1 had one brand name compared to FF5 which had had various brand names associated with their various restaurants, which might explain the FF5 franchisors’ lack of care of the brand and the defiance of institutional demands.

Defying Activism’s Pressures for Structural Changes

Industry associations (IA1, IA2 & IA3) had been defiant of pressures from trade union TU2 for structural changes. Specifically, as found by the 2019 Franchising Inquiry, IA1 used regulations to protect the interests of franchisors, rather than franchisees and their workers (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services 2019). Such an action further entrenched power disparity in the stakeholder relationship between franchisors on one end and franchisees together with their workers at another end. In a similar vein, IA2 and IA3 had opposed the implementation of a living wage and minimum wage system because it would be detrimental to

small and medium sized businesses that could not afford it. This opposition reflects neoliberal political economic conditions, with the focus being on the economic prosperity of businesses.

Union TU2's 2018 and 2019 campaign for fair wages aimed for a change in the political structure. The rationale was that if the structure was broken, and this could have been resolved by a change in government from a conservative Coalition to a Labor Government. The union asserted that the Labor Government would in turn have industrial relations (IR) laws that are more favourable for the workers. IA2 and IA3 opposed TU2's campaign position, that the structure was broken and needed to be fixed with a change in government at the Federal level, as well as a change in industrial relations laws. IA3 developed a counter-campaign to TU2's campaign. As an illustration, IA3 developed a campaign that portrayed the benefits of casualisation. In a campaign document provided by an IA3 Manager, it is highlighted that casual work provides workers with the flexibility to balance work commitments with education, leisure, and family (IA3 Campaign Document 2018). In the following quotation, IA3 Workplace Relations Manager explains that the industry association was concerned by TU2's campaign, which had been receiving:

That campaign we devised on the basis that we were concerned that [TU2's] campaign did not appear to be one that was evidence-based or fact-based, but one based on slogans, and one, receiving quite high levels of attention (IA3 2019).

One of the claims made in TU2's campaign was for an increase in wages, given the wage stagnation in Australia. IA2 refuted this claim based on data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that demonstrated that, between 2010 and 2019, Australia had consistently had the second highest national minimum wage rate second only to Luxembourg (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2020), as shown in the following quotation:

Let us look at the facts, our minimum wage is the second highest in the world behind only Luxembourg... We say that it is quite inaccurate to refer to our minimum wage being broken [as claimed in TU2's campaign]. If it's broken for anyone, it is [for] the small-business people, the small businesses in retail and hospitality that are finding it increasingly difficult to stay open and employ people and being asked to pay more for work to be done for them every year (IA2a 2019).

IA3 defied TU2's campaign claims with a counter-campaign that highlighted the benefits of casualisation for the workers. Likewise, IA2 believed that the claim for a wage increase based on

wage stagnation was unsubstantiated given that Australia had the second highest national minimum wage rate in the world and that any increases would hurt small businesses that were struggling financially.

Conceding

A second reactive response by business is conceding to activism pressures. Specifically, three of the businesses (FF1, FR1 & R2) initially defied pressures from social activism, but after news stories on ABC News and Fairfax Media, the businesses admitted to the wage underpayments and stated they would make attempts to redress these issues. A Founding Director of the whistleblowing consultancy WC1b attributed the change to the investigations that had been conducted by WC and the news stories uncovering wage underpayments in FF1:

Some people had claims of \$200,000 that they were underpaid, because this exposé happened, because this investigation happened, they were now in a position where they could claim you know that kind of money and receive it in backpay and that would just not have happened if the media turned a blind eye and nobody cared about it (WC1b 2018).

Likewise, FR1, which was initially defiant, conceded by paying back the underpaid franchise workers but did not accept responsibility for the wage underpayments. This concession was made after the news stories on ABC News and Fairfax Media publications that detailed allegations of systemic underpayments by FR1. The information in the news stories was partly based on WC1a's collaborative investigations with an investigative journalist. WC1a explained the actions of FR1 as follows:

I just kept gathering evidence and thought well if they are not going to address it, I'll go to the media and I contacted [an investigative journalist] and asked... [The investigative journalist] did a joint venture with ABC and Fairfax Media... The company [FR1] immediately talks about establishing a backpay program... I think from memory it was immediately. And they said that they were not taking any responsibility for it, but that they [will] put this program together where anyone who was underpaid to make a claim (WC1b 2018).

Another company which initially defied the activism pressures by union TU1 was R2, which conceded after Fairfax Media reported that its enterprise agreements that failed the BOOT. In 2018, R2 negotiated with TU3 for another enterprise agreement that was passed. The agreement was not with TU1 but the change to negotiate a new agreement was a concession on R2's part. TU1

opposed R2's enterprise agreement with TU3 as it believed that TU3 had been co-opted by large businesses to negotiate for enterprise agreements that were favourable for the businesses in return for the businesses proactively recruiting union members for TU3. Although the 2018 enterprise agreement had led to workers receiving higher penalty rates, TU1 continued to call for its inclusion in the bargaining of a new enterprise agreement. TU1 argued that based on the 2018 enterprise agreement, workers should be paid for accrued personal leave weekly instead of receiving the entitlement yearly (TU1 website 2020).

Likewise, a similar large company R3 also conceded to pressures from TU1, seemingly to avoid a termination hearing at the FWC. This concession is demonstrated in the explanation that a TU1 Executive provided of a termination hearing pertaining to R3:

We are supporting a member... in his termination application of the [R3] agreement. Having made that application the company has straightaway tried to push through now towards an agreement, and they have got an agreement that they want to put for ballot next month... [with their] desire to avoid a termination hearing (TU1 2018).

The indication is that R3 was protecting its legitimacy by avoiding the termination of the agreement by the FWC, that would most likely generate media interest.

In summation, the reactive defying response was seemingly because there were no reputational costs for the businesses and reactively, they engaged in defying and conceding. Institutional pressures from the media in the form of news stories exposing allegations of wage underpayments as well as pressures from the Parliamentary Inquiry and regulatory bodies such as the ATO, FWC, and FWO seemed to have changed the position of companies such as FR1 and FF1 from one of defiance of the activists claims to a more conciliatory stance. A summary of the reactive responses is presented in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7: Reactive Responses by Businesses and Industry Associations

Reactive response	Source of Pressure	Industry Representatives
Conceding to activism pressure	ATO, FWC, Media	FF1, FR1 & R2
Defiance of calls to set aside enterprise agreements failing the BOOT	TU1	R2 & FF1
Defiance of pressures to address wage underpayments at an organisational level	WC1a & WC1b	FR1, FF1 & FF5
Defiance of pressures to address wage underpayments at a structural level	TU2	IA1, IA2 & IA3

OUTCOMES

Having explored the social activism and industry mechanisms, this section explores the outcomes. The outcomes are considered at individual, organisational and structural levels. The subsidiary research question relevant to this section is *how do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?*

Individual Outcomes

Ununionised

None of the seven interviewed precarious workers reported that they were part of a union or any other mobilising structure pertaining to precarious workers' rights. The indication from the precarious workers, who were tertiary university students, was that it was not worthwhile to fight for their rights. For example, precarious worker PW1, who worked in the hospitality sector, stated:

I'm in between getting full time work at the moment... I'm not really into the activism or fighting for my rights as an employee, which I guess is a little bit of may be silly of me. But particularly when it is a casual job, I go, it is putting in more effort than it is worth (PW1 2018).

Common across the precarious workers was that the union membership fee was a hindrance for a casual worker to join a union to campaign for their rights. For some international students, there was a difference in that they were not aware of their rights and protection as workers.

Entitlements

Workers received their due entitlements in various forms. Specifically, with the enterprise agreements that they had negotiated with TU3 being set aside in a FWC hearing, the workers in FF1 and R2 were subsequently covered by their respective Awards, and by an agreement that passed the BOOT, respectively. This meant that they received entitlements such as penalty rates, which were not provided by their previous enterprise agreements. An Executive at TU1 discussed the *penalty rates* that many of the workers received, following a new enterprise agreement that passed the BOOT:

The agreement was approved and came into effect in April and May of this year. That agreement restored something like 80 or \$90 million, maybe more per year in *penalty rates, and shift rates and overtime rates* to [R2] workers. And so as you can imagine, there were 70, 75,000 workers, the vast majority of whom were financially much better off because of the restoration of those core rights (TU1 2018).

In 2018, R3 also set aside their enterprise agreement that failed the BOOT in favour of a new agreement that paid workers penalty rates and casual loading. Notwithstanding that, the R3 underpaid workers did not receive backpays, which was estimated to be approximately “\$1 billion” (The Sydney Morning Herald 2020; TU1 website 2021).

Backpays

Contrary to R3, workers at FR1 received backpays for the deliberate and dishonest underpayments that occurred in the franchise. Specifically, in October 2020, it was reported in ABC News and the Australian newspaper publications that FR1 had back paid its underpaid workers approximately *\$173 million*. These back payments began after WC1a uncovered incidences of systemic wage underpayments. Likewise, after the Australian Taxation Office started an investigation into FF5’s compliance on advocacy by a TU1 Executive, two FF5 franchise workers who were not paid their superannuation entitlements received back pays amounting to about “\$10,000”, (The Sydney Morning Herald 2019).

Organisational Outcomes

Internal Controls

There have been changes to the *internal controls* of FR1, which implemented a biometric time recording system. A Founding Director of the whistleblowing consultancy, WC1a, had

recommended the implementation of such a system in a submission that in September 2015 to the Senate Inquiry on workers on temporary visas. The Senate Inquiry reported its findings in March 2016. The biometric system that WC1a proposed required the Franchisor to have the fingerprints of all the workers at its stores. The workers were required to scan their fingerprints each time they started and ended a shift.

Organisational Policy Change and Legitimacy

Franchise FF1 *changed its policy* to make it easier for franchisees wishing to leave the franchise. The reason that FF1 made the changes is to protect its *legitimacy* as is shown in the following quotation by WC1b:

Franchisees [at FF1] are in a bit of a strong position to argue for fairness when leaving the system, and so when we help franchisees get out of the system the company's normally a lot more receptive to what the franchisee wants ... they [FF1 franchisors] think that if they don't help the people that we're trying to help that it could end up falling in the hands of a journalist and then they'll be up for round two or three or four in the media again. And that is obviously not what they want, because they are trying to protect the brand (WC1b 2018).

Financial Performance

There have also been changes in *financial performance* of businesses after revelations in the media of wage underpayments. For example, FF1's market value decreased after the revelations. WC1b highlighted this decrease in the following quotation:

In the week after the story came out, over a week it fell over \$900 million in their [FF1's] market capitalisation (WC1b 2018).

This claim is corroborated by a July 2019 report in the Australian Financial Review, which highlighted that in August 2016 FF1's share price was valued at "\$76", and at the end of the 2018/2019 financial year it was valued at "\$37.64". Likewise, FF5's share price also fell after media reports and the Franchising Inquiry about the franchisor's exploitation of franchisees such as by opening new stores that were unlikely to be profitable just to collect upfront fees from franchises and quickly selling unprofitable stores (WC1b 2018). An analysis by Reuters Eikon published by the ABC News in December 2020 supported the claim on the significant drop in FF5's share price from about \$4 in 2014 to \$0.08 in December 2020.

Closure of Stores

The franchisors of FF1 and FF5 did not admit responsibility for the wage underpayments in their franchises although there had been *closures of franchise stores*. A Founding Director of the whistleblowing consultancy, WC1b highlighted that the franchisors had closed stores amid claims that their franchise brands are profitable:

So, to us, that just not make sense how you could be saying to the public that everything is OK, our [FF5] franchisees, they are OK, everything is good, everything in the media is just a beat up. But, by the way, we are going to close up to 200 stores because they are not profitable (WC1b 2018).

Legitimacy

In terms of the changes to the *legitimacy*, businesses (i.e. FR1, R1, R2 & R3) that either proactively or reactively addressed incidences of wage underpayments or enterprise agreements that failed the BOOT seemed to have enhanced their legitimacy. As support, the 2019 Corporate Reputation Index by RepTrak (Fombrun, Ponzi & Newburry 2015), showed that FR1, R1 and R3 were ranked among the top 60 most trusted brands in Australia (Rose 2019). In addition, the 2019 reputation indexes of FR1, R1 and R3 had increased in comparison to those in 2018 (Rose 2019). R2, which was also ranked among the top 60 trusted brands had not been previously included in the ranking (Rose 2019). FF1, which like R3 had set aside an enterprise agreement that failed the BOOT, was not including in the ranking. Noteworthy is that the methodology used by RepTrak to measure corporate reputation had been empirically validated by academic researchers (Fombrun, Ponzi & Newburry 2015). The significant decreases in the FF1 and FF5 share prices might be an indication that their legitimacy was compromised.

Whistleblowing Consultancy's Reputation

For the whistleblowing consultancy WC, there seemed to have been changes to the reputation of the firm. Specifically, following successes in advocating for franchisees and workers at FR1 and FF1, the Founding Directors at the WC generated reputational capital, which alleviated the fears of informants in their subsequent investigations (WC1b 2018). The Consultancy's reputational capital was also demonstrated by FF1 franchisees and their workers, who were informants who had contacted them despite the FF1 franchisor telling its franchisees and workers not to do so. The FF1 investigations conducted by WC1a and WC1b took place after ABC News and Fairfax Media

reported on the wage underpayments in FR1, which the two Founding Directors had assisted in uncovering.

In summation, an increase in reputational capital is one of the organisational outcomes. Other organisational outcomes are changes to *internal controls*, *company policies*, *financial performance*, *closing of stores*, and *legitimacy* for businesses.

Structural Outcomes

Living Wage

There has been no change to the national minimum wage rate being based on a living wage as of January 2021. As stated earlier, charities like C1 and C2 have been calling for a living wage to be implemented but the FWC's Expert Panel in the 2019-2020 national minimum wage review did not increase the national minimum wage rate on the basis that businesses have been struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that increases to the national minimum wage rates in previous periods of economic growth enabled workers reliant on the national minimum wage rates to be more able to meet their financial needs than they were ten years ago (Fair Work Commission 2020). The national minimum wage rate increases by the Expert Panel in the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic were however not based on wages that can sustain a household consisting of two adults and two children (Fair Work Commission 2020), as per the living wage.

Protest Rallies (Mobilisation)

There have been declines in the overall proportion of unionised workers in Australia, but there has been public support for their campaigns, as demonstrated by the large groups of protesters seeking a change in the industrial relations system in the 2019 rallies. Specifically, based on Australian Bureau of Statistics data, as of August 2020, the proportion of casual workers (based on them not being entitled to leave) that were union members was "8 per cent". There have also been decreases in the proportion of unionised workers in industries such as retail, where it has fallen from "12 per cent" in 2014 to "9.6 per cent" in 2020; and hospitality from "2.6 per cent" in 2014 to "1.9 per cent" in 2020 (Australia Bureau of Statistics 2020). This decline had been attributed to the long-lasting effect on the ability of unions to mobilise members because of *Work Choices* which, although repealed, had set limits on union movement (Gahan, Pekarek & Nicholson 2018).

Casual Conversion Clause

There have been several changes to the industrial relations policies. One such change was the *right to request casual conversion*. The Federal Court ruled on August 2018 that long-term casual workers are entitled to a conversion to a permanent position. This court decision was upheld in April 2020. TU2 had been campaigning for the casual conversion clause in a campaign for job security:

So, what we say around job security is that if you are a casual, working in the same job and it's actually a permanent job and there is an expectation that that work will be ongoing, then you should be able to choose to be a permanent employee not a casual employee (TU 2019).

Legislative Outcome

At the state levels, significant industrial relations policies have been enacted. Specifically, in June 2020, a legislation was passed in Victoria, to criminalise *wage theft*. In a June 2020 media release by IA3, the industry association stated that it “strongly opposed” Victoria’s *Wage Theft Act 2020* on the basis that it was “an attack on Victorian employers” who should instead be receiving support for the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their businesses. In contrast, as stated in a March 2020 submission by TU2 to a Senate Inquiry into wage underpayments, the union is supportive of criminal penalties being imposed on employers who intentionally exploit their workers. Moreover, TU2’s submission stated that, at a federal level, together with the penalties, unions ought to be able to be given more access to workplaces and to be able to inspect records maintained by employers. These changes proposed by TU2 have not been enacted at the federal level. Another legislative outcome includes the enactment, at a federal level, of the *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) 2017 (Cth)*, which only provides civil penalties for wage theft. Similar to that was the enactment of the *Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)*, which requires companies with a turnover exceeding \$100 million to report on their risk exposure to modern slavery.

Tripartite Group

In January 2021, the outcomes pertaining to the tripartite group between government, industry, and the union movement, represented by actors such as IA2 and IA3, and TU2 are still unfolding, with a consensus yet to be reached. The Government had, however, introduced the *Fair Work*

Amendment (Supporting Australia's Jobs and Economic Recovery) Bill, with the main aim of suspending the use of the BOOT (Stanford 2020). Specifically, under the Bill, the FWC would be required to approve enterprise agreements even if they fail the BOOT (Stanford 2020).

Multi-stakeholder Initiative and Social Value

Retail companies R1, R2 and R3 were the businesses that were members of the multi-stakeholder initiative (MSI) United Nations Global Compact (United Nations Global Compact 2021). One of the focuses of the MSI is on businesses having policies that make it their responsibility to respect human rights, and to have operations that redress the negative impacts of its actions on human rights. As members of the MSI, the businesses must respect the human rights of vulnerable workers and compensate their exploited workers when they became aware of the exploitation (United Nations Global Compact 2021).

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings on the mechanisms and outcomes in the precarious work case study. Data indicated that the social activism mechanisms consisted of *framing*, *mobilising* and *social activism tactics*. *Framing* was undertaken based on morality and power inequalities by the trade unions in their campaigns. *Mobilising* was done for political capital, a source of power consisting of economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational and social types of capital. In terms of the *social activism tactics*, persuasive (e.g. lobbying) and disruptive tactics (e.g. protest rallies) were used. The social activists used persuasive and disruptive tactics in *grassroots activism*, where the focus was at a local level, as well as in *social movement unionism*, where the unions concern was not just on the bargaining power of their members, but also on social welfare, which reflects a collective culture. In terms of businesses and industry associations, they *proactively dissociated* to protect their *legitimacy* if they existed in *stigmatised sectors*. Likewise, they *proactively partnered* to increase their *institutional capital* and to *gain better outcomes*. *Reactively*, the businesses were engaged in *defying* seemingly because there were no reputational costs. The reactive defiance by industry associations reflected *neoliberal* political economic conditions, and defiance of activism pressures demonstrated an onerous *stakeholder relationship* between a franchisor and its franchisees. In a similar vein, businesses reactively *conceded* because their *legitimacy* was threatened. The outcomes pertained to workers receiving the entitlements and

limited unionisation at an *individual* level. At an *organisational* level, the changes pertained to factors such as legitimacy and company policies. At a broader, *structural* level, there has been no change in relation to the living wage, there have been some changes in regulations, the protest rallies have been large while mobilisation of precarious workers seems to have been limited. Another structural outcome is that with the MSIs they are interconnected with the respect of human rights, which generates social value. Table 6.8 presents a summary of the mechanisms and outcomes in the precarious work case.

Table 6.8: Summary of Mechanisms and Outcomes in the Precarious Work Case

Social activism mechanisms	Industry mechanisms	Outcomes
Framing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Morality ▪ Power inequality Mobilising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Political capital Social activism tactics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Persuasive ▪ Disruptive ▪ Grassroots activism ▪ Social movement unionism 	Proactively dissociating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legitimacy ▪ Stigmatised sector Proactively Partnering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional capital ▪ Political capital Reactively defying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reputational cost ▪ Neoliberalism ▪ Stakeholder relationship Reactively Conceding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legitimacy 	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entitlements & backpay ▪ Unionisation Organisational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internal controls ▪ Company policies ▪ Financial performance ▪ Closing stores ▪ Legitimacy ▪ Reputational capital Structural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No change to a living wage ▪ Protest rallies and mobilisation ▪ Changes to industrial relations regulations ▪ MSI and social value

An analysis of these findings indicates that *social activism mechanisms are influenced by the context*. To illustrate, grassroots activism and social movement unionism were determined by stakeholder relationships in terms of the power or political capital that the activist groups possessed. An activist group like union TU2, with a considerable amount of political capital, pursued campaigns for the well-being of the Australian working population through social movement unionism, while a smaller union TU1, and the whistleblowing consultancy used grassroots activism. *Social activism mechanisms are also influenced by industry mechanisms*, as

demonstrated by the activist groups using persuasive and disruptive tactics targeted at businesses. Evidently, *industry mechanisms are influenced by the context*, and this is demonstrated by industry associations such as IA2 and IA3 defying activism pressures from union TU2 for wage increases. The industry associations' opposition of the activism campaign is based on the negative impact wage increases would have on the economy, which was reflective of neoliberal values which prioritise the economy. Moreover, the *outcomes are influenced by, and influence the context*. Specifically, the outcomes being influenced by the context is illustrated by the lack of change in an activism aim of having the national minimum wage as living wage. This maintenance of the status quo is indicative of neoliberal political economic conditions and institutional structures that place more value on the economy in comparison with the social dimension. In this vein, the outcomes influencing the context is reflected by the lack of change in relation to a living wage being part of the institutional structure that activist groups have been seeking to change.

CHAPTER 7: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE CASE

Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss the contextual factors in the climate change case. These factors will be useful in addressing the subsidiary research question on *how context enables social activism*. The chapter is based on interview data from 16 participants, and document analysis to supplement the primary interview data. The documents include media releases, newspapers, organisational reports, organisational websites, and relevant publications. From the analysis, it emerged that contextual factors pertained to *political economic conditions, structures, culture, and stakeholder relationships*. Like the contextual factors in the precarious work case in Chapter 5, this chapter is also organised based on these four contextual factors.

Political Economic Conditions

Social Movement theory posits that varying political economic conditions can serve as catalysts for people to form movements, such as around an issue like climate change (McAdam 2017). The political and economic conditions in Australia surrounding climate change are therefore explored. At the outset, secondary data is used to discuss the government's approach to climate change and the economy. Thereafter, interview data is used to describe the perspectives of interviewees on the role of government in relation to the economy and climate change.

Government's Approach to Climate Change and the Economy

From 1996 to 2007, a minimalist approach to climate change policies was taken by the Howard Coalition Government (Wright & Nyberg 2017). The then Government was of the view that policies to limit anthropogenic climate change were detrimental to the economy (Crowley 2007). With Australia being highly reliant on coal as a source of income from export, as well as for its domestic consumption, the then Government was averse to policies that limited greenhouse gas emissions (Crowley 2017). The approach taken by the Howard Coalition Government was also demonstrated when Australia, together with the United States of America, refused to ratify the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, the *Kyoto Protocol*, on the basis that it would damage the economy (Crowley 2007). The public's sentiment on climate change appeared to have

diverged from that of the Howard Coalition Government around 2006, with polls of Australians showing that climate change was an issue of concern to them. In November 2007, the Rudd Labor Government achieved a landslide victory in the federal election (Wright & Nyberg 2017). In December 2007, shortly after its win, the Rudd Labor Government ratified the *Kyoto Protocol* at a United Nations Climate Change Conference that was held in Bali (Tranter 2011). The Rudd Labor Government committed that by 2050, the country would have reduced its greenhouse gas emissions levels by *60 per cent* of the levels in 2000 (Tranter 2011, p. 78).

In 2008, continuing with efforts to address climate change, the Garnaut Climate Change Review, which was commissioned by the then Prime Minister, Rudd, as well as the State and Territory Governments, was released, which recommended the implementation of an emissions trading scheme (ETS) (Garnaut 2008). Like its commitment following the ratification of the *Kyoto Protocol*, the Rudd Labor Government proposed a carbon pollution reduction scheme in which Australia's greenhouse gas emissions would, by 2020, be reduced by "5 per cent of the 2000 levels". However, the proposed legislation was rejected by the Senate (Tranter 2011, p.93). When the Gillard Labor Government took power after the August 2010 federal election, an Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) legislation was passed by the Senate in November 2011 and took effect in July 2012 (Wright & Nyberg 2017). There was a significant positive effect due to the ETS, with reports that in 2013, Australia's greenhouse gas emissions were at its "lowest" level in the "24 years" that emissions levels had been monitored (O'Gorman & Jotzo 2014 cited by Crowley 2017, p.2).

Barely a year later, the conservative Abbott Coalition Government won the September 2013 federal election, and shortly after started dismantling the structures that had been put in place by the Labor Governments to address climate change (Wright & Nyberg 2017). The Abbott Coalition Government started by abolishing the Climate Commission, which had a significant role in publicising the severe summers that Australia had been enduring (Wright & Nyberg 2017). In addition, the Government started the process to repeal the ETS legislation, and in July 2014, the repeal was passed by the Senate (Wright & Nyberg 2017).

In the November 2014 G20 meeting hosted by Australia, the then Prime Minister Abbott stated that he did not want to “clutter up” its agenda with climate change, but instead wanted to focus on economic policies (White 2014 cited by Crowley 2017, p.5). The then Prime Minister was criticised for his stance by other conservative leaders such as Britain’s then Prime Minister David Cameron and Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel, as well as by Pope Francis, who wrote to advise him that the G20 meeting should focus on issues that affect the vulnerable, like climate change (Crowley 2017). The then Prime Minister Abbott maintained his stance to focus on Australia’s economy, on the basis of Australia being the largest producer of coal in the world (Crowley 2017).

In September 2015, Prime Minister Turnbull took over the Coalition Government and maintained the same minimalist approach to climate change policies, although he seemed to have done this to gain the support of the conservative coalition parties (Crowley 2017). The current Morrison Coalition Government has also focused on the economic benefits of coal while ignoring the effects of greenhouse gas emissions (Hudson 2019). For example, in February 2017, when parts of the country were experiencing heat waves, Scott Morrison, who was then the Treasurer, took a chunk of coal to Parliament, and made a speech while holding the coal, stating that people should not be afraid of it (Hudson 2019). Recent empirical research has, however, highlighted that Australia has been incurring economic losses because of the minimalist approach that has been taken towards greenhouse gas emissions, such as from coal (Zhang et al. 2020). Specifically, the 2019 losses from extreme climate-change related disasters, including “bushfires, cyclones, flooding, hailstorms, and tornadoes”, were calculated to be worth “\$3.7 billion”, providing evidence that there is economic value from limiting the greenhouse gas emissions (Zhang et al. 2020, p.492.e7).

The minimalist approach to climate change policies that has been maintained since at least September 2013 is aligned with neoliberalism. Economic growth from the export and use of fossil fuels (Crowley 2017) has been used to justify the lack of intervention by various conservative Federal Governments (Delany-Crowe et al. 2019).

Perspectives on Political Economic Conditions

Perceptions of the Role of Government

The interviewees' perspectives on the political economic conditions presented in this sub-section pertain to the conservative Morrison Federal Government's responses to climate change and the benefits or detriments of coal in relation to the economy. Most of the interviewees (13 of 16), indicated that the Federal Government was not doing enough to address climate change. The three exceptions consisted of a financial company FinCo4, which held investments in fossil fuels; a mining company MinCo1 that mines coal; and a conservative think tank CTT, which espouses a worldview based on minimal government interference or libertarianism. A government response to climate change would not be in the short-term economic interests of FinCo4 and MinCo1; and would not be aligned with CTT's underpinning ideology. There were perceptions that the Federal Government was not doing enough. For example, an Environmental Advisor at EngCo1 explained that the reporting on the engineering company's greenhouse gas emissions was not mandatory, reflecting a lack of leadership by the Federal Government in the matter:

The government hasn't pushed or hasn't forced or put in any more legislation across the board, to mandate it [reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by companies] across all the states. I think that there is some leadership that could be shown by the Federal Government in setting that up, you know (EngCo1 2020).

An example that pertains to the social activists is the following quotation by the Director of Environment at a social movement organisation SMO2, who highlighted that the Liberal-National Coalition and the Labor parties had done little in recent years to address climate change:

Tony Abbott, who, to be fair to him, he was a very good campaigner and he campaigned on one idea and that was repealing the carbon tax. You know, if you say something often enough and lie often enough, people will believe it. Unfortunately, the Labor Party did not have the conviction to fight them on the actual substance of the issue. And, you know, five years later, we are in the situation we are in now (SMO2 2019).

Perceptions on Coal and the Economy

The perspectives around the benefits and detriments of coal were provided by seven interviewees. Three of these interviewees indicated that coal is beneficial to the economy (CTT, FinCo4 & MinCo1), and four indicated that prominence should not be given to coal and the economy due to the high social and environmental costs associated with its greenhouse gas emissions (EngCo2, FinCo2, SMO2 & SMO4). For CTT and MinCo1, the economic benefits of coal are not limited to

Australia but also accrue to the importers of coal given as a source of energy, it enables many people in developing countries to have a “cheap” and “reliable” source of energy:

Australian coal is good for humanity in general, and it is good for India because it provides a source of *cheap* [and] *reliable* electricity for millions and millions of people. So, obviously, I think it is obvious that it is a good thing for us to allow Indians to have *cheap* [and] *reliable* energy (CTT 2020).

Likewise, the Head of Sustainability at MinCo1 justified the company’s proposal to export coal on the basis that coal as an energy would be a *driver* of *economic* and social activities:

We tried as a company to push the message that the energy that [MinCo1] was extracting here [in Australia] in the form of coal would be used in India to lift people out of poverty. I mean, access to energy is an important economic driver for quality of life, whether it is, you know, making sure you have got constant electricity supply for hospitals, schools, water, and wastewater (MinCo1 2020).

These views suggest a predominance of neoliberal values, which justify the prioritisation of Australian economic interests with the view that the benefits trickle down to all people (Delany-Crowe et al. 2019). Contrary to this view, the four interviewees that indicated the detrimental effects of coal were from companies that identified as being sustainable and social activists. For example, a Founding Director of FinCo2 explained that her company only provided financing options that are free from the fossil-fuels sector to its customers because Australia still has a responsibility for the negative externalities attributable to its coal exports:

Australia is the biggest exporter of coal in the world. I think it's actually the biggest producer of coal in the world.... If we are exporting coal at the highest rate of any country in the world, then all of that coal that is going out are our footprints. So, investment in that industry is the key to that industry succeeding or continuing (FinCo2 2019).

A Campaigner at SMO4 highlighted that, against a predominant view that coal is important for Australia’s economy, the SMO was advocating for strategies that mitigate climate change. The Campaigner stated, “there is a perception that, you know, things like the coal industry, and coal mining are vital to Australia's existence and Australia's economy” (SMO4 2019).

In summation, the political economic conditions under which activists such as SMO4 were pursuing climate action were underpinned by neoliberalism, with the Federal Government giving the highest priority to the country’s economic interests with a justification that benefits would trickle down to the population.

Structures

With the term structures referring to the regulations and rules that shape the practices in a social environment (Cassell 1993), the structures in the climate change case can be categorised based on Aboriginal Australians rights, regulation of environmental protection, and risk exposure. This section of the chapter is organised based on these categories.

Aboriginal Australians Rights

Native Title Institutional Structures

Since 1788, when British settlers arrived in Australia and seized their land, Aboriginal Australians have continued to struggle to redress the inequalities that have consequently arisen (Burgmann 2003). There have been pivotal attempts to redress these inequalities through institutional changes including the *Mabo decision* and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) (NTA) (Bartlett 1993; Burgmann 2003). These institutional structures are important elements to consider given that Aboriginal Australians have seemingly been marginalised in the decision-making structures used by mining and construction companies to explore or construct on land owned by Traditional Owners (Galloway 2020). Entwined with this is the adverse effects that climate change has on the land with which Aboriginal Australians have a strong connection (Delany-Crowe et al. 2019).

In terms of the institutional structures, the *Mabo decision* is a 1992 High Court of Australia judgement that recognises that Aboriginal Australians can have rights to land and that these rights existed even before Australia's colonisation (Bartlett 1993). This change in the legal system means that if Aboriginal Australians who are claimants of the native title can demonstrate their connection with pieces of land based on their traditional laws, then the court could make a ruling that provides ownership to the claimants (Galloway 2020). After the *Mabo decision*, the then Keating Labor Government enacted NTA, which states that the native title process begins with a claimant notifying the "National Native Title" Tribunal. After this has been done, the claimants have a right to negotiate on activities that are to be conducted on the land (e.g. mining) (Galloway 2020, p. 15). Three criticisms have been levelled against the NTA: first, that the burden of proof of native title should not be on the Aboriginal Australians but on the Governments; second, minerals that are sourced from the land are not considered as native title; and third, the negotiation is skewed against the Aboriginal Australians (Galloway 2020).

Interviewees on Aboriginal Australian Rights and Native Title

An Aboriginal activist (AA) and three other interviewees, representing companies MinCo1, MinCo2 & SMO2, discussed the structures pertaining to Aboriginal Australians rights. AA highlighted that Aboriginal Australians had still not received full restitution for the land dispossession that started during colonisation. Specifically, the Aboriginal activist narrated that settlers who, approximately *180 years ago, killed Aboriginal people, took over his ancestral land*, had started a company on it with a *two million pounds grant* from the British Government. Moreover, he narrated that the company was still in operation although it had relocated, seemingly after having taken advantage of the Aboriginal community:

This area was first kind of taken over by white people through a big land grant given to a big agricultural company that still exists today. So, they got given a million acres, 2 million pounds, to kind of start this entity...the company still exists in Australia, still makes a lot of money still goes really well, is listed on the ASX, all of that, that hasn't come to terms with the fact that they killed Aboriginal people 180 years ago, there's a big issue there...There's a sign here that says that they founded this area. And you know, then kind of made all their money and cut ties and said, 'see you later, we're gone'. Sold all the land, made all this extra money, and then bought up north (AA 2020).

While AA narrated about the structures that have perpetuated inequalities between the Aboriginal and non-indigenous Australians, the two interviewees representing mining companies highlighted that their companies were involved in *native title rights*. The Head of Sustainability at MinCo1 highlighted the company's involvement as follows:

We were entering into agreements with four different Traditional Owner groups across the project...each of those groups were engaged with independently and through different state and national processes to reach a range of agreements around not only cultural heritage, but also *native title rights* (MinCo1 2020).

Similarly, an Executive Manager at MinCo2 highlighted the company's involvement with *native title rights*, specifically in relation to the *employment* of Aboriginal communities:

Native title had just come to the fore. Yeah, so it had to do with *Native title*. It was also to do with things around Indigenous *employment* and opportunities and sharing the benefits. And so, there is a whole load of things around that. A lot of the work I did was around Indigenous employment (MinCo2).

Documentary evidence indicates that bargaining power is skewed more towards companies such as MinCo1 than towards the Traditional Owners. Specifically, ABC News in December 2019 and

SBS News in May 2019 reported on Traditional Owners of land at site where MinCo1 was constructing a mine. It was reported that an agreement the Traditional Owners reached with the mining company was unfair because they were inadequately compensated for their native title rights. Activist group SMO2 also indicated that it was working on filing a shareholder resolution for a company that was proposing to frack on land, without having received the right to do so from the Traditional Owners:

We have got two active resolutions at the moment. One with [a company that] is currently looking to frack gas in the Northern Territory. And there are Indigenous Traditional Owners that contend that [the company] doesn't have their consent to be fracking on that land. This will be the second year in a row that we have filed a resolution in relation to consent of those people (SMO2 2019).

In summation, the *Mabo decision* and the NTA provide frameworks that recognise the rights of Aboriginal Australians but systemic structures that favoured the colonialists have perpetuated an uneven playing field, with Aboriginal Australians being at a disadvantage. Moreover, under these frameworks, Traditional Owners are placed into a form of market mechanism where they negotiate with mining companies for their land, an aspect which can be viewed as neoliberalism (Howlett et al. 2011). Moreover, despite the strong connection Aboriginal communities have with the land, an indication is that they do not seem to have been included in the formulation of federal climate change policies that have a direct impact on their land and livelihoods (Belfer, Ford & Maillet 2017; Nash et al. 2018).

Climate Change-Related Regulation

Current regulations that pertain to climate change and that were discussed by the interviewees include the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (the EPBC Act) and the *Paris Agreement*. The EPBC Act enacted under the Howard Coalition Government came into force in July 2000 (McGrath 2004). On enacting the *Paris Agreement* in December 2015, Australia became one of the 196 parties that adopted the international legally binding treaty (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2021).

The EPBC Act

The aim of the EPBC Act is to provide protection of the natural environment, especially when the protection is of significance at a federal level. Australia's Constitution provides the state and territory governments the jurisdiction over the management of natural resources (Allan et al, 2020). The federal government can still enact laws that override those at the lower levels of government, with the responsibility of their implementation lying with the states and territories (Allan et al, 2020). With the EPBC Act being a national law, it gives the Federal Government the power to validate the environment impacts of major projects at the state and territory levels (McGrath 2004).

In the interviews, a Consultant at a conservative think tank CTT, was the only participant that discussed the EPBC Act. The CTT has been campaigning for the repeal of Section 487(2) of the Act, on the basis that the act provides that a *person aggrieved*, who does not necessarily need to have *proprietary interest* in a project, such as an outsider environmental activist, can initialise court proceedings seeking to have the Federal Environment Minister review the environmental impacts of a major project. The CTT argued that this process could stall projects of national significance, and consequently be detrimental to the to the economy yet the activism campaigns do not generate considerable environmental value. Specifically, the Consultant stated:

Section 487 of the EPBC Act extends the definition of *person aggrieved* in terms of who is allowed to have legal standing in challenging environmental decisions made by the Federal Environment Minister... So, what this does is it allows individuals and institutions that have been involved in environmental activism or research to then have legal standing to challenge projects where they don't have a *proprietary interest*... Section 487 actually fails to have any meaningful changes to any environmental conditions. So, on one hand, I think we have got very small *environmental gains* and a very large cost to the Australian economy (CTT 2020).

The justification on the economic benefits of a project outweighing environmental gains is consistent with neoliberalism.

The Paris Agreement

The aim of the *Paris Agreement* is to limit global warming to below two degrees Celsius, with a preference for it to be 1.5 degrees Celsius (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2021). The parent agreement to the *Paris Agreement* is the 1994 *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*, which was entered into by 197 parties

including Australia (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2021). Besides the *Paris Agreement*, another subsidiary agreement of the *UNFCCC* is the 1997 *Kyoto Protocol* emissions (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2021). The three Agreements all seek to have the greenhouse gas emission levels at a stabilised level, without causing damage to the planet, and acting within a period that enables sustainable development (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2021). Based on the *Paris Agreement*, countries submit, every five years, their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), which specify the climate actions they would take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Maraseni & Reardon-Smith 2019). Research has found that although Australia as well as other developed countries such as Canada, and developing countries like Congo, have been reporting successes in achieving their NDCs, this is not necessarily the case (Maraseni & Reardon-Smith 2019). For example, based on the *Paris Agreement*, about 80 to 90 per cent of coal and 50 per cent of gas should remain in the earth, to achieve the 1.5 degrees Celsius target, but politicians and companies have been acting based on short-term political and economic interests (Maraseni & Reardon-Smith 2019, p.2).

Based on the interview data, three participants (FinCo1, SMO1 & CTT) identified the *Paris Agreement* in their discussions. For the financial company and the SMO, the discussion pertained to their operations. The Strategy Manager at FinCo1 stated that the impact investing company was using the *Paris Agreement* as a *benchmark*. However, he asserted that within the sector a *business-as-usual* view was still being used. This compromised Australia's ability to achieve the *Paris Agreement's* target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius:

There are a range of views within the impact investing industry, about whether we should be using *business as usual as a benchmark*, or the benchmark of keeping global warming to two degrees or lower. Some of our work is much, much better than the industry in general benchmark. But is not yet at a point where we can keep global warming to two degrees or lower (FinCo1 2020).

For SMO1, the discussion by its Executive Officer was on the SMO's work with the local and state governments, aimed at the targets set in the *Paris Agreement*:

And a number of our councils and ourselves signed up to that. And that is committing to work with the state and others in the state to meet the *Paris* goals and the 2050 target (SMO1 2019).

On the other hand, the Consultant at CTT was of the view that Australia should follow the lead of the United States of America, which had withdrawn² from the *Paris Agreement*, to enable the country to invest in *cheap and reliable non-renewable sources of energy*:

Australia has distorted the market allocation of the energy production, away from reliable energy and cheap energy sources, such as coal, gas and nuclear, which has been flat out banned. And directed them towards expensive and non-reliable forms of energy such as wind and solar. So, we do not have a market allocation of energy production that best delivers quality [and] reliable power at a low cost. And I think that this is why Australia should move away from the renewable energy target and the government should remove [Australia] from the *Paris Climate Agreement* (CTT 2020).

In summation, notwithstanding Australia being a party to the *Paris Agreement*, Kyoto Protocol and the UNFCCC, whose goals are to stabilise the greenhouse gas emission levels, and subsequently enable sustainable development, the economic interests seemingly outweigh the environmental and social costs.

Risk Exposure

In addition to Aboriginal rights and regulations protecting the environment, another facet of the structures in the climate change is risk exposure. Nine participants (i.e. from organisations EngCo1, EngCo2, FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3, FinCo4, MinCo1, MinCo2, SMO5 and CTT) identified risk exposure in their discussions of their organisations' activities. These participants were representative of all the companies except ManCo1. A Sustainability Manager at ManCo1 stated that in discourses on the company, the environmental and social value that the company generates is used as a measure, rather than monetary values. This might explain why she did not refer to the company's risk exposure. Specifically, the Sustainability Manager stated:

We don't talk about business success in terms of dollar figures. We talk about the impact that we have been able to make. And we estimate that five million [disposable items] are diverted from landfill every day by [our] users around the world (ManCo1 2019).

Risk and Resource Allocation

Other representatives of companies highlighted that risk exposure was an important decision-making consideration. For example, the Environmental Advisor at EngCo1 stated that EngCo1

² Shortly after the January 2021 inauguration of President Joe Biden, the USA started the process to rejoin the *Paris Agreement* (Briggs 2021).

allocated *limited resources* to the reporting of the greenhouse gas emission levels on a construction project because it was *not high risk*, being below the threshold of the *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme*:

Within [EngCo1], on this particular project, there isn't very much there, honestly. And that' is once again, is driven by the fact that we don't meet the thresholds of reporting. So, they don't see that as a high risk and because it's *not viewed as a high risk, very little resources are allocated to it*, to deal with it (EngCo1).

Physical and Transition Risks

As an example from a financial company, FinCo4 demonstrates that the company considers risk in its investment decisions. Specifically, the *physical risks* from events associated with climate change such as floods and bushfires, and the *transition risks* associated with the economy transitioning to a low carbon economy. The Sustainability Investment Manager at FinCo4 explained these risks based on its role as a *fiduciary* for its customers:

The main driver for us is because we are an investment firm and we act as a *fiduciary* for our members...And we look at where they might be *physical risks* for our portfolio holdings, and also *transition risks*. For *physical risks*, we look at rising sea levels and the impact of severe weather events. And in *transition risks* what we are focusing on there is what is the risk of some of the fossil fuel companies that we own as the economy transitions to a low carbon future (FinCo4 2020).

Financial and Reputational Risks

Exposures to financial and reputational risks were identified by representatives from a mining company, the CTT and SMO. Specifically, for a stigmatised organisation, if there are numerous attacks on its legitimacy (Lauwo, Kyriacou & Otusanya 2020), like MinCo1, which has been targeted by several activists due to a coal mine it is constructing, then exposure to financial and reputational risk is influential in its operations, as highlighted by its Head of Sustainability:

If the financing company has a certain level of conditions, and they say if you do not meet these, we can't lend to you, then that's a *risk*. And likewise, with an insurer, you cannot get access to insurance policy without meeting those conditions, that is also a *risk*. So, the *risks* present themselves in different ways to the company. It might be risk in getting money or insurance to run a project. It might be a *risk* I guess in having enough of a level of credentials to meet your customers' expectations (MinCo1 2020).

A Consultant at CTT highlighted the financial risks facing companies undertaking major projects due to activists using Section 487 of the EPBC Act to stall the project at an economic cost that outweighs the *environmental gains*:

So, in some of the research I have done, I have estimated that, it's a conservative estimate, that \$65 billion of investment have been put at *risk* due to legal challenges through Section 487 and very little *environmental gains* that have resulted from these legal challenges (CTT 2020).

A Campaigner at SMO5, on the other hand, asserted that superannuation funds would seek to address climate change to mitigate their financial and reputational risks:

I can foresee a lot of superfunds moving on that issue, because they do not want to be the next company targeted with a legal case (SMO5 2020).

Culture

Based on the interview data and documentary evidence, culture, which represents the symbolic representations of the rules and practices in a social context (Amenta & Polletta 2019), can be categorised in this case study into *intergenerational equity*, *systems thinking*, *Aboriginal knowledge*, and *views of activism*. *Intergenerational equity* is a principle that recognises that current and future generations have the same rights (Treves et al. 2018). For such a recognition, *systems thinking*, whose key characteristic is the view that the different dimensions of a system are interconnected, is needed (Lezak & Thibodeau 2016). *Aboriginal knowledge* pertains to a generalised worldview of Australian Aboriginal communities, given their deep connection with the environment, and knowledge on climate change (Nash et al. 2018). The *views of activism* refer to how the issue and the changes being sought are perceived (Amenta & Polletta 2019). This section on culture is organised based on these four categories.

Intergenerational Equity

In terms of climate change, a consideration of intergenerational equity means that decision-makers such as government officials have a duty to protect the right of future generations to live in a healthy environment that is not compromised by the effects of greenhouse gas emissions (Treves et al. 2018). Eleven of the participants believed that inter-generational equity is an important consideration. This consisted of five of the social movement organisations (SMO1, SMO2, ..., SMO5), the Aboriginal Activist (AA), and five of the representatives from the companies

(EngCo2, FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 & ManCo1). For the SMOs and AA, the indication was that addressing climate change is a responsibility that the current generation owes to the future generations. For example, a Climate Strategist at SMO3 stated:

Climate change is real; it is happening now. It is our responsibility right now. So, do we have a responsibility to future generations? Sure (SMO3 2019).

Likewise, a Campaigner at SMO4 discussed the responsibility in terms of SMO4's members and their interest in future generations:

I think the public has future generations interests, or you know, a lot of our members have future generations interests at heart and their huge involvement in things like the climate strike. And that is about supporting students and supporting people in the fight for climate action. Knowing that the change that we want is for their generation (SMO4 2019).

For AA, he based his discussion on Aboriginal knowledge and indicated that businesses needed to be conscious of the effects their actions have on future generations:

I look at businesses who have a five-year strategic plan, I think, well, what is the use? Like, you are not really changing...It doesn't actually talk to change and meaningful change and kind of the sustainability and long-term notions that we need to be thinking about. So, until you unpack that and say, 'well, what does our business look like in seven generations (AA 2020).

The five companies that indicated that intergenerational equity is important did so also based on a perception of responsibility to future generations. For example, a Sustainability Manager at an engineering company (EngCo2) stated:

We are responsible for the unborn. You know, what kind of planet and living conditions are we providing for them (EngCo2 2020).

Moreover, a Strategy Manager at a financial company (FinCo1) indicated this importance by stating that FinCo1 will continue to be a member of the *Not Business as Usual* alliance, which supports the *School Strike for Climate* movement:

The Not Businesses as Usual campaign, assuming it stays kind of fundamentally like what it is, then I imagine will be part of it and support it as we can (FinCo1 2019).

A Sustainability Manager at a manufacturing company (ManCo1) demonstrated the significant impact of future generations on SMO2 by stating:

We also think that future generations are stakeholders. So, there are a lot of underrepresented stakeholders in this space and future generations and ecosystems that don't have a voice are also key stakeholders (ManCo1 2020).

In summary, protection of the right of future generations to live in a healthy environment is of importance to all the SMOs, AA and five of nine companies. The five companies differed from the other four companies in that they overtly identified as sustainable companies based on a stakeholder model, while the other four seemed to use a shareholder model, giving most emphasis to customers and investors.

Systems Thinking

Interconnectedness, a core characteristic of systems thinking, is comparable to the principle of intergenerational equity (Lezak & Thibodeau 2016). This characteristic was highlighted by four participants from four companies (EngCo2, FinCo1, FinCo2 & FinCo3). Specifically, the Sustainability Manager at EngCo2 illustrated the interconnectedness of different components of a system using the metaphor of a tree connected to other trees. The metaphor highlights that the success of one component of the system is essential to the success of the entire system:

There are some really interesting cases where a tree has died, and the other trees have fed the root system to keep the trunk alive. And this doesn't make sense to us. But there are reasons why that might be the case, where the forest doesn't want one system to fail because it could cause disease for other parts of the system (EngCo2 2020).

For the three financial companies for which systems thinking seems to be important, the representatives highlighted the interconnection between the environmental, social, and economic systems of their companies. Specifically, the Strategy Manager at FinCo1 highlighted this interconnection in his discussion of the company mission:

So, our mission, our purpose and our goal is to show that finance can be a force for good. So that finance can work in a way that is good for the planet, and good for people (FinCo1 2019).

Likewise, the Founding Director of FinCo2, having previously worked for another large financial company, started FinCo2 as a business that was not only financially profitable, but more environmentally and socially responsible compared her previous employer:

It [the previous employer] felt really profit driven. It was all about the financial success of the organisation, to me and whether or not that is the case that is how it felt... All of my skills lie in the finance area and so I just wanted to prove that you could work in that industry with a completely different sort of drive and focus and still be successful. And still run a profitable business that has a more positive impact on the planet (FinCo2 2019).

According to the Founding Director of FinCo3, the interconnection of the company was demonstrated through their focus, not only on the financial bottom line but also on providing financial services to a diversified clientele, who might be considered as being on the fringes of the financial sector:

We find that money can be quite overwhelming for a lot of people. That might be women who feel intimidated, it might be people of the LGBTIQ+ community, it might be migrants and refugees because they find it overwhelming that it is a new system. So, we really want to break down the barriers of financial advice (FinCo3 2019).

Company FinCo4 had a different view from the other three financial companies, pertaining to systems thinking. Specifically, FinCo4 fully divested from tobacco, but in relation to fossil fuels, alcohol, gambling, and weapons, it provides its customers with the option to exclude these investments from their portfolios. As shown in the following quotation by the Sustainability Investments Manager at FinCo4, the company would divest from these products only if they stopped generating financial returns for its customers:

Tobacco, we have as a firm wide exclusion, for every product, but those others; weapons, alcohol, gaming, and fossil fuels are specific exclusions from our sustainable investment [themed products] ... We are an investment firm, and we act as a fiduciary for our members, then we obviously have to always act in the financial interests of our members (FinCo4 2020).

Systems thinking, which requires a holistic view rather than reductionism, recognises that anthropogenic climate change has far reaching effects, and the focus cannot be only on financial profit or the short-term interests of customers. In addition to seemingly giving priority to a shareholder business model, FinCo4 differs from the other three financial companies in that it was a significantly larger business in terms of its financial resources and number of employees.

Aboriginal Knowledge

Like systems thinking, Aboriginal knowledge is also an important facet of culture when considering climate change. Aboriginal knowledge is of importance because there is a lot to learn from Aboriginal Australians when addressing a grand challenge such as climate change. Aboriginal Australians have survived for several thousands of years, which demonstrates that they have the tools to deal with grand challenges. This was highlighted by a Sustainability Manager at

EngCo2 who stated that the longevity of Aboriginal Australians is based on them having a systems way of thinking as opposed to reductionist thinking:

And yet, we are disrupting the very life support system that makes all that possible. So, that was not part of our system that we were thinking about and yet that seems so obvious to us. And I would think it is obvious to First Nations people in Australia that say, you can't live that way. Societies that have lasted for thousands of years, could never have survived, based on that kind of thinking (EngCo2 2020).

The Sustainability Manager also stated that a reductionist way of thinking is demonstrated through insufficient understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal knowledge such as the use of *cultural burning* to mitigate fire hazards from climate change. As the narrative below illustrates, *cultural burning* is multi-faceted, and not single-dimensional as viewed by western society:

Our approach in Western culture is well, you know, the fire needs fuel to survive, so let us get rid of the fuel. Let us do hazard reduction burning. And yet, Indigenous people in Australia have used, they certainly burned to reduce the level of fuel, but they did it for other reasons too. They actually did it to bring health back to the natural spaces and promote food and promote habitat and keep things in balance and also to connect themselves to the land. So, *cultural burning*, they refer to it as... And this is a classic example of reductionist thinking (EngCo2 2020).

For the Aboriginal Activist (AA), he asserted that while people were experiencing the effects of climate change like food insecurity, the situation was not as bad as it was for Aboriginal Australians several thousand years ago, and yet they had survived. The Aboriginal Activist stated that knowledge to redress complex issues like climate change, which Aboriginal Australians have weathered, still exists in the form of oral knowledge. According to AA, for this knowledge to be shared, certain preconditions need to be met, such as addressing systemic racism and recognising Aboriginal Australians' self-determination:

People are experiencing climate change now. You can point to a whole heap of examples of food scarcity and all that now. I get people are facing climate change issues now, but not to the same severity as Indigenous people ten, twenty thousand years ago. And that knowledge is still there...It is oral knowledge.... It is not just going to come because you want the knowledge. There has got to be something deeper behind that...And it is about reconciling properly, not having systemic racism. Like, it has got to be a narrative at that level for Indigenous communities to engage (AA 2020).

Views of Activism

The perceptions of activism in terms of culture are presented based on the perspectives of the interviewees for this case study, with the exclusion of the representatives of the SMOs. Five of the interviewees from EngCo2, FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 & ManCo1 were supportive of activism. A Sustainability Manager at EngCo2 demonstrated his support for activism in the following quotation where he defined activism as a pivotal aspect of a functioning democracy, with activists playing an important role in pursuing systemic changes:

I actually think activism is a really important mark of a healthy democracy. And actually, we [companies' decision-makers] need to not be so suspicious of activists, we need to understand where they are coming from, because they have run out of options. They have done all the nice things. And so, we have left them with no option other than to try and disrupt the way our world works (EngCo2 2020).

For the other participants (FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 & ManCo1), their support of activism is indicated by them voluntarily joining, *Not Business as Usual*, which, as stated earlier in the chapter, is an alliance of businesses that publicly support the *School Strikes for Climate* movement. These four companies stated that their membership in the alliance and support of the movement was important as because it aligned with their companies' missions. For example, a Strategy Manager at FinCo1 explained their support for the movement as follows:

We think of our team, our organisation as a community. And I'm going to use that language for a moment. So, as a community we support the climate strikes and the alliance, ... [which is an opportunity] for companies to support their workers who feel aligned with the climate strike and want to support the climate strike (FinCo1 2019).

Likewise, the importance that the company placed on being a member of the *Not Business as Usual* and being certified as a *B Corporation*, which reflected the company's support of activism, was explained by a Sustainability Manager at ManCo1:

And part of *Not Business as Usual* is about saying we are in business for better. It is like the B Corp movement; we are businesses in businesses for better. Not just to make money for shareholders, and so let us actually use our voice to drive change (ManCo1 2019).

Representatives of four companies (EngCo1, FinCo4, MinCo1 & MinCo2) were not so positive on activism. Specifically, an Environmental Advisor at EngCo1 did not express any view on how EngCo1 perceived activism but voluntarily stated that she found the activism by Greta Thunberg "quite sensational" (EngCo1 2020). In a similar vein, the Managers at FinCo4 and two mining

companies (MinCo1 & MinCo2) implied that activism was idealistic. For example, a Sustainability Investments Manager at FinCo4 differentiated the function of the company from activism by stating that it was a “pragmatic” and not an “activism fund” (FinCo4 2020). The FinCo4 2019 Climate Risk Report also contained this differentiation. The Head of Sustainability at MinCo1 identified the company as being “pragmatic” as shown below:

[MinCo1] is a pragmatic company. You know, the company is not going to spend money on a project that doesn't have a demand. So, I say to people, coal mining, people don't dig up coal and hope that someone is going to buy it. Because it's an expensive exercise and it's not like you have got a warehouse and you have got coal on coal and you can find other people to buy your product (MinCo1 2020).

Likewise, an Executive Manager at MinCo2 also viewed activism as being idealistic, stating that mining is a necessity, given that most products used by the public are made using mined raw materials:

Mining executives see them [radical activists] as hypocrites. They are still driving their cars, they still need their consumer goods, they still need their mobile phones. How do they think their TVs or cars, or microwaves are produced? How do they think their bikes are made, if they take a radical view that they will only go on bikes? You would not have those products unless you had mining. Unless you walked everywhere (MinCo2 2020).

Another participant that had little support for activism was a Consultant at a Conservative Think Tank (CTT) who stated that he believed in minimal interventions from government, which can be viewed as a libertarian political philosophy. Based on the information on its website, CTT appeared to espouse a similar philosophy. As shown below, the Consultant viewed climate change activism with apprehension, considering the activists and media to be “overly alarmist”:

I don't want to make too broad of generalisations in terms of people involved in [the climate change] movement, because, you know, that encompasses a lot of different organisations and a lot of different people in it and different views. But I think that in large, what gets amplified in the media and what is presented by some of the more active climate change activists is... *overly alarmist* and I don't think it's backed by science (CTT 2020).

As indicated by the above quotation, the CTT Consultant viewed activism as being unpragmatic, which is common view among the other participants who did not view climate change activism positively. Conversely, support for activism by companies such as FinCo1 and ManCo1 was largely demonstrated by their involvement in the *Not Business as Usual alliance* that supports the *School Strike for Climate* movement.

In summation, there seems to be tension between long-term and short-term orientations in the climate change case. Intergenerational equity, systems thinking, and Aboriginal knowledge reflect a long-term orientation. There is also a view that climate change activism is idealistic, and the focus should be on the economic value that fossil fuels generate, which is a short-term view. Based on Bourdieu's Power theory, in a *field*, which is a term Bourdieu uses to represent an area where tensions exist, the predominant habitus belongs to the power holders (Bourdieu 1993; Wolf 2018). As discussed in Chapter 2, *habitus* refers to dispositions that people have, which they unconsciously enact (Bourdieu 1993), or the values and ideologies that determine peoples' actions. The dominant habitus is therefore indicative of a culture, and in this case study, a short-term orientation seems to be the dominant *habitus*. Social activism generally occurs in opposition to the values and ideologies of the power holders (Den Hond, & De Bakker 2007), or the predominant habitus. The activists, except for CTT, pursued a change from the dominant *habitus* or culture, which is a short-term orientation, to one that is long-term.

Stakeholder Relationships

Based on Bourdieu's Power theory, as highlighted earlier in the thesis, *fields*, is a concept that represents a context with limited resources, in which there are tensions between different social actors as they try to increase or maintain the resources that they possess (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). In the climate change case, interview data and documents indicate an existence of tension between, first, social actors in civil society; second, civil society and business; third, Traditional Owners and businesses; and fourth, civil society and government.

Tension Between Social Actors in Civil Society

Included in civil society are SMOs and think tanks such as CTT. There was tension between SMOs seeking to protect the environment or climate action, and the conservative think tank whose libertarian ideology was based on giving prominence to the economy and the free market. The CTT argued that minimal environmental benefits were obtained from social activism that targeted major projects being conducted, such as the construction of MinCol's coal mine, and that the economic gains of such projects outweighed the environmental ones being pursued by activists.

Demonstrating this tension is the following quotation by a Consultant at CTT on the use of Section 487 of the EPBC Act by social activists seeking to protect the environment:

So, if we repeal 487, I think that you have very marginal changes in terms of the environment but quite a substantial change in terms of investment in in Australia in terms of a lot of like projects in the mining and resources and agriculture sectors (CTT 2020).

In a March 2020 report published by CTT, the think tank highlighted the negative short-term impact that the targeting of fossil-fuel mining companies, and other companies associated with them, by SMOs campaigning for climate action, had on the economy. In the CTT report, it is estimated that from when the EPBC Act took effect in 2000 to 2020, “\$65 billion” was placed at risk due to the activism by SMOs such as SMO3. The tension was therefore between a long-term orientation held by activists in SMOs seeking to protect the natural environment, and a short-term orientation maintained by the CTT, which gave prominence to economic gains.

Tensions between Civil Society and Business

There are tensions between civil society consisting of SMOs pursuing climate action, and some businesses and industry associations. Mining companies like MinCo1 have been targeted by SMOs like SMO3. Other companies whose environmental impact was not as substantial (Young & Marais 2012), like FinCo4 have also been targeted by SMO5 for their indirect links with fossil fuels, whose emissions contribute towards climate change. The tension between the SMOs and businesses is illustrated by the following quotation by a Head of Sustainability at MinCo1 who highlighted that the company was not responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions for the coal that was exported:

For us as a company, the emissions from the coal are a consequence of creating electricity for people to use. So, that is the consequence, and that that would be accounted for in the other country [the coal is exported], where that electricity gets generated, not here in Australia (MinCo1 2020).

In tension with MinCO1’s view on their negative externalities is the activism by SMO3, whose aim is to limit greenhouse gas emissions at a planetary level to enable intergenerational equity, as is shown in this quotation by its Campaign Strategist:

Our goal is to not only stop the growth in concentration of CO2, but then to turn it around and bring it back to a to a level which sustains human civilisation. So, we believe in climate change, we believe it is the biggest threat to human civilisation and that is all we work on (SMO3 2019).

The tension between the SMOs and the industry associations, is based on mining companies together with their industry associations who, through their wealth of economic capital had been seeking to reinforce a reliance on fossil fuels (SMO3 & SMO4). For example, a Campaigner at SMO4 explained the power and influence of the industry associations as follows:

The [mining industry association] is very powerful. And an example of that is early this year they were through the ABC [media outlet] to run like a pro-coal campaign. And I guess that is kind of similar to what we do, like we run an anti-coal campaign, but they just have a lot more money to fund that kind of campaign... Like, big lobby groups organised around the coal industry and I think, you know, they find their power and influence through money (SMO4 2019).

By enabling a reliance on fossil fuels, the mining companies and their industry associations protected their political capital represented by their financial gains from fossil-fuels, and the influence they have in their fields, which reflected an accrual of institutional capital.

Tensions between Traditional Owners and Business

There are tensions between Traditional Owners and mining companies. Systems thinking and intergenerational equity seemed to be reflected in the Aboriginal culture by the communities having strong connections with the land and their kin. These values of the natural environment and kinship are demonstrated by the following quotation by an Aboriginal activist:

So, for me connection is the most important. Until we can connect as a race, and as people and have a set vision, we really cannot go anywhere forward...Indigenous people believe that Mother Earth, Creator provides everything. And if you support that view and support Indigenous creation stories, like on God, that kind of presence, then there is backing within that to ensure that you can get good outcomes (AA 2020).

Conversely, mining companies that require the Traditional Owners to source resources and construct their sites had been operating under conditions and structures underpinned by neoliberalism, and a short-term orientation with an emphasis on generating profits rather than a consideration of the environmental and social costs. This is demonstrated by media reports by ABC News in December 2019 and SBS News in May 2019, on the construction of MinCo1's coal mine without recognising the native title rights of all the Traditional Owners of that portion of land.

Tension Between Civil Society and Government

There has been tension between civil society consisting of SMOs seeking climate action and the Federal Government. For SMOs like SMO5 that have been targeting companies like MinCo1 to stop the construction of their coal mine, it was done with the intention that investments would be geared more towards renewable energy than fossil-fuels. As highlighted by a Campaigner at SMO5, a reliance on fossil-fuels poses a threat to ecosystems:

We are already seeing, like the bushfires that happened this year in Australia and the USA, we are seeing the death of the Great Barrier Reef, like there are so many things that are already in train. Now, scientists have said, okay, of the fossil fuels that exist, we can't look for more reserves and burn them... [companies] continuing to explore and find new fossil fuels, and that's their business model, and they will burn those fossil fuels to make money; we are not going to meet our carbon budget. And so we are saying like, they should not be funding these companies, they should be directing money to companies that aren't, you know, so destructive (SMO5 2020).

In contrast, the Government has been of the view that social activists targeting these companies are a threat to the economy. Prime Minister Morrison is for example quoted as having told a forum of executives of Australian companies that they “should listen to the ‘quiet shareholders’ and not environmental protesters” (SBS News 2019). The SMOs pursuing climate action have a long-term orientation, anchored on intergenerational equity, while the Federal Government seemingly has a short-term orientation that is based on protecting the economy. In summation, the *fields*, consisting of civil society, business, and government, are characterised by long-term versus short term orientation tensions and the maintenance of power.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter aimed to present the contextual factors in the climate change case, which pertain to the culture, political economic conditions, structures, and stakeholder relationships. The culture or predominant habitus seems to be a short-term orientation. Social activists pursuing climate action are seeking to change this orientation, that is held by some companies and the Federal Government. The political economic conditions and the structures are seemingly underpinned by neoliberalism, where the emphasis is on the free market and economic growth, and to a lesser extent on generating long-term environmental and social value. The stakeholder relationships are characterised by tensions between the stakeholders, which is demonstrated by tensions between long term and

short-term orientations, and the maintenance of power. A summary of the contextual factors is presented in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Summary of the Contextual Factors in the Climate Change Case

Theme	Categories	Underpinning Principles
Political economic conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government's approach ▪ Perspectives on political economic conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neo-liberalism
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exposure to risk ▪ Regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neo-liberalism
Culture or the predominant habitus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intergenerational equity ▪ Systems thinking ▪ Aboriginal knowledge ▪ Views of activism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short-term orientation
Stakeholder relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tensions between stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long-term versus short-term orientation ▪ Maintenance of power

CHAPTER 8: MECHANISMS AND OUTCOMES IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE CASE

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present an analysis of the mechanisms and outcomes in the climate change case study. This chapter is guided by three subsidiary research questions that pertain to *how social activists use a range of mechanisms for change*; *how businesses and their representatives respond to social activism*; and *how the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders*. Like in the preceding chapter, the findings in this chapter are based on interview data and supplemented by documents. Emerging from the analysis are social activism mechanisms, which consist of *framing*, *mobilising*, and *activism tactics*, with the actions of companies being proactive and reactive. The proactive actions are *blending institutional logics* and *partnering*, while the reactive responses are *defying* and *conceding*. The outcomes are at *individual*, *organisational*, and *structural* levels. The chapter is structured based on these themes and categories.

SOCIAL ACTIVISM MECHANISMS

Social Movement theory explains the social activism mechanisms in terms of *framing* (Benford & Snow 2000), *mobilising* (McAdam 2017), and *activism tactics* (Briscoe, Gupta & Anner 2015). These mechanisms are explored based on the climate change case, in an Australian setting.

Framing

The framing references used were *intergenerational equity*, *evidence-based claims*, and *protecting Aboriginal culture*. An Aboriginal activist (AA) and five SMOs used intergenerational equity as a framing reference. A conservative think tank (CTT), SMO3 and SMO4, used evidence-based claims as a framing reference. Protecting Aboriginal culture was used by AA and SMO4.

Intergenerational Equity

The principle of intergenerational equity is evident in the campaigns by the AA and SMOs in their campaigns to protect the natural environment. For AA, a demonstration of this framing reference

is based on Aboriginal knowledge, which he used in his advocacy, and specifically in relation to considering the impacts actions have on *future generations*:

I think for me, unless you have got a long, like a true long-term sense that you don't actually appreciate where you are going... So, until you unpack that and say, 'well, what does our business look like in *seven generations*? Does it even exist? Does it need to exist?... until you get companies making decisions at that level, you are not going to get true sustainability (AA 2020).

For the SMOs, the emphasis on future generations is captured in their webpages. For example, for the SMO3 webpage seeking support for the movement, it is stated that the SMO aims “to preserve a liveable planet, and to protect our own and future generations from dangerous climate change” (SMO3 Website n.d.). Moreover, the campaigns were based on the *existential* threat climate change poses if it is not addressed. As shown below in a quotation by the Director of Environment at SMO2, their climate action campaigns were based on the premise that a cost cannot be attached to the issues being threatened, which include life, and natural resources like the *Great Barrier Reef*:

The other way of thinking about this is and this comes down to framing, as well is the way it is seen as a cost to reduce emissions...what cost do you put on the *Great Barrier Reef*? What cost do you put on a prolonged drought? What costs do you put on humanity facing an *existential* crisis? These things cannot be valued (SMO2 2019).

Conversely, a Consultant at CTT was of the view that activists who viewed climate change as an existential threat were *alarmists*. The Consultant perceived that the activists had other agendas, which were framed under climate action. Specifically, as shown in the following quotation, the Consultant believed that the climate action campaigns by such activists, were done in pursuance of aspects that *seem unrelated to climate change*, and in alignment with American progressive Congresswoman *Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez*:

What is presented by some of the more active climate change activists is; in terms of what I believe about what they are putting forward, I think that it is overly *alarmist* ... But I think a lot of the loudest people in the movement are, like *Alexandria Ocasio Cortez*, is an open socialist, and she is using, you know, things like the Green New Deal to promote things like health care, universal basic income, increasing taxes on the rich. All these other things that *seem unrelated to climate change* (CTT 2020).

Evidence-based Claims

Critical of the campaigns that viewed climate change as an existential threat, CTT's framing reference seemed to rely on evidence-based claims. Specifically, the Consultant at CTT claimed not only that the activists seeking climate action were *alarmists*, but also that they relied on information that was not based on scientific evidence, and he stated, "I think that it is overly alarmist and *I do not think it is backed by science*" (CTT 2020). The CTT conducts research, which it publishes and uses for lobbying. For example, in a March 2020 non-peer reviewed research publication by the think tank, it was found that activism tactics had generated losses to the economy. Given the publication's findings were reported in national newspapers such as the Australian Financial Review, and the Australian, it seemed to have been used in lobbying for a greater emphasis on economic gains from industries such as coal mining, which activists have targeted.

Interviewees from SMO3 and SMO4 highlighted that they *ensured* that their messaging was substantiated. For example, a Campaign Strategist at SMO3 highlighted this in the following quotation:

We are not a scientific organisation, but we ensure that all of our communications and materials are scientifically based... And we try and *ensure* that all of the information that we use is credible and peer- reviewed and from respected authoritative sources (SMO3 2019).

Likewise, a Campaigner at SMO4 stated:

Making sure that we back up all of our claims with facts, *making sure* that the things that we say, widely reported on have either scientific or research evidence to back them up [are things that we do as an organisation] (SMO4 2019).

For the CTT, SMO3 and SMO4, basing the issues that they are advocating for on evidence-based information seemed to enable them to mobilise support for their causes.

Protecting Aboriginal Culture

With Aboriginal culture being threatened due to the negative externalities of some companies, its protection was also used as a framing reference by SMO4 and AA. Specifically, this framing reference was used in relation to a campaign by SMO4 to stop fracking, and another campaign to prevent construction of a coal mine on lands in which Traditional Owners have native title rights, on the basis that the voices of Traditional Owners were silenced. In the campaign to stop fracking,

SMO4 framed it as a need to protect the land with which the Aboriginal communities have a strong connection. This campaign was discussed by the Aboriginal activist who also framed it as the protection of the sacred Aboriginal culture:

And it is just another battle for Indigenous people to have to try and protect landscapes. So, you know, we do not want gas wells in every kind of place, or, you know, in public places or *on sacred sites* or contaminating landscapes (AA 2020).

An online petition on SMO4’s website also states that the campaign sets to protect “sacred country”. Likewise, in another online petition on SMO4’s website that focused on the campaign against construction of MinCo1’s mine, it was stated that the mine “would tear the heart out of the land”. In summation, intergenerational equity, evidence-based claims, and protection of Aboriginal culture framing references seek to enable mobilisation by providing hope that through a collective identity, climate change and its associated issues can be tackled. An overview of the framing references is presented in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Framing References in the Climate Change Case

Framing Reference	Activist/Activist Group
Intergenerational equity	AA, SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5
Evidence-based claims	CTT, SMO3 & SMO4
Protecting Aboriginal culture	AA & SMO4

Mobilising

Based on Social Movement theory, and specifically Resource Mobilisation theory, social movements require resources to enable the attainment of their aims (McCarthy & Zald 1977). The resources can be conceptualised based on Bourdieu’s Power theory, and include economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational and social types of capital.

Mobilising Structures

Mobilising structures are the formal or informal structures which enable activists to mobilise resources and consequently engage in collective action (McCarthy 1996). In this case study, they included formal structures like the conservative think tank and the SMOs. Informal networks of activists like the Aboriginal activist and his association with the climate change movement as well as individual activists campaigning against mining company MinCo1 were also part of the

mobilising structures for the climate change movement. The mobilising structures were used to mobilise political capital that would enable the activists to achieve their aims. Political capital consists of economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational and social types of capital (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020).

Mobilising Economic Capital

Economic capital enables the advocacy groups (SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4, SMO5 & CTT) to gain the resources that they needed to undertake their work, as well as to assert their power in a field in which they were competing for resources. The economic dimension was important for the advocacy groups, because by mobilising financial resources, they can pay important expenses such as staff wages. The importance of financial resources to advocacy is illustrated in the quotation by a Campaign Strategist at SMO3:

You have to make a profit, otherwise your business no longer exists. So, the difference between a charity like us and a corporation is that we do not pay out dividends. Our dividends go into our business. So, yes, there is a financial dimension. Like I said, like we are a small organisation. You know, less than a million dollars a year, six or seven employees and our job is to amplify the power of the six or seven employees to get thousands of people doing things (SMO3 2019).

The economic capital that the advocacy groups mobilise is from membership fees, government grants, funders, and public donations. Based on interview data, SMO1's economic capital was primarily from membership fees and State Government grants. According to its website, SMO2 depended on funders including a large superannuation fund, and donations from the public. Interview data and the SMOs websites indicated that SMO3 and SMO4 relied on donations from the public. The 2019 SMO5 annual report indicated that its income came mainly from donations from the public and grants from government. In a similar vein, the 2018 CCT annual report indicated that its income was mainly from donations from the public.

Mobilising Institutional Capital

Institutional capital provided an activist and advocacy groups (AA, SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4, SMO5 & CTT) with the capability to determine the rules in their fields. With *habitus* referring to the dispositions that people unconsciously enact, and which consequently determine their behaviours (Bourdieu 1993), the Aboriginal activist and SMOs sought to establish a *habitus*

aligned with a long-term orientation. The following quotation by the Director of Environment at SMO2 highlights this as the Director reflected on the piecemeal climate change strategies that seemed to be part of the discourse in relation to mitigating and adapting to climate change:

At the moment, the conversation, unfortunately, it's still around, "well, we need to do things sensibly, and we need to take things, you know, make changes slowly, and so on and protect the economy... And, in a sense, kind of a wilful blindness to the kind of dangers that really lay ahead. That we cannot continue this *incrementalism*. We really need to start making some substantial changes, and quite quickly (SMO2 2019).

While the AA and SMOs seemed to want substantive climate action by business and government, the CTT wanted the economy to be prioritised over environmental and social considerations. As discussed in Chapter 7, the CTT argued that the economic benefits for the country from the fossil-fuels sector tended to outweigh the environmental benefits being sought by climate change activists. A Consultant at the CTT highlighted this by stating, "I think we have got very small environmental gains and a very large cost to the Australian economy" (CTT 2020). Therefore, seemingly, the CTT was mobilising institutional capital for the predominant *habitus* to remain as being based on a short-term orientation, while the AA and SMOs were seeking changes that aligned with a long-term orientation.

Mobilising Knowledge Capital

Knowledge capital enabled the Aboriginal activist and advocacy groups (SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4, SMO5 & CTT) to frame the issues that they were campaigning for more effectively as well as to inform the social activism tactics that they will be using. Evidently, such information seemed to have been mobilised by the stakeholders. The knowledge is sourced from social networks, research, and supporters. The Aboriginal activist identified his social network as a source of information as shown below:

Because of the connections I made in the environmental sector, while I was doing climate change campaigning, I had some really good connections (AA 2020).

The SMOs and CTT sourced their information from research. An illustration of this is SMO2, which collated and analysed information on companies and industry associations. The SMO2 had a public database with information on the shareholder resolutions filed in Australian companies. In addition, as highlighted by its Director of Environment below, the SMO had also been conducting research on lobbying by industry associations in relation to climate change:

We have done a lot of work over the last 18 months or two years, just tracking the advocacy of industry associations... for instance and what they say and advocate for on climate policy (SMO2 2019).

Supporters, consisting of workers in the businesses being targeted, have been informants. Specifically, workers in MinCo1 have informed SMO4 of the effectiveness of activism tactics as shown in the following quotation by a Campaigner at SMO4:

In the [MinCo1] campaign at the moment [SMO4] are trying to target corporations who are going to potentially work with [MinCo1] to let them know that the [MinCo1] coal mine would be really bad for the environment. And I guess they get information from that company or from *staff* there about the likelihood of that company you know dropping their contract or refusing to work with them (SMO4 2019).

These findings indicate that mobilising knowledge capital enabled the Aboriginal activist and advocacy groups to exercise power in relation to framing and activism tactics.

Mobilising Reputational Capital

Reputational capital, projected through credibility (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020), was mobilised by SMO3 and SMO4. These two SMOs differ from the others in that they relied on donations from the public. The CTT also relied on donations, but in contrast with the SMOs, the predominant *habitus* of a short-term orientation aligned with its ideology. Contrasting with the SMOs, the CTT was pursuing a maintenance of the status quo in relation to a short-term orientation culture, and political economic conditions as well as institutional structures underpinned by neoliberalism. The reputational capital of the SMOs was therefore of importance as they needed it to change the culture that impeded climate action. For example, for SMO3 their *credibility* was a source of *power* as highlighted by its Campaign Strategist:

Credibility comes with *power*, and our power is a movement of people. And we can demonstrate that thousands or tens of thousands of people respond to our direction. We have a database of 60,000 people. And we know that nearly 80 per cent of those 60,000 undertake four or more actions per year on our direction (SMO3 2019).

Likewise, the supporters of the SMO, who seemingly joined it because of its credibility, was a source of power for SMO4, as shown in the quotation by a Campaigner at the SMO:

We have a million members. So that is really people who have taken action with us...I think people are especially powerful when, you know, there is someone to support collective interest...we find our power and influence through people (SMO4 2019).

By mobilising reputational capital, SMO3 and SMO4 were able to also mobilise the financial resources that they needed for their operations, given that the SMOs are reliant on donations.

Mobilising Social Capital

Mobilising social capital enabled the Aboriginal activist and activist groups (SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4, SMO5 & CTT) to exercise their power through their social ties. The social networks were formed through their partnerships with other stakeholders including associated movements, investors, and customers. Activist group SMO3 partnered with the *School Strike for Climate* movement for the 2019 protest rallies across the world, as is shown below in the quotation by its Campaign Strategist:

Most recently, we worked closely with the student strike movement. And that is almost seven million people around the world, on the streets, including 300,000 in Australia with the biggest climate rally that we have ever seen (SMO3 2019).

For SMO2, it has been partnering with investors and providing them with the information that it had collated and analysed on industry associations and their views on the climate change policy. This form of knowledge capital is of assistance in the shareholder resolutions that are filed. The Director of Environment at SMO2 explained its relationship with the investors as follows:

We have done a lot of work over the last 18 months or two years, just tracking the advocacy of industry associations...So, we will provide that, I guess, a summary of that advocacy to investors. So, at the moment investors don't have a source for that kind of information other than doing a Google search themselves. But that is never going to provide you a clear picture (SMO2 2019).

In a similar vein, SMO5 partnered with the customers of financial company FinCo4 who wanted the company to divest from fossil-fuels. A Campaigner at SMO5 stated that customers approached the SMO to develop the campaign, shown in the following quotation:

[Customers] had tried to push [FinCo4] saying, 'look, we don't want to be invested in these fossil fuel companies that are making global warming worse'. ... because there were so many [FinCo4 customers] that came to us, we thought it would be worthwhile setting up a campaign. So, we launched a campaign in January, and within six weeks 10,000 members had signed on (SMO5 2020).

In summation, social capital, together with economic, institutional, knowledge and reputational types of capital, are constituents of political capital, as well as sources of power (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020), with the findings indicating that knowledge capital informed framing. Moreover,

the findings also suggest that political capital was a determinant of the activism tactics. An overview of the mobilisation of capital is presented in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Overview of Mobilising Capital in the Precarious Work Case

Type of Capital	Activist/Activist Group
Economic	CTT, SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5
Institutional	AA, CTT, SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4, & SMO5
Knowledge	AA, CTT, SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5
Reputational	SMO3 & SMO4
Social	AA, CTT, SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5

Social Activism Tactics

The social activism tactics used in this case included protest rallies, civil proceedings, private dialogue, shareholder activism, lock-on protests, secondary boycotts, online petitions, educational seminars, and activists' art tactics. These tactics can be persuasive such that activists seek to demonstrate the merits of their demands. Conversely, the tactics can be disruptive, whereby their tactics interfere with corporate operations, and/or threaten the legitimacy of the companies.

Protest Rallies

Protest rallies were a common tactic used by all the SMOs. For SMO1, SMO2 and SMO5, supporters were not mobilised to participate in the rallies but have demonstrated their support through their participation in the *School Strike for Climate* protest rallies that were held in September 2019 in Australian cities. The following statement by the Director of Environment at SMO2 illustrates the support given:

We really wanted to encourage people to join the youth at those strikes. And we sort of made that option available to our staff to do that, as well (SMO1 2019).

Besides the School Strike for Climate rallies, SMO3 and SMO4 staged protests rallies at the head offices of MinCo1 in 2017 to stop construction its coal mine, and at the offices of State Government officials in 2018. Protest rallies were also held at community levels by locals opposed to the construction of a mine by MinCo2 and a proposed waste management strategy by a contractor of EngCo1. The conservative think tank CTT, did not organise or participate in protest rallies.

Civil Proceedings

Civil proceedings have been used in relation to the construction of MinCo1's coal mine. Section 487 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999 (Cth) (the EPBC Act) had been used as a disruptive tactic by activists. Specifically, in 2015, under the EPBC Act, a SMO filed a case against the Federal Environmental Minister for failing to take into consideration two endangered species in the decision to approve MinCo1's coal mine. None of the interviewed activists stated that they used civil proceedings. For the CTT, the repeal of Section 487 of the EPBC Act was a prominent issue that the think tank had been lobbying for.

Private Dialogue

Through private dialogue, the Aboriginal activist (AA), and three advocacy groups (CTT, SMO1 & SMO2) engaged with decision-makers. The Aboriginal activist described his climate change activism tactic as using a *soft voice* to avoid being miscast as an *angry* person:

Through *soft voices*, you are able to have a wider scope and a bigger, deeper narrative that you can share with people... So, you can be an *angry* Aboriginal person, but that gets put front page in the papers, you are an angry Aboriginal person, not that you are campaigning [against] climate change and sort of things like that (AA 2020).

The CTT has also been using private dialogue in its political lobbying. The Executive Officer at SMO1 stated that they engage in private dialogue with local and state government officials, as well as community members on adapting and mitigating climate change. Moreover, the Director of Environment at SMO2 stated that the SMO engaged with Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) listed companies that it targeted, prior to filing a shareholder resolution:

Over the course of any given year, we may engage with upwards of 20 companies, sometimes up to 40 companies. With a handful of those companies, depending on how the engagement progresses, we may proceed to filing a shareholder resolution (SMO2 2019).

The Aboriginal activist used private dialogue as a persuasive tactic; it does not threaten the reputational capital of their targets, and likewise does not generate significant financial costs due to a disruption to the operations of the targeted organisations.

Shareholder Activism

The filing of shareholder resolutions was an activism tactic used by SMO2 and SMO5. Based on a database managed by SMO2 that listed the shareholder resolutions for environmental and social

issues in Australia between 2002 and 2020, 53 shareholder resolutions were filed. Activist groups SMO2 or SMO5 have been identified as the lead filers for 40 of these. As illustrated in Table 8.3, the shareholder resolutions pertained to the maintenance of a cultural heritage filed in relation to a mining company; shutting down of a fossil-fuel mining company; protesting against a fracking proposal where consent had not been obtained from Traditional Owners; environmental disclosures by energy and financial companies; lobbying by mining industry associations, aligning the operations of companies in the financial, energy and mining sectors to the *Paris Agreement* targets; seeking to highlight the health risks associated with coal in the energy sector; and challenging the greenhouse gas emission targets. Most of the resolutions were filed by SMO2 and the resolutions in which SMO5 was the lead filer pertained to companies disclosing their exposure to fossil fuels and their transition from fossil fuels.

Table 8.3: Shareholder Resolutions by SMO2 and SMO5

Shareholder Resolution Focus	Sector	SMO Filing
Maintenance of a cultural heritage	Mining	SMO2
Fossil-fuel operation shutdown	Mining	SMO2
Fracking proposal without consent	Energy	SMO2
Environmental disclosures	Energy & Financial	SMO2 & SMO5
Lobbying by industry associations	Mining	SMO2
Alignment of companies' operations to the <i>Paris Agreement</i>	Financial, Energy & Mining	SMO2
Highlighting health risks of coal	Energy	SMO2

Lock-on Protests

Lock-on protests involve the use of a locking device such as handcuffs or bicycle lock-chains at the site at which the activists are protesting, to create human obstructions (Ricketts 2019). The tactic was used by activists in informal mobilising structures protesting against the construction of MinCo1's mine. The disruptive tactic was used on MinCo1's operations as well as the operations of its contractors like engineering company EngCo2. An illustration of this activism tactic is presented in Figure 8.1. in which the activist locked both his hands onto a coal drilling machine to disrupt the operations of MinCo1.



Figure 8.1: Lock-on Protest

(Source: Narooma News (2019)- uncited in references)

Secondary Boycotts

In secondary boycotting, activism is levelled on a business to get it to cut its ties with a primary target (Radzik 2017). To protect companies, the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) (the CC Act) prohibits secondary boycotting. However, under Section 45DD (3) of the CC Act boycotts are permitted when the main purpose is either “environmental protection” or “consumer protection” and does not entail industrial action. Secondary boycotts had been used by all the SMOs except SMO1, which focused on climate change advocacy work at a community level. The primary target was MinCo1, and the secondary targets included its contractor EngCo2, as well as other companies that provided it with finance and insurance. Companies in the financial and insurance sectors were environmentally low risk (Young & Marais 2012), but as highlighted by the Director of Climate at SMO2, they were targeted because of their influence:

In the case of say, the banks or the insurers. They won't be necessarily carbon emitters, but they will have influence. So, the idea about engagement with those institutions, it's not about, you know, curbing their emissions because they are not really big emitters in terms of a national sense but in terms of how their lending can change, or how they can *influence* other organisations (SMO2 2019).

The resource dependence of a primary target is therefore a determinant for the use of secondary boycotting.

Online Petitions

Online petitions were used by SMO3, SMO4 and SMO5 for their activism campaigns. The petition forms were published on their organisational websites and could be forwarded to different people using different social media platforms. Online petitions were used by the three SMOs in their campaigns against construction of MinCo1's coal mine; by SMO4 against fracking on land in which the Traditional Owners had not consented; and by SMO5 seeking FinCo4 to divest from fossil-fuels. The online petitions were presented to decision-makers, and specifically, government officials associated with the approval of MinCo1's mine, and senior executives for the fracking and divestment campaigns. The number of supporters of a campaign seemed to be a demonstration of political capital, or power, as indicated by the following quotation by a Campaigner at SMO5, who highlighted the number of supporters they had achieved within *six weeks* of the FinCo4 divestment campaign:

We launched a campaign in January, and within six weeks 10,000 [supporters] had signed on, calling on [FinCo4] to divest from fossil fuels... members have been taking action during COVID online, to kind of push [FinCo4] to divest from fossil fuels. (SMO5 2020).

The use of online petitions during the COVID pandemic, as highlighted by the Campaigner at SMO4, also demonstrated that the internet had reduced the transaction costs of activism for the SMOs.

Educational Seminars

Educational seminars were used only by the conservative think tank. Based on the CTT's website, its seminars provided a forum for presenting its findings from research to the public. Some of the prominent issues that the CTT had focused on were calls for Australia to withdraw from the *Paris Agreement* and the repeal of Section 487 of the EPBC Act. The CTT's arguments for these actions were predicated on them being beneficial for Australia's economy.

Activists' Art

Activists in informal mobilising structures had, as a persuasive tactic, made artwork to demonstrate their opposition to the construction of MinCo1. According to ABC News, the artwork included dolls, sculptures and paintings representing a bird species (Refer to Figure 8.2), that was potentially endangered because of MinCo1's coal mine. The activists sent the artwork to Government officials.



Black-Throated Finch Doll by J. McCaughey and Painting by M. Hartley

Figure 8.2: Activists' Artwork Tactic

(Source: ABC News (2019) – uncited in references)

In summation, persuasive tactics that seek to convince decision-makers of the merits of the activists' claims, such as *private dialogue* and *activists' art* had been used by activists, such as the Aboriginal activist, in informal mobilising structures. The conservative think tank had also been using persuasive tactics including *private dialogue* and *educational seminars*. The arguments put forward by the CTT on prioritising economic gains, seemed to be supported by the predominant *habitus*. Therefore, the indications are that mobilising structures and the context shaped the activism tactics. Other tactics that had been used in the case are *protest rallies*, *lock-on protests*, *civil proceedings*, *online petitions*, *secondary boycotts*, and *shareholder activism*, as illustrated in Table 8.4. Resource dependence also seemed to be a determinant in the activism tactics given the finding that if private dialogue did not reach a consensus, then shareholder activism would be used.

Table 8.4: Activism Tactics in the Climate Change Case

Activism Tactic	Activist/Activist Group
Protest rallies	SMO1, SMO2, SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5
Civil proceedings	SMO against MinCo1's mine
Private dialogue	AA, CTT, SMO1 & SMO2
Shareholder activism	SMO2 & SMO5
Lock-on protests	Activists mobilised through informal groups
Secondary boycotts	SMO2, SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5
Online petitions	SMO3, SMO4 & SMO5
Educational seminars	CTT
Activists' art	Activists mobilised through informal groups

COMPANIES' MECHANISMS

Companies, in particular mining companies, can seek to earn a social licence to operate (Moffat & Zhang 2014) and can *blend market and social welfare institutional logics* (Pache & Santos 2013) as was evident in the interview data on the *proactive* corporate actions. Moreover, companies can *reactively* respond to institutional pressures by *defying* and *conceding* to the pressures (Pache & Santos 2010), as was found for some of the companies in this case study.

Proactive Actions

Earning a Social Licence to Operate

Mining Companies

Given that it is essential for mining projects to not only earn a formal operating licence from the government but also to be accepted and approved in their local communities for their successful operation (Moffat & Zhang 2014), earning a social licence to operate was a proactive action taken by the mining companies (MinCo1 & MinCo2). The two mining companies identified engagement programs with the local community including the Traditional Owners, which seemed to have been initiated proactively to mitigate the negative externalities from the companies' operations. As shown in the following quotation by its Head of Sustainability, MinCo1 engaged with Traditional Owners not only in the legal native title processes, but also in providing *economic and employment* opportunities to the local Aboriginal communities through contracts with the company and its associates:

I participated in a range of different discussions with Traditional Owner groups, whether it was to do with those statutory processes or to look at economic and employment opportunities as well... in the area of environmental management, we have awarded some very substantial packages of work to a majority Indigenous owned business, an environmental services company, we have assisted Indigenous businesses to partner with other companies and then win work (MinCo1 2020).

Likewise, MinCo2 engaged with its local community by proactively going to the community, schools, and *colleges*, to encourage people to apply for positions in the mining company and its contractors such as transport companies. The Executive Manager at MinCo1 stated that the *driving force* behind these actions was to *maintain a social licence to operate*, as shown below:

We were starting to develop contracts with Indigenous groups that would often partner with established businesses and as part of that partnership with established businesses, for

example, transport companies, we would insist that they employ local people as part of any contract... it was really important to go into those communities, or go into those *schools* or go into those *colleges* to encourage certain groups, that wouldn't normally apply for jobs, start applying...What was the *driving force*...I guess, a recognition that to *maintain your social licence to operate*, you have to engage with your community (MinCo2 2020).

Engineering Companies

Earning a social licence proactively was not as prominent in the engineering companies. The indication is that this was because the durations of their operations in a local community were shorter than the mining companies. This is illustrated in the following quotation by an Environmental Advisor at EngCo1, who stated that the company tended not to allocate considerable resources to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions because their time at a site is shorter relative to possibly a mining company:

Construction is very sporadic and very short term. So, very rarely is an engineering and construction company going to invest too much in reducing the carbon footprint... in processing plants and things like that, they think long term, they think they plan long term they think 40 years, 20 years, 30 years. Engineering and construction companies think two, three years ahead, and then that is it. That is how they work because they work according to projects (EngCo1 2020).

Proactively gaining the acceptance and approval from the local community that they operate in might therefore be a more dominant concern for the mining companies due to the longevity of their operations at a specified site.

Blending Institutional Logics

Another proactive corporate action is blending market and social welfare logics, whereby organisations integrate their profit-seeking goals with the environmental and/or social value that they are generating (Pache & Santos 2013). Interview data and documentary evidence suggests that four companies (FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 and ManCo1) were able to integrate the two competing demands of market logic and social welfare. Demonstrating this is FinCo1, which provided an impact investing platform, by providing its customers with investments that sought to bring about environmental and/or social value as well as financial returns. Likewise, FinCo2's main business objective was to provide its customers with financing options that were not associated with the fossil-fuel sectors, whilst FinCo3 aimed to provide financial services to a

diverse range of people including young people, women, and the LGBTQ community, who would otherwise not have access to such services. For ManCo1, the products that it produced reduced waste as they were reusable, which is an important element of a circular economy.

The four companies incorporated elements that are prescribed by market and social welfare logics, as demonstrated by the quotation from a Strategy Manager at FinCo1:

Our mission, our purpose and our goal is to show that finance can be a force for good. So that finance can work in a way that is good for the planet, and good for people. We are interested in systemic change (FinCo1 2019).

Similarly, the integration of market and social welfare logics is captured by an explanation given below by a Founding Director of FinCo2, as to why she left a financial role at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, to establish her own company:

I left the Commonwealth Bank with sort of a clear idea of really wanting to do something in my industry in a different way than the way I think most organisations do. I was sort of led by my values, my ethics, and morals instead of a bottom line. So, that was sort of the core reason I changed (FinCo2 2019).

Based on the interview data, the indication is that the four companies were able to generate environmental and/or social value, while generating a profit, and hence they seemed to be perpetually blending market and social welfare logics.

Not Business as Usual Alliance

The four companies also demonstrated that they had been blending market and institutional logics with their pledge to the *Not Business as Usual* alliance. As stated in Chapter 7, the *Not Business as Usual* alliance was formed in support of the *School Strike for Climate* movement, which has been seeking substantive climate action from government (Not Business as Usual 2019). The alliance was active on Friday 20 September 2019 in Australia, three days prior to the United Nations Global Summit. By joining the alliance, organisations were committing to allow their workers to participate in the *School Strike for Climate* protest rallies. Inasmuch as the alliance is called ‘not business as usual’, it has placed the onus of responsibility for substantive climate action on governments and little on the business sector. Supporting this assertion was a statement on the alliance’s website, stating “it is not up to the private sector to lead climate action... The bigger the turnout, the stronger the pressure on the government” (Not Business as Usual 2019).

Despite the focus of the alliance being on substantive changes by governments, the representatives of the four companies (FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 & ManCo1) stated that they believed that business had a pivotal role in relation to climate action. A Sustainability Manager at ManCo1 explained the role of the business sector as follows:

Part of being part of *Not Business as Usual*... we are calling on governments to make change and immediate change. But we are also calling on other businesses to stand up and say right at the moment there are so many areas where businesses are ahead of government. So, businesses just have to set really strong climate agendas (ManCo1 2019).

Likewise, a Founding Director of FinCo3 indicated the important role of business in addressing an issue like climate change as follows:

Because for too long I think we have waited for the government to be the leader and take ownership to create change...we just can't wait for that to happen. I think with a lot of the social movements we have actually seen it isn't okay, this isn't how we want to be as a society, and then creating our own social demand chain. So, I think climate change is no different (FinCo3 2019).

An overview of the proactive actions of companies are presented in Table 8.5, and these findings on the proactive actions suggest that the actions of companies in this case study are shaped by the culture as the companies seemed to be contributing to a culture or predominant habitus where the emphasis was on the long-term impacts of decisions rather than short-term interests. Moreover, the actions were shaped by the structures and political economic conditions, given the companies had been incorporating elements of both market and social welfare logics, which are aligned with the systemic changes that activists pursuing climate action had been calling for.

Table 8.5: Proactive Corporate Actions in the Climate Change Case

Activism Tactic	Company
Earning a social licence	MinCo1 & MinCo1
Blending market and social welfare logics	FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 & ManCo1

Reactive Responses

Defying

By defying, organisations reject institutional demands (Pache & Santos 2010), and this was evident in the responses by two companies (FinCo4 & MinCo1) to activism pressures. The companies defied the pressures predicated on pragmatism and stakeholder salience.

Pragmatism: Financial Company

Pragmatism can be viewed as behaviour that is practical, based on common sense, and flexible to the circumstances (Farjoun, Ansell & Boin 2015), which seemed to be the view held by FinCo4 and MinCo1 in justifying their decision to defy the activism pressures. Specifically, FinCo4, which was targeted by SMO3 and SMO5 through online petitions, defied pressures from activists to divest its entire portfolio from fossil fuels. A Campaigner at SMO5 stated that the SMO wanted the company to divest from all fossil fuels, including metallurgical coal and gas. As shown below, a Sustainability Investment Manager at FinCo4 stated that the company had been defying the divestment pressures because in acting as a fiduciary for its customers it sought not to agitate change, but provide financial returns to its customers:

We act as a fiduciary for our members, then we obviously have to always act in the financial interests of our members... we are not seeking to invest in a way to agitate for change in the way that an activist investor would. So, we will push back against calls for divestment for non- financial reasons. We can divest, it is always a course of action open to us, but we are only going to do it when it is in our members financial interests (FinCo4 2020).

Moreover, as at the interview date, FinCo4 had investments in thermal coal. Reinforcing that FinCo4 only acted in the financial interests of its customers, the Sustainability Investment Manager stated that with the *economics* and future of thermal coal being very limited, the company would move away from investing in companies that solely invested in the thermal coal sector. The Manager stated that the company did not really refer to such a move a divestment but rather as acting in the financial interests of its customers:

We have not got a divestment policy as such, but thermal coal, the *economics* of thermal coal is becoming increasingly challenged. So, we are unlikely to invest in any pure play thermal coal company. *But we do not couch it in the language of divestment as such, we couch it in language that we believe that the future for thermal coal is very limited. We*

think it's got a use by date, and we believe there are better ways for us to invest our members' money (FinCo4 2020).

Supporting this position, FinCo4's 2019 climate risk report stated that the company was "not an activist fund" but rather "a pragmatic fund".

Pragmatism: Mining Companies

Pragmatism as a justification for defying activism pressures was also prominent for MinCo1, which was targeted by activists in SMO3, SMO4 and SMO5 who opposed the construction of its coal mine. Varied tactics such as protest rallies, lock-on protests, secondary boycotts, civil proceedings, private dialogue, and activists' art had been used. As shown in the following quotation by the Head of Sustainability at MinCo1, its response to the activism against its coal mine is that MinCo1 was a *pragmatic* company responding to the demand for the resource:

[MinCo1] is a *pragmatic* company. The company is not going to spend money on a project that does not have a *demand*. So, I say to people, coal mining people do not dig up coal and hope that someone is going to buy it. Because it is an expensive exercise...no one is going to make a coal mine if there is no *demand* for the product, because it is just a horrendously expensive exercise to do that (MinCo1 2020).

For MinCo2, which was constructing a gold and copper mine, its Executive Manager had a similar view, stating that though mining had been contributing to global warming, it was still part of the solution to climate change through mined resources such as *copper*, that could assist in reducing carbon emissions:

I actually personally, believe that that we [the mining sector] are contributing to the acceleration of global warming; absolutely...And taking a very radical view, for example, to no mining is not the answer. Because let us face it, mining is the solution to climate change. Putting thermal coal to one side mining is the source for most of your inputs for equipment that will reduce humankind's carbon footprint. Be it batteries [or] copper (MinCo2 2020).

The indication from these findings is that pragmatism was used to justify companies' defiance of activism pressures.

Stakeholder Saliency

Like pragmatism, another justification was the saliency of stakeholders, and this is evident in the responses of MinCo1 to activism pressures. Specifically, the large SMOs that had formal

mobilising structures seemed to gain the attention of the mining company, potentially because they projected higher levels of political capital, or *power*, than smaller SMOs, or a small group of activists who were part of an informal mobilising structure. The Head of Sustainability at MinCo1 provided an example of an SMO that gained their attention:

We were definitely looking at stakeholders in terms of what influence they have. So, the influence I guess, as a measure of what you would say *power* is, *are they a legitimate stakeholder*. We had NGO groups for example that would pop up like grass growing in the garden. There would be 10 people in them. But others might be a tree. So, might be something like a *WWF or something like that is quite established*. And they have got a lot of supporters, they have got a lot of members, they have got a stronger voice...we were definitely conscious of identifying those stakeholders that had a different level of engagement and influence on other stakeholders (MinCo1 2020).

In a similar vein, the customers of FinCo4, who are given priority, as discussed earlier in the section, also demonstrate a stakeholder group that has political capital to influence the reaction by companies to activism pressures. As stated earlier in Chapter 2, political capital consists of economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational, and social capital (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Therefore, the indication from the findings is that pragmatism, stakeholder salience, and political capital seemed to be determinants of defiance as a corporate reaction to activism pressures.

Conceding

Another reactive response to activism pressures is conceding. By conceding, the activists accommodate the institutional demands (Pache & Santos 2010), which seemed to be an action taken by two engineering companies (EngCo1 & EngCo2). As stated earlier, there was no indication that the engineering companies *proactively* sought to earn a social licence to operate. The two companies, however, in their *reactive* responses seemed to have been driven to concede by an aim to maintain legitimacy.

The concession pertaining to EngCo1 was a response to community activism against a proposal on the storage of the tailings in their community grounds. Tailings are the end products of a manufacturing process and managing their disposal is of importance to climate change given the impact it has on greenhouse gas emission levels. In relation to EngCo1, the tailings were proposed

to be transported about 500 kilometres to a disposal site. Community activists held protest rallies opposing the proposal seemingly because of the negative impact the transportation and disposal of the tailing would have on the environment and local community. According to the Environmental Advisor at EngCo1, the company eventually withdrew the proposal:

The tailings for this project were targeted at being buried in a basic lot... And the community protested and that was shelved...that was with regards to protesting the location, the final location for storage of tailings for the project (EngCo1 2020).

In a similar vein, EngCo2 conceded to activism pressures from SMO5. Specifically, through secondary boycotting, SMO5 targeted EngCo2 because of its working relationship with MinCo1. As stated earlier, MinCo1, which had been constructing a coal mine, was the primary target. As a response to the activism pressures, EngCo2 terminated its working relationship with MinCo1. The Sustainability Manager at EngCo2 indicated that it did this to maintain its reputational capital as perceived by its clients. Even so, a government official was of the view that EngCo2 should not have conceded to the activists:

The company withdrew its involvement in that particular project, and it did that publicly. They received a lot of abuse from a certain federal politician... and he thought [the senior executives] were going soft on the activists...But [the company has] remained true to that commitment, and that has been important to their ability to go and work with other clients (EngCo2 2020).

Documentary evidence demonstrates that EngCo2 had been receiving sustainability and industry awards both prior to the termination of the working relationship with MinCo1, and after. The indication is that the engineering company conceded to the pressures to maintain its legitimacy.

To reiterate, proactive actions were shaped by the culture as the companies aimed to contribute to a transformation from a short-term to a long-term orientation. Moreover, the proactive blending of market and social welfare logics contrasted with neoliberalism, which underpinned the political economic conditions and structures. In the blending of the two logics, the economic, environmental, and social dimensions were reconciled, while in neoliberalism the economic dimension superseded the environmental and social dimensions. In terms of the reactive responses, as illustrated in Table 8.6, they consisted of defying and conceding. The determinants of these

reactive responses in the climate change case study are pragmatism, stakeholder salience, political capital, and legitimacy.

Table 8.6: Reactive Corporate Actions in the Climate Change Case

Activism Tactic	Company
Defying	FinCo4 & MinCo1
Conceding	EngCo1 & EngCo2

OUTCOMES

Having presented the findings on the social activism mechanisms and the actions by businesses, the outcomes for the climate change case are explored. Social movement literature provides that the outcomes can be at an *individual* (Pichardo 1997), *organisational* (Diani 2019) and *structural* (della Porta 2015) levels, and hence these three levels of analysis are used.

Individual Level Outcomes

Agency

Agency refers to an enactment of autonomy (Osterman 2006). In this case study, besides the Aboriginal activist and the representatives of the SMOs, some of the representatives of the companies (FinCo1, FinCo2, FinCo3 & ManCo1) seemed visibly enthusiastic about the climate change movement. As discussed earlier in the chapter, these four companies seemed to blend market and social welfare logics. This enthusiasm is also indicated by their participation in the *School Strike for Climate* protests in September 2019. A Founding Director of FinCo2 described her attendance of the strike as follows:

It felt good to be there [at the *School Strike for Climate* Melbourne rally] that day. That was a big outcome. It was just such a positive energy. It was goosebumps and the hairs on the back of your neck standing up just with how amazing it was on the day (FinCo2 2019).

Based on documentary evidence (Australian Broadcasting Corporation News 2019; Gillezeau 2019), many young people across Australia seemed to have agency as they sought substantive climate action through the *School Strike for Climate* movement.

Organisational Outcomes

Financial Performance

The financial performance of MinCo1 seemed to have been affected by activism. The company received the approval for the construction of its coal mine in May 2019, after six years of activists' opposition to the construction. Activist group SMO5's website reported that as of January 2021, 85 companies from the financial, engineering, insurance, and transport sectors, seemingly because of secondary boycotting, had chosen not to work with MinCo1.

Reputational Capital

The reputational capital of MinCo1 seemed to have been affected by its numerous activists, and SMOs that had targeted it for the construction of its coal mine. Based on all the attacks, the organisation seemed to have been stigmatised (Lauwo, Kyriacou & Otusanya 2020), and demonstrating this, in November 2020, it rebranded its trading name. Conversely, EngCo2's legitimacy seemed to have been maintained as it continued to receive numerous industry and sustainability awards.

Divestment

There had also been some changes to FinCo4's assets. Specifically, in August 2020, the financial company divested from fossil fuel companies that mined coal for energy use but retained their investments in some large coal mining companies. The SMO5 website stated that the company did not make a public announcement of its divestment but only confirmed it when contacted by the media. This action by FinCo4 was consistent with the pragmatism of the company, which the Sustainability Investment Manager referred to when he stated that it would only act in the financial interests of its customers.

Status Quo

In addition to FinCo4 not fully divesting from fossil fuels, there had been other instances of no changes at an organisational level. Specifically, based on SMO2's database that presents all shareholder resolutions filed in Australia, between 2002 and 2020, *none of the climate change shareholder resolutions, as well as the other social and environmental-based resolutions*, were carried in the annual general meetings. Company MinCo2 proceeded with the construction of a

copper and gold mine overseas. Moreover, in relation to the tailings of the manufacturing company contracted by EngCo1, with the company conceding to activism pressures, as of January 2021, it had not found an alternative site to dispose the tailings.

Structural Outcomes

Mobilisation

Based on documentary evidence (Australian Broadcasting Corporation News 2019; Gillezeau 2019), through formal and informal mobilising structures, young people seemed to have been mobilised around an intergenerational equity collective identity. The young people also seemed to be connected to a global community that is pursuing climate action and seemed to have allies in the business community in the form of the *Not Business as Usual* alliance.

Regulatory Status Quo

Section 487 of the EPBC Act has not been repealed but there has been a review of the EPBC Act, and an interim report was released in July 2020 (Slezak 2020). The final report was submitted to the Government in October 2020, and as of January 2021, the report is still not publicly available. The interim report on the review of the Act concluded that the environment was worsening under the EPBC Act, which it is meant to protect, and recommended the appointment of a regulator to oversee the protection of the environment (Slezak 2020). The Morrison Coalition Government stated that it did not support such an appointment (Slezak 2020).

Native Title Rights

A third outcome relates to the lack of native title rights. As of January 2021, the native title rights of some Aboriginal communities on the land on which MinCo1 had been constructing a coal mine had still not been recognised. Likewise, the Aboriginal Elders who had been protesting with SMO2 against a proposal to dig up gas wells on their land have not received their native title rights.

Circular Economy

Companies that have been blending market and social welfare logics like FinCo1 and ManCo1 have been contributing towards a circular economy. For FinCo1, its 2020 Impact Report stated that it had invested in businesses that were in the circular economy, such as a manufacturing

alternative to plastic that is compostable and biodegradable in oceans. For ManCo1, as shown in the following quotation by its Sustainability Manager, it had been developing an initiative with Government funding, that introduces a circular economy thinking model to Australia:

We have come on board with a circular economy hub that has had government investment and the aim is to bring circular economy thinking and ideas to Australia. So, rather than replicating the work that is already out there led by the *Ellen MacArthur Foundation*, just bringing it to Australia and saying this is how it is relevant (ManCo1 2019).

As part of this, the model being used and promoted by ManCo1 is to reduce and reuse rather than recycle.

Multi-stakeholder Initiatives and Environmental Value

Multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) including the United Nations Global Compact have been developed to support business to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. In Australia, as of January 2021, 240 businesses became part of the MSI (United Nations Global Compact 2021), with EngCo2 being the only business out of nine that became part of the MSI. In terms of the greenhouse gas emissions, there have not been substantive changes to the levels, with a report by the United Nations on the progress of the SDGs stating that the world is not on track to meet the *Paris Agreement* target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2020).

Chapter Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to present the findings on the mechanisms and outcomes in the climate change case study. The interview data and documentary evidence indicated that the social activism mechanisms consisted of *framing*, *mobilising*, and *activism tactics*. *Framing* references included intergenerational equity, evidence-based claims, and protecting Aboriginal culture. The formal mobilisation structures included the SMOs and CTT, while an informal mobilisation structure was represented by the Aboriginal activist. In turn, *mobilising* was undertaken by the activists for political capital. *Activism tactics* included protest rallies, lock on protests, secondary boycotts, shareholder activism, private dialogue, civil proceedings, educational seminars, and activists' art. The actions of companies included *proactively earning a social licence* and *proactively blending market and social welfare logics*, which are shaped by *culture*, *political economic conditions*, and *structures*. In addition, companies have been *reactively defying and*

conceding to activism pressures, determined by *pragmatism*, *stakeholder salience*, *political capital*, and *legitimacy*. Agency in relation to climate action was found to be an individual-level outcome. The organisational level outcomes pertained to companies' policies such as divestment, and legitimacy, for example, reputational costs. The structural level changes included mobilisation, a regulatory status quo, native title rights not being recognised, a circular economy and MSIs, with limited environmental value generated in relation to greenhouse gas emission levels. A summary of the mechanisms and outcomes is presented in Table 8.7.

Table 8.7: Summary of Mechanisms and Outcomes in the Climate Change Case

Social activism mechanisms	Companies' mechanisms	Outcomes
Framing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intergenerational equity ▪ Evidence-based claims ▪ Protecting Aboriginal culture Mobilising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mobilising structures ▪ Political capital Social activism tactics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protest rallies ▪ Lock-on protests ▪ Civil proceedings (EPBC Act) ▪ Secondary boycotts ▪ Private dialogue ▪ Shareholder activism ▪ Educational seminars ▪ Activists' art 	Proactively earning a social licence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legitimacy ▪ Culture Proactively blending market and social welfare logics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legitimacy ▪ Political economic conditions ▪ Structures ▪ Culture Reactively defying and conceding <p>Determined by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pragmatism ▪ Stakeholder salience ▪ Political capital ▪ Legitimacy 	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agency Organisational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial performance ▪ Reputational capital ▪ Divestment ▪ Status quo Structural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mobilisation ▪ Regulatory status quo ▪ Native title rights ▪ Circular economy ▪ MSIs and greenhouse gas emissions

An analysis of the findings indicates that *social activism mechanisms influenced the outcomes*. Specifically, formal mobilising structures, informal networks, and the various type of activism tactics used generated agency in relation to climate action, and consequently, the mobilisation of participants in the School Strike for Climate movement and the broader climate change movement. In addition, companies' *mechanisms were influenced by the context*; an example of this pertained to companies proactively blending market and social welfare logics. The companies seemed to have done this to change the predominant *habitus* from one where the focus is on short-term

interests to one underpinned by the long-term view of intergenerational equity and systems thinking. This also demonstrates that *the outcomes influenced each other*, as agency in terms of climate action contributes to mobilisation for the climate change movement. The *outcomes also influenced the context*, and vice-versa. As an illustration, the regulatory status quo reflects the neoliberal political economic conditions and institutional structures, due to the limited substantive climate action policies at the Federal level. In the same vein, the regulatory status quo is the context under which climate change activists have been pursuing substantive climate action.

CHAPTER 9: CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

Introduction

The data on the precarious work and climate change case studies presented in the preceding chapters provide the basis of this cross-case analysis that examines the similarities and differences in the two case studies. The analysis is organised around the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes, which will be useful in answering the research questions in Chapter 10. The analysis is guided by Social Movement, Neo-institutional, Stakeholder, Resource Dependence and Bourdieu's Power theories. Specifically, the two case studies are analysed in accordance with the theories and empirical studies presented in Chapters 2 and 3. The key factors pertaining to the theories and empirical research are presented in the analytical framework illustrated in Figure 9.1.

Analytical Framework

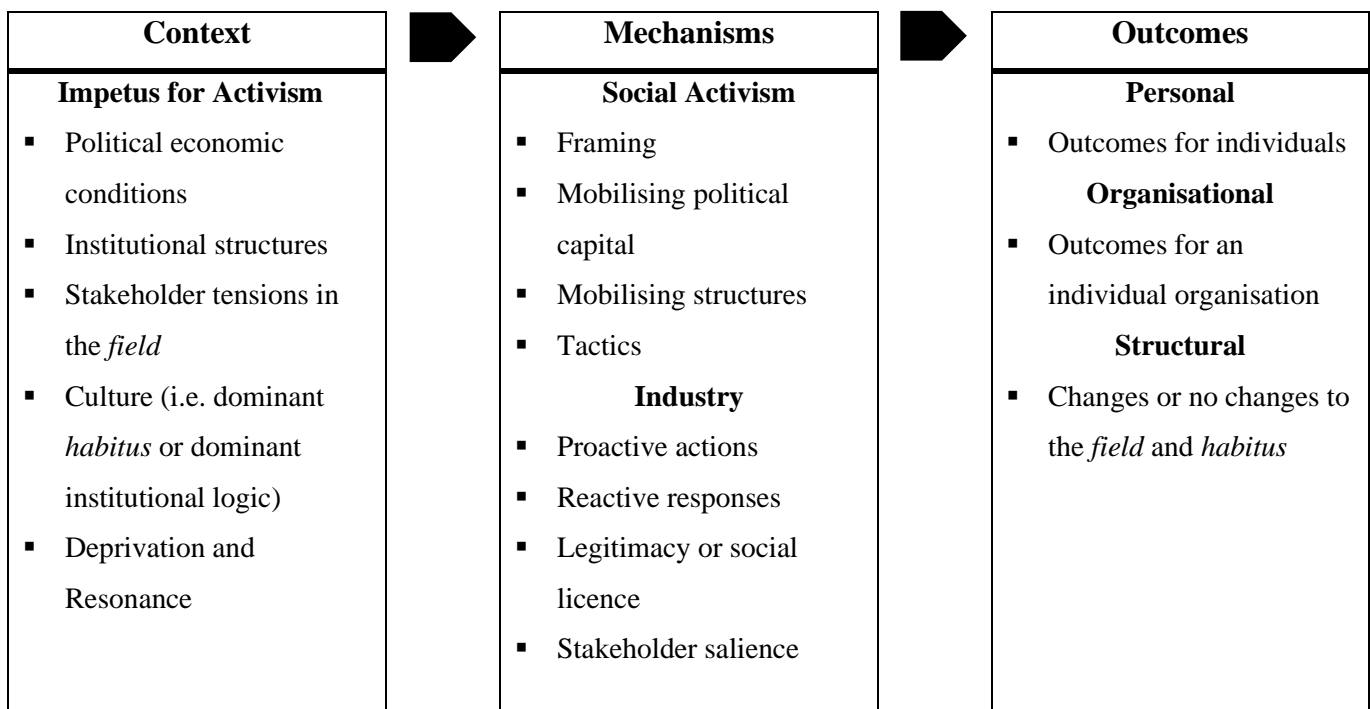


Figure 9.1: Cross-Case Analytical Framework

In the cross-case analytical framework, the impetus for activism can be based on the political and economic conditions (Bartley 2003; McAdam 2017) and institutional structures (Doh & Guay

2006). Like Bourdieu's *habitus* (Bourdieu 1993), institutional logics (Thornton & Ocasio 1999) consist of the dispositions or the values and ideologies that are unconsciously enacted in a social context. Culture, which is another contextual factor, is essentially the dominant *habitus* or the dominant institutional logic. Culture is an impetus for activism given activists seek changes to the values and ideologies that shape the issues they are opposed to or campaigning for (Amenta & Polletta 2019). Another impetus for activism is deprivation and resonance of the issue (Smelser 1962). Moreover, with Bourdieu using *fields* to capture the relations between social actors (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992), the tensions between business and stakeholders can be an impetus for social activism (Briscoe & Gupta 2016).

The mechanisms in the framework include framing by social activists (Benford & Snow 2000; Hervieux & Voltan 2018) and mobilisation of resources (McCarthy & Zald 1977), with the resources being represented by political capital (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Social activists can be in formal mobilising structures and informal groups (Chuang, Church & Hu 2018). Through these structures or groups, they used a range of activism tactics to persuade their targets of the merits of their demands or be disruptive to the operations of a targeted organisation and/or threaten its reputational capital (Briscoe & Gupta 2016). In terms of the actions of business and industry associations, they can be proactive, such as blending market and social welfare logics (Pache & Santos 2013) or reactive, such as using defiant or conciliatory responses to institutional pressures (Pache & Santos 2010). Moreover, the salience of the stakeholders (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997) and legitimacy (Ritson, Wilson & Maclean 2015) are determinants of the actions taken by businesses and industry associations.

The outcomes in the framework are at micro, meso, and macro levels. At a micro or a personal level, the outcomes are at an individual level and can relate to a person's identity, quality of life and participation in society (Pichardo 1997). At a meso or organisational level, the outcomes can refer to an organisation's legitimacy (King 2008; McDonnell & King 2013), culture, or policies (Van Cranenburgh, Liket & Roome 2013). At a broader macro, or structural level, the outcomes are in relation to the *field* in that the political capital that the social actors possess changes or remains the same (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). There can also be a change to the *habitus*

(Bourdieu 1993), in terms of the actions of people after activism. Alternatively, the status quo can be maintained.

Context

Political Economic Conditions

The political economic conditions in both cases seemed to be underpinned by *neoliberalism*. Based on secondary data, demonstrations of neoliberalism in the precarious work case included the 1983 Accord between the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the then Hawke Labor Government to put a stop on wage growth to tackle the concurrent high unemployment and inflation rates in the country (Wright 2014). Likewise, economic policies such as the privatisation of Government owned enterprises, the opening of Australia's economy to international competition, and the decentralisation of wage determination through enterprise bargaining, are indicative of neoliberalism. More recently, neoliberalism has seemingly been a driver for the wage stagnation in the country (Stanford 2018). In the climate change case, from the 1990s to 2010s, the Governments' economic policies have been largely justified based on the free market (Crowley 2017). Specifically, investments in fossil fuels were supported by Governments, and a minimalist approach to climate change policies that limit greenhouse gas emissions has been taken by Governments, predicated on coal being a major source of export income for the country (Hudson 2019).

These political economic conditions seemed to have enabled institutional structures that in turn shaped the activism issues on the rights of precarious workers and for climate action. Specifically, Australian Federal Governments seemed to have focused on economic growth on the basis that the benefits would trickle down to the population. However, the interviews and secondary data highlighted that despite the country's production growth, the profits were distributed largely to the business owners or managerial class. For example, Australian Bureau of Statistics Status research demonstrated that between 2013 and 2018, as production growth increased, wage growth remained stagnant (Stanford 2018). For the climate change case, secondary data demonstrated that the country's 2019 economic losses from climate change related to weather events amounted to "\$3.7 billion" (Zhang et al. 2020, p.492.e7). These losses highlighted a limitation of Government's economic policy giving precedence to economic growth while not taking substantive action to adapt and mitigate climate change. Other research has also found that the *Occupy Movement* and

the *Arab Spring* in the 2010s were formed as resistances to political economic conditions, that were characterised by neoliberalism globally, and in the Middle East (della Porta 2015; Gillan 2020). This is due to given governments' failure to provide social safety nets despite rises in unemployment, inflation, and wage stagnation (della Porta 2015). Therefore, the neoliberal political economic conditions seemed to have led to institutional structures that did not support vulnerable workers or enable climate action.

Structures

Connected with the political economic conditions are the structures, which in both case studies are based on *neoliberalism*. The dominance of neoliberalism in the political economic conditions seemed to have translated into institutional structures that provided little protection for the rights of workers, in relation to the precarious work case, and limited substantive climate action by the Federal Government, in terms of the climate change case. Specifically, in the precarious work case, the federal regulatory system failed to protect vulnerable workers by having criminal penalties, for deliberate and dishonest underpayment of wages and entitlements. The *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) 2017* (Cth) only provided civil penalties for wage theft, and the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth) only applied to companies whose annual turnover exceeded \$100 million. Likewise, in the climate change case, neoliberalism seemed to have translated to institutional structures that limited the country's ability to achieve the *Paris Agreement's* 1.5 degrees Celsius target. Additionally, Section 487 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (the EPBC Act) gave activists some ability to file civil proceedings in the Federal Court if they could demonstrate that the Environment Minister did not consider the negative impact a project would have on the flora and fauna. There is also an indication that Aboriginal communities who have a strong connection with the land, are not included in the formulating policies on the mitigation and adaptation to climate change (Belfer, Ford & Maillet 2017). Social activism in a neoliberal environment is consistent with prior research (Bartley 2003), which has demonstrated its presence in neoliberal settings where there is limited government regulation on labour and environmental issues. The limited protection offered by the structures in both cases is an impetus for social activism to protect vulnerable workers and the natural environment.

In addition to the institutional structures shaping social activism, they also shape the actions of companies. In the precarious work case, the complexity of the industrial relations system was prominently discussed by the business owners and industry associations as a challenge that they encountered. The finding matches with an Australian qualitative research by Kellner et al. (2016) whose participants highlighted the complexity of the industrial relations system. For the climate change case, the companies stated that they responded to the minimalist climate change policy through private regulation such as *B-Corporation* certification. This is consistent with the findings of Bartley (2003) on neoliberalism being an impetus for companies' private regulation and Kumar et al (2020) on companies responding to regulation coercively based on DiMaggio and Powell (1983)'s Neo-institutional theory.

Culture (Predominant Habitus or Predominant Institutional Logics)

The underpinning principles that can explain culture or demonstrate the predominant *habitus* or predominant institutional logic seem to be *collectivism* in the precarious work case, and *short-term orientation* in the climate change case. In the precarious work case, the findings highlight the right to organise held by both workers through unions, and employers through industry associations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth). Worthy of highlighting is that Hofstede's empirically validated cultural dimensions demonstrated that Australia has a very high level of individualism, in the sense that people look out mainly for themselves and their families (Hofstede 2011; Hofstede Insights 2021). The finding that the precarious work case culture is underpinned by neoliberalism is supported by Australia's industrial relations literature (e.g. Sheldon & Thornthwaite 2020; Snell & Gekara 2020). In the case study, collectivism was the basis on which the advocacy groups were formed, in terms of the right to associate as well as a goal for advocacy groups that were campaigning for the rights of precarious workers, or the collective well-being. As a goal this would entail ensuring that the *habitus* or institutional logic associated with collectivism is upheld.

In the climate change case, the findings demonstrated some prominence of long-term orientation among the interviewees, specifically in relation to intergenerational equity, systems thinking, and Aboriginal knowledge. This view was held by the activists, and managers in companies that blended market and social welfare institutional logics. A contrasting view that emphasis should be

placed on generating economic value when considering the environmental and social impacts of actions such as coal mining, was also found. This short-term view appeared to be held by mining companies and one large financial company. The short-term view also appeared to be held by the powerholders who had the dominant *habitus* or institutional *logic*. Literature corroborates the short-term view held by powerholders in Australia (Crowley 2017; Wright & Nyberg 2017). Social activists pursuing climate action are therefore seeking a change in the dominant *habitus* or institutional logics such that there can be greater alignment with principles such as intergenerational equity, systems thinking, and Aboriginal knowledge.

While the underpinning cultural dimensions in the two cases are different, the findings indicate that in both cases, culture was an impetus for social activism. These findings are consistent with research (Almeida & Chase-Dunn 2018), which indicates that social movements can develop due to cultural issues such as immigration. For example, not only can social activism arise due to progressive activists supporting the rights of immigrants, but it can also develop when nationalist and conservative groups are opposed to immigration and globalisation (Almeida & Chase-Dunn 2018).

Deprivation and Resonance

Other factors that can be catalysts for social movements are deprivation and resonance (Smelser 1962, McAdam 2017). In the precarious work case, structural deprivation is prominent given its indication in the workers' descriptions of the precarity in their jobs based on uncertainty, unfair wages, and the associated risk if one is an independent contractor. Campaigning for their rights such as through a union or a mobilised informal group, was however not a critical aspect for the interviewed precarious workers. In contrast, based on documentary evidence, intergenerational equity and climate action seemed a critical aspect for young people who were part of the *School Strike for Climate* movement (Marris 2019). Social Movement theory explains that deprivation and the resonance of an issue with the public can be catalysts for a social movement (Smelser 1962; Walker & Pettigrew 1984). However, deprivation did not seem to be a reason for the precarious workers to campaign for their rights. A reason for the difference in the two cases might be that for young workers, precarious work is institutionalised, which is consistent with a review of literature on precarity in a British setting, that highlighted that young workers viewed precarious

work as a “new norm” (Alberti et al. 2018, p.451). With the workers viewing it as a *new norm*, it would seemingly be part of their *habitus*, while in the climate change case, young people would view climate action as a critical issue such that they campaign against a predominant short-term *habitus*.

Stakeholder Relationships

Stakeholder relationships is the fifth contextual factor in the analytical framework, and in both cases, there are indications of tensions in the *fields*. In the precarious work case study, the tensions pertained to the activist groups including the unions, franchisees, and franchisors on one end, and the industry associations and government on another end. The tensions between the activist groups, industry associations and government were based on tussles between collectivism and neoliberalism. The tensions between the franchisors seemed to be based on the structure of the relationship. In the climate change case, there seemed to be tensions between the progressive civil society and Traditional Owners on one end, and business, the conservative civil society, and government on the opposite end, with the tensions being based on long-term versus short term orientations. The tensions are represented in Figure 9.2.

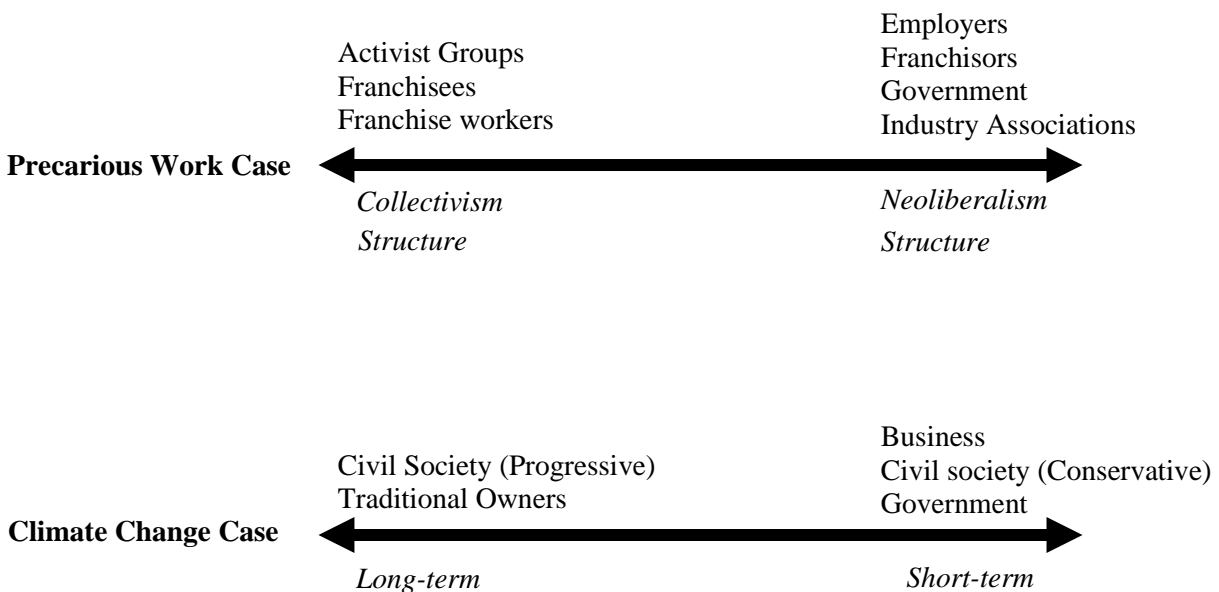


Figure 9.2: Representation of Tensions Between the Stakeholders

The tensions also seemed to be evident in the social actors' mobilisation of political capital with the groups on the right side of the continuum, such as employers in the precarious work case and business in the climate change case, seeking to maintain political capital. These social actors would want the political economic conditions and structures to remain focusing on the economic dimension, and consequently short-term interests. The social actors on the left of the continuum were seeking to increase their political capital to enable actions that aligned with a culture underpinned by collective values and that considered long-term impacts, such as in terms of intergenerational equity. As the tussle between maintaining and gaining political capital persisted, social activism by groups such as trade unions and progressive social movement organisations were enabled. This is consistent with management theorists Briscoe and Gupta (2016) who, in their review of literature on the influence of social activism and business, indicated that the tension between the two groups was an impetus for social activism. Empirical research has also indicated the presence of this tension between business and stakeholders. For example, Nyberg, Wright and Kirk (2018), basing their research on British data, found tension between the energy sector and anti-fracking advocacy groups. Likewise, Murray and Nyberg (2020) found tension between Australian mining companies and the then Rudd Labor Government in the implementation of a *Resource Super Profits Tax*, which was abandoned when the Gillard Labor Government took over. Despite the indication of the power of Australia's mining sector, the stance taken by the Labor Government also highlighted that the tensions between social actors in *fields* were not static but rather fluid, as Bourdieu's Power theory explains (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). That is, the Government's position has not always been based on short-term interests.

Summation of the Context

In summation, political capital, which is a source of power, shapes the political economic conditions and consequently the institutional structures. These contextual factors, together with stakeholder relationships, are drivers of social activism. With the regulations being a subset of institutional structures, they also seemed to shape the actions of companies. Moreover, the stakeholder relationships seemed to shape the mobilisation of power capital, and the tensions between the stakeholders, which were grounds for social activism. These interactions are illustrated in Figure 9.3.

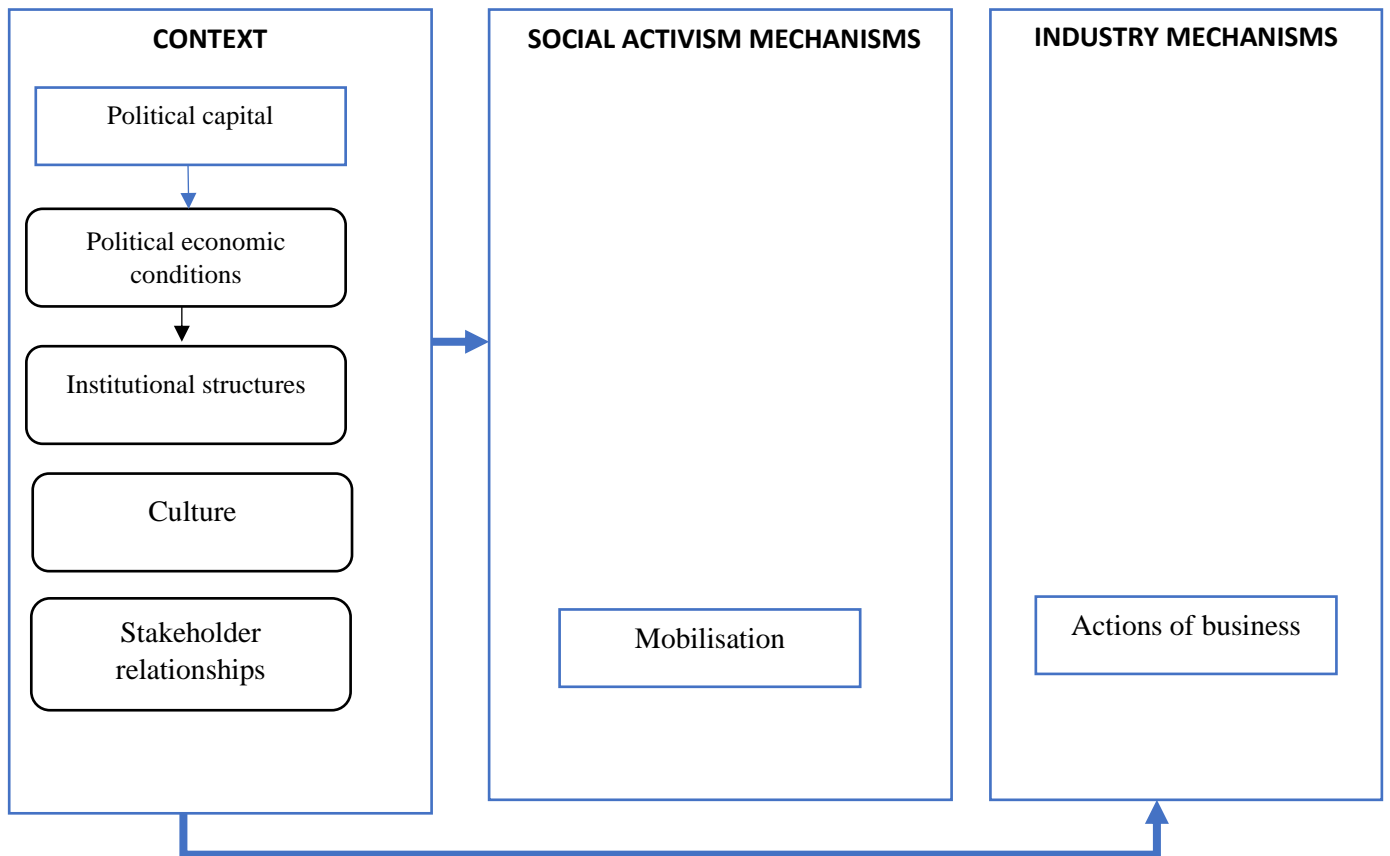


Figure 9.3: Contextual Factors Cross-Case Analysis

Mechanisms

The social mechanisms in the analytical framework presented in Figure 9.1 are *framing*, *mobilising political capital*, *mobilising structures*, and *tactics*. The mechanisms pertaining to businesses and industry associations are *proactive actions*, *reactive responses*, *legitimacy*, or *social licence*, and *stakeholder salience*.

Social Activism Mechanisms

Framing

The framing references in the two cases had the same goal, which was to provide hope that, through a collective identity, the associated issues can be redressed. In the precarious work case, the framing references pertained to morality and power inequalities, whereas in the climate change work case they pertained to intergenerational equity, evidence-based claims, and the protection of

Aboriginal culture. Specifically, in the precarious work case, wage theft, which was a framing reference based on morality, was seemingly used to describe a systemic issue that could be addressed through a collective identity. Likewise, the use of a framing reference highlighting the income disparity between senior executives of corporations, who were referred to as “fat cats”, and the working population (Refer to Figure 5.2 in Chapter 5) also seemed to have been used to highlight a systemic issue that could be addressed as a collective. In the climate change case, intergenerational equity was a framing reference that aimed to preserve the ecosystem for future generations. Evidence-based claims were also used as a framing reference, seemingly to project credibility, which would enable mobilisation of resources. In a similar vein, protection of Aboriginal culture seemed to have been used to describe unethical conduct by companies when their negative externalities had an impact on the Aboriginal communities. Despite the differences in the framing references, the aim of each framing reference seemed to be to enable mobilisation of resources.

The findings on framing and its relationship with mobilisation are consistent with Social Movement theory. Specifically, based on theory and empirical research, framing enables mobilisation by providing the audience that a social movement seeks to convince, with the diagnosis of an issue and a prognosis that offers a possible solution (Hervieux & Voltan 2018; Smelser 1962). In both the precarious work and climate change case, the diagnosis was demonstrated by the framing references, and the prognosis in both cases included substantive changes to the associated political economic conditions and institutional structures, which are both underpinned by neoliberalism.

Mobilising

With mobilising being the second social activism mechanism in the analytical framework, in both cases it was done to gain political capital. The types of capital that were mobilised were economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational, and social (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). In both cases, economic capital, which gave the activists the financial resources to undertake their operations were mobilised through donations, membership fees and consultation fees. Institutional capital that provided the activists with the power to determine the rules in their *fields* was mobilised as the activist groups aimed to change the *institutional structures*. Knowledge capital, which

consisted of the information that the activists could use to exercise their power, determined the *activism tactics*, and seemed to be useful in *framing*. Specifically, in the precarious work case, information on surveyed members of a union and the public, assisted the union in *framing* a campaign on wages and employment arrangements that were fair for all workers. Moreover, in the climate change case, the use of informants by activists assisted in the development of *activism tactics* targeted at a mining company. Reputational capital or credibility was earned following successes in mobilising participants or generating positive returns following the activists' advocacy. Social capital provided the activists with networks through which they aimed to gain *institutional capital*. For example, a tripartite group was formed in the precarious work case between a trade union, an industry association and government, for reforms to Australia's industrial relations system. Likewise, in the climate change case a partnership was formed between a social movement organisation and customers of a financial company, to exert pressure on the company to divest from fossil fuels. As a summation, an aim of mobilising for political capital was to change *institutional structures*. In addition mobilisation also influenced *activism tactics*, and the *framing* process.

The findings in terms of mobilising political capital are consistent with extant research. Specifically, like Yaziji and Doh (2013) found, progressive social activists encountered constraints in mobilising resources. By mobilising political capital, they tried to overcome constraints and bring about changes to institutional structures. These structures were underpinned by conservative ideologies that favour the economy over the social and environmental dimensions. Moreover, other research by Akchurin & Lee (2013) demonstrates that social networks, especially inter-organisational alliances such as the tripartite group in the precarious work case, enable social actors to gain institutional capital needed to generate changes in a *field*.

Formal Mobilising Structures and Informal Groups

While political capital was mobilised in both cases, there was a difference in the type of structures used. Resource Mobilisation theory, as a sub-set of Social Movement theory explains that social movement organisations (SMOs) provide formal structures through which resources can be mobilised, with informal structures such as social networks also being a mobilising structure (Chuang, Church & Hu 2018; McCarthy & Zald 1977). In the precarious work case, mobilisation

seemed only to be enabled through formal structures, which included unions, a whistleblowing consultancy, and charities. None of the precarious workers interviewed stated that they were members of a formal mobilising structure, such as a trade union. While the formal mobilising structures would reduce the costs incurred by an activist, for trade unions, the deductions from workers, that the unions needed for their operations seemed to have deterred the interviewed casual workers from registering with a union.

In contrast, in the climate change case, while there have been formal structures such as the SMOs seeking climate action, there were individuals or informal groups that were part of the climate change movement such as an interviewed Aboriginal activist. Based on secondary data (Marris 2019), participants in the *School Strike for Climate* movement seemed to be in informal groups. The findings from the interview and secondary data suggest that formal mobilising structures and informal groups enabled the mobilisation of capital, which is consistent with prior research (Chuang, Church & Hu 2018). The findings also suggest that the mobilising structures shaped activism tactics in terms of seemingly generating a wide range of activism tactics that targeted businesses.

Tactics

The climate change case had a more diverse range of activism tactics than the precarious work case. The activism tactics used in the climate change case included protest rallies, civil proceedings, private dialogue, shareholder activism, lock-on protests, secondary boycotts, online petitions, educational seminars, and activists' artwork tactics. In the precarious work case, the tactics included protest rallies, civil proceedings, private dialogue, and media influence. Informal groups in the climate change case used tactics such as activists locking themselves onto the machinery of their targets to disrupt operations and potentially threaten the reputation of the targeted business, and the use of creative skills to persuade government officials of the merits of their demands. The indication is that in addition to formal mobilising structures, informal groups generated inclusivity and consequently a diverse range of tactics. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that a combination of persuasive and disruptive tactics could be used by activists. For example, a whistleblowing consultancy in the precarious work case used private dialogue initially, and when the businesses were defiant to the firm's demands, resorted to contacting the media to

expose the actions of businesses involved in wage underpayments. Likewise, in the climate change case, a social movement organisation used private dialogue to engage with companies on their climate action strategies, and if the companies were not conciliatory to their demands, then the SMO filed a shareholder resolution. The findings demonstrated that activists could oscillate between persuasive and disruptive tactics, with a possible determinant being the legitimacy of a targeted business, with the activists using the legitimacy as leverage for their demands. This finding pertained to large-sized businesses but not the small businesses. The finding matches with the precarious work case and with an American study by Eesley and Lenox (2016), which found that disruptive tactics such as protests and boycotts generated considerable media attention, and the tactics threatened the reputation of the companies targeted by activists.

In addition, Briscoe and Gupta (2016)'s theoretical framework asserts that persuasive and disruptive tactics are determined by activists' resource dependence. There is some support for this proposition based on the findings from the two cases. Specifically, none of the activists and advocacy groups were dependent on their targeted organisations for the resources that they mobilised. Therefore, none of the participants' resources or capital would be directly impacted by disruptive tactics on their targets. Noteworthy is that the two charities in the precarious work case, and the conservative think tank in the climate change were autonomous in relation to their resource dependence on their targets. They only used private dialogue and civil proceedings as persuasive tactics. A reason for their consistent use of persuasive tactics might be the culture and political economic conditions. Specifically, the charities are underpinned by principles of collaboration and cooperation, in alignment with collectivism that seemed to underpin the precarious work case. The indication is that the collective values were the predominant *habitus* for the charities in the precarious work case. For the conservative think tank, it espoused a libertarianism ideology, which favours key elements of neoliberalism such as the free market and deregulation.

Summation of Social Activism Mechanisms

In summation, framing enabled mobilising of political capital, with the aim of mobilising capital seemingly being to change institutional structures. An example of framing was the "fat cats" reference was used by unions pursuing a living wage for all Australian workers. Moreover, mobilising capital evidently determined the activism tactics, and appeared to shape framing. This

is demonstrated by informants of a SMO who assisted in developing tactics targeted at a mining company. Mobilising structures also shaped the mobilisation of capital, and shaped the range of activism tactics, with informal groups in the climate change case using a wide range of activism tactics such as lock-on protests. The tactics seemed to be determined by resource dependence as well as contextual factors, specifically the culture and political economic conditions. Due to activists' seemingly low resource dependence on the targeted organisations, they could use disruptive tactics, but the charities in the precarious case and the conservative think tank in the climate change case only used persuasive tactics. This seemed to be based on a collectivism values for the charities, and a libertarian ideology for the conservative think tank. The interaction of these factors is illustrated in Figure 9.4.

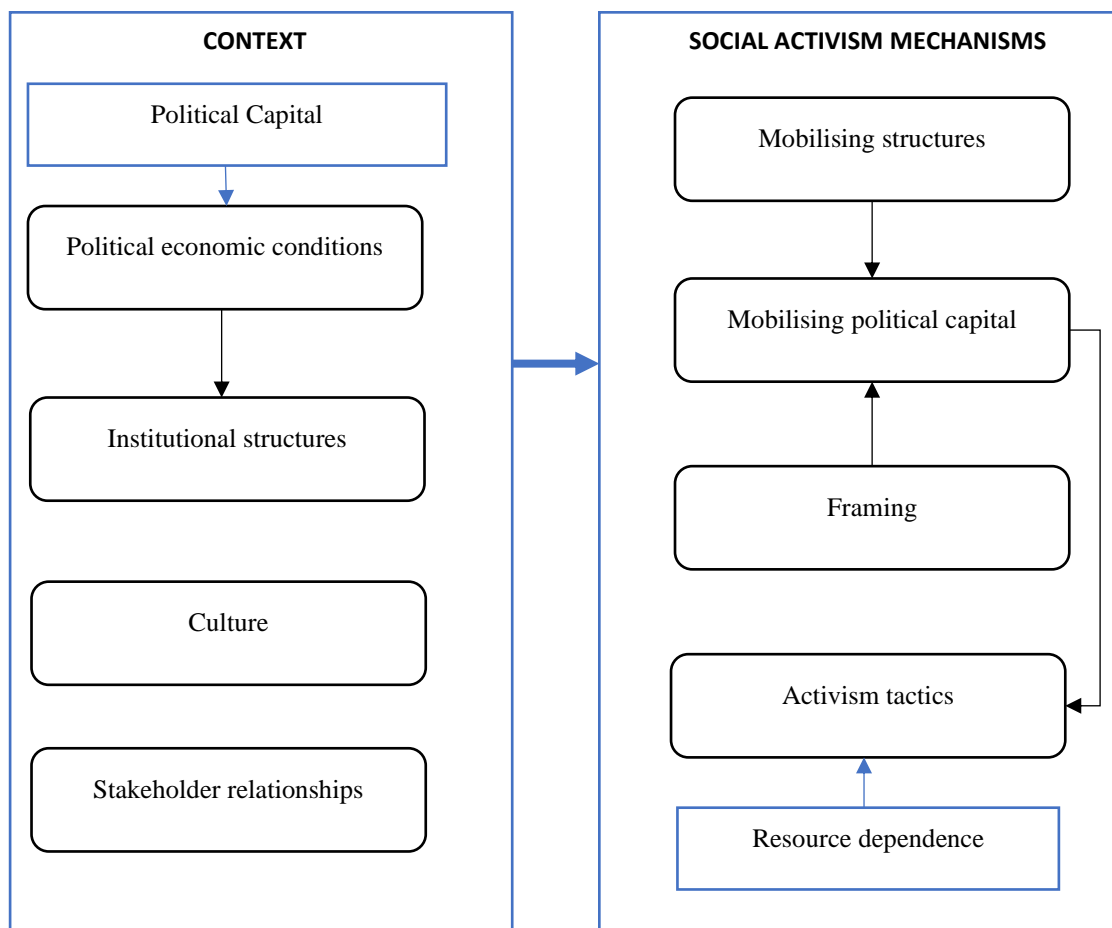


Figure 9.4: Social Activism Mechanisms Cross-Case Analysis

Industry Mechanisms

Proactive Actions

The proactive actions by companies included *blending institutional logics* and *earning a social licence* for the climate change case. For the precarious work case, the proactive actions by businesses and industry associations were *dissociating* and *partnering*.

Blending Institutional Logics

Blending market and social welfare logics, which entails a company integrating its profit-seeking goal with the environmental and/or social value that it is generating (Pache & Santos 2013), was only evident in the climate change case based on the context. Companies that used this mechanism in the climate change case were purposively formed based on reconciling the economic, social, and environmental dimensions. However, no business in the precarious work case was established based on the triple bottom line principle. Noteworthy is that blending institutional logics differs from decoupling of institutional logics. In decoupling, businesses separate their operations from the prescribed structures; thereby the environmental or social value that they project to their stakeholders is purely for symbolic reasons (Scott 2008). An example of blending market and social welfare institutional logics from the interview data included an impact investing financial company whose aim is to provide investors with a platform to generate environmental and/or social value as well as a financial return. Likewise was a manufacturing company whose products are reusable, which contributed towards a circular economy. Companies that blended institutional logics seemed to have done so to project legitimacy. The companies projected their legitimacy based on their operations that not only focussed on the pecuniary aspects, but also environmental and social concerns; as well as their environmental, social and governance certification, specifically, *B-Corporation* certification. Blending institutional logics to project legitimacy is supported by empirical research that was based on French social enterprises, which found that the firms blended the two logics to project their legitimacy (Pache & Santos 2013).

In terms of social activism, proactively blending market and social welfare logics seemed to be beneficial for not only the businesses in projecting their legitimacy, but also for social movements in furthering their goals. Specifically, the four companies that blended the two institutional logics were members of the *Not Business as Usual* alliance and they overtly supported the *School Strike*

for Climate movement. Empirically, an American study found that Fortune 500 companies overtly joined social movements to repair their reputation (McDonnell 2016). There were no indications that the four companies analysed for the thesis, which are smaller in size than Fortune 500 companies, had tarnished reputations. Moreover, none of the large companies analysed for this thesis was a member of the *Not Business as Usual* alliance. It might seem like a paradox how a for-profit organisation could reconcile the diverging institutional logics through joining such an alliance. However, it has been argued that such businesses “frame away” the paradoxical tensions between seemingly divergent institutional logics and instead view market and social welfare as part of the mission of such businesses (Child 2020, p.1155). This argument is consistent with findings in which representatives from the four businesses stated that generating environmental and social value/or was an intrinsic element of their businesses.

Earning a Social Licence

Earning a social licence to operate was the second proactive action which was evident in the operations of the two mining companies in the climate change case. While a legal licence to operate is static, a business must earn its social licence from its community, and the acceptance and approval given by the community does vary over time depending on how the business engages with it as a stakeholder (Hall et al. 2015). In the climate change case, the companies were involved in employment engagement programs with their local communities including Traditional Owners. The interviewed managers that represented these two mining companies indicated that these programs were not in response to activism pressures but seemingly carried out more so out of the volition of the company’s decision-makers. These engagement programs therefore appeared to have been done pre-emptively to mitigate negative externalities that potentially arose from their mining operations. Moreover, a representative of an engineering company indicated that due to the duration of their contracts, the company, and the sector, did not proactively invest in a similar program that would generate environmental value, specifically one to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The construction contracts were approximately three years, which was considerably shorter than the duration of a mining project. Therefore, the indication from the findings is as the mining companies sought to mitigate corporate negative externalities on the community, they proactively tried to earn a social licence. The corporate actions were therefore shaped by legitimacy. This is consistent with prior research that indicates that companies in stigmatised

sectors can proactively engaged with their communities to manage their legitimacy (Aqueveque, Rodrigo & Duran 2018).

Dissociating

Another proactive action is in relation to organisations *proactively* dissociating from other organisations in their sector that had been implicated in unethical and/or illegal actions. Specifically, it was only in the precarious work case that three business owners and an industry association proactively dissociated from other businesses in their franchising, hospitality, and pharmaceuticals retail sectors that had been involved in wage theft. One of the owners distanced and dissociated his franchise from other franchises because he said it was important for prospective investors. Two other business owners distanced and dissociated themselves from their sectors on the basis that at a personal level they were fair and ethical people, as well as employers who would not risk their legitimacy by exploiting their workers. For the industry association which represents the franchising sector, its CEO stated that wage theft was not unique to the sector but rather a business-wide issue. The indication from the CEO's statement was that it was important for the public, specifically future investors, to be aware that wage theft was not unique to franchising. These findings on dissociating highlight the actions by businesses and an industry association in *stigmatised sectors*. Prior research has shown that following media attacks on a sector, particularly the arms trade, investors often divest from the stigmatised sector to distance and dissociate themselves from the sector (Durand & Vergne 2015). Threats to the legitimacy of the organisations in stigmatised sectors appeared to be an underpinning reason for the organisations to distance and dissociate themselves from stigmatised businesses in their sectors.

Partnering

Partnering was another proactive action evident in the precarious work case. The partnerships included first a collaboration between a union and large businesses; second, a collaboration between franchisors and franchisees; and third, a tripartite group. First, due to the collaboration, the indication is that the workers in larger companies were in enterprise agreements that failed the *better off overall test* (BOOT), which required them to be in a *better off* position under the agreement than an associated Award. Seemingly, based on interview data and newspaper reports, the large businesses co-opted the trade union to reduce wage costs. The large businesses were

exercising power by co-opting the union, hence indicating that political capital shaped this proactive action. Similar forms of co-opting have been identified in the literature; an example is Schneiberg (2013) who found, based on American data, that companies threatened by activist groups blocked them by denying them access to valuable resources. In both instances the companies were the powerholders. In the second partnership, franchisors proactively co-opted franchisees by offering them benefits such as reduced franchise costs. This was apparently done pre-emptively to protect a franchised company's reputation prior to investigations on wage underpayments by one of the activist groups. This collaboration seemed to have been to protect the legitimacy of the company. The third partnership, a tripartite group formed between industry, union, and government representative has been seeking industrial relations reforms. The indication is that the partnership was formed to enhance institutional capital required for reforms to the institutional structures. That is, institutional capital enables social actors to determine the rules in their sectors (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020); therefore, the parties that formed a partnership, enhanced their institutional capital, and consequently the likelihood of reforming the structures was greater than when a single social actor was attempting to make changes.

Legitimacy

Legitimacy was central to the proactive actions by businesses and industry associations; it involves stakeholders making continuous judgement calls on the business and its operations, in terms of whether they approve of them and are willing to accept them. Legitimacy is therefore not something that a business can hold on to, but rather, what the stakeholders can provide based on their assessment of its activities. Businesses will therefore try to gain the approval and acceptance of stakeholders that they consider to be powerful at a given point in time. This is consistent with Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997)'s stakeholder salience framework, which extends on Freeman (1984)'s Stakeholder theory that views the impacts of stakeholders on businesses and vice-versa. The stakeholders that granted legitimacy to the businesses in the two cases included investors, financiers, insurers, civil society, government, and the community.

Moreover, legitimacy can be viewed based on Suchman (1995)'s framework, which posits that legitimacy is based firstly, on it being *moral*, meaning that the approval and acceptance that an organisation seeks from a stakeholder is based on morality; secondly, on it being *pragmatic*, such

that the legitimacy is determined by the self-interest of the stakeholder, and what the stakeholder gains from the organisation; and thirdly, on it being *cognitive*, where the organisation aims to be seen by its audience as a necessity. Suchman (1995)'s framework has similarities with Bourdieu's Power theory. Specifically, like Bourdieu's view that social actors are self-interest driven (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992), *pragmatic legitimacy* is based on the self-interest of the stakeholders. In addition, habitus is conceptualised as consisting of dispositions that are unconsciously enacted (Bourdieu 1993), which is similar to *cognitive legitimacy*, being that an organisation, due to it being necessary, is taken for granted.

In terms of the businesses that had acted proactively in the two cases, the businesses that blended market and social welfare logics seemed to be seeking moral legitimacy from investors, workers, and the community. The businesses that tried to earn a social licence seemed to be do so based on *pragmatic* and *cognitive* legitimacy in that through the employment engagements, the local community would recognise the value the mining company generated to them as workers, and consequently, acknowledging that having the mining company in the community is necessary. For the franchisor and franchisees in a partnership, as well as the dissociation, by the business owners and the industry association, legitimacy seemed to be based on moral legitimacy as they attempt to protect themselves from wage underpayment issues.

Summation of the Proactive Actions

Blending of the logics seemed to be done to project moral legitimacy; for example, through companies using *B-Corporation* certification to demonstrate their focus on environmental, social and governance aspects. Earning a social licence appeared to be shaped by pragmatic and cognitive legitimacy, as illustrated by mining companies engaging with local communities. Partnering seemed to be formed to generate benefits for the powerful party, as indicated by large businesses co-opting a union in relation to the BOOT. Partnerships are also formed to project moral legitimacy such as franchisors co-opting franchisees to provide favourable portrayals to activist groups, and to gain institutional capital to change the institutional structures, as the work done by the tripartite group. Proactive dissociation also seemed to be done to project moral legitimacy such as business owners in stigmatised sectors distancing and dissociating from other businesses in the sector which were involved in wage theft. An illustration of these interactions is presented in Figure 9.5.

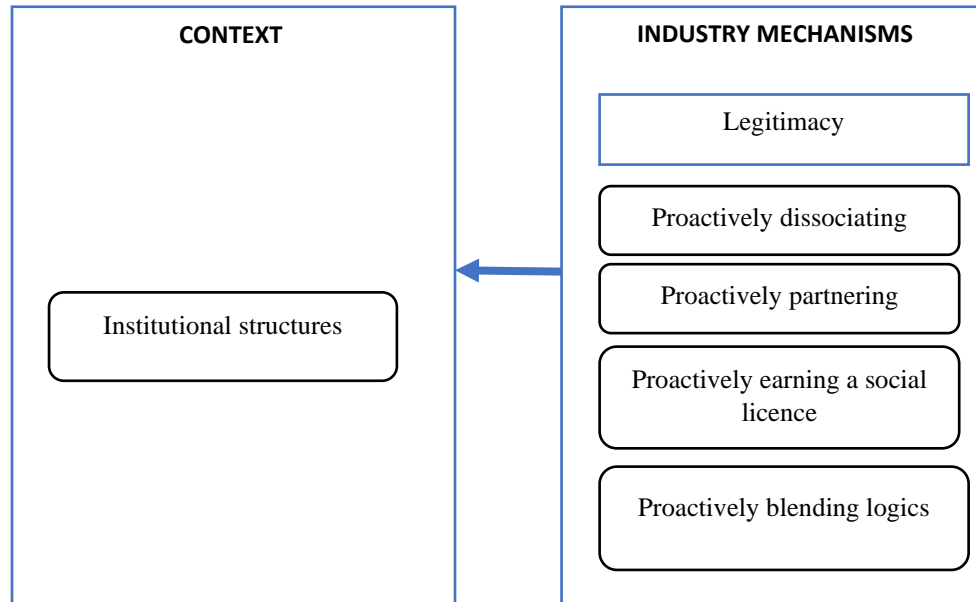


Figure 9.5: Proactive Actions Cross-Case Analysis

Reactive Responses

Defying

Defying is one of the reactive responses to activism pressures. In the precarious work case, an illustration of defiance is in relation to a large retail business refusing a union's demands to set aside enterprise agreements that had not been updated for several years, which consequently failed the BOOT. Likewise, industry associations also defied pressures from unions and charities calling for increases to the national minimum wage rate on the basis that the small businesses that they represent would not be able to sustain the increase in wage costs. In the climate change case, a financial company defied divestment pressures because it was in the interests of its customers. According to the company's 2019 climate risk report, it was "not an activist fund" but "a pragmatic fund". Evidently, pragmatic legitimacy seemed to be a basis for defiance as a reactive response. The industry association's pragmatic legitimacy was determined by the interests of the small businesses which, as the interviewees from the industry associations stated, represented a significant proportion of Australia's businesses. The justification for the financial company which, besides stating that it is a *pragmatic fund* in response to a call by activists' groups to divest from fossil fuels, stated that it was a fiduciary of the interests of its customers. Prior research has found that pragmatic legitimacy is associated with the economic dimension while moral legitimacy tends

to focus more on morality based on the social and environmental dimensions (Corciolani, Gistri & Pace 2019). The economic dimension had been a focus of the three organisations in their justifications for defiance to activism pressures. Therefore, pragmatism as a determinant of defiance is further reinforced.

Stakeholder Salience

Stakeholder salience was another reason for the defiance to institutional pressures. As highlighted earlier in this chapter, Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997)'s stakeholder salience framework is closely aligned with legitimacy. Business managers base their decisions on the effect stakeholders' actions have on their legitimacy of the business, the power of the stakeholder(s), and the urgency of their demand. In relation to the interview data, for one of the mining companies that has been constructing a coal mine, it has had a wide range of activists that have targeted it, and activism tactics that have been used. A manager at the mining company who was interviewed stated that given the wide range of activists and other stakeholders, the company only factored in those who were seemingly salient based on their power. The manager used a metaphor that some activists were like "grass" while others were like "a tree", with the indication being that, using political capital as a measure, the more established, and potentially more powerful, would receive the decision-makers' attention. Therefore, defiance was determined by stakeholder salience, of which a key element is political capital.

Consistent with the findings are research studies that demonstrated that responses by business to stakeholder pressures is influenced by stakeholder salience (Cundill, Smart & Wilson 2018; Kim & Youm 2017), and that pragmatism (Fassin, de Colle & Freeman 2017; Ptashnick & Zuberi 2015) influence the responses by businesses to stakeholder pressures. Moreover, more recent research based on a mining company in Tanzania, which focused on *organisational stigma*, found that the mining company acted pragmatically by dissociating and distancing itself from its negative externalities, as it attempted to repair its legitimacy (Lauwo, Kyriacou & Otusanya 2020), which also highlights a reactive and defiant response by the business.

Conceding

Conceding was another reactive response to activism pressures. An example of a business that conceded in the precarious work case was a franchised retail company that had initially defied pressures from an activist group to address wage underpayment issues in its franchises. The company, however, conceded to the activists' demands, shortly after an exposé on wage theft in the franchise was aired on television and published in newspapers. In the climate change case, an engineering company conceded to activism pressures by withdrawing from a contract with a mining company that had been the primary target of the secondary boycotting tactic. The engineering company has been consistently receiving sustainability and industry awards for the period before it terminated its contract with the mining company, and in the period after, which indicates that maintaining its legitimacy was important to the company. These findings are consistent with prior research that has demonstrated that businesses have responded to institutional pressures, particularly social activism, to protect their legitimacy (Bartley & Child 2014; Carberry et al. 2019; King 2008; Soule, Swaminathan & Tihanyi 2014). Specifically, the businesses appeared to have conceded to activism pressures to protect their moral legitimacy. Their concern seemed to have been on whether the businesses would be perceived by their stakeholders including customers, business partners, and the community, as being ethical, which indicates a cultural dimension. According to a manager of the engineering company, the reason that the company withdrew its contract with the mining company which was constructing a coal mine was to ensure that its business practices were aligned with its clients. As such, it used moral legitimacy as the basis for the concession to activism pressures. Moral legitimacy therefore seems to shape a reactive conciliatory decision by businesses.

Summation of the Reactive Responses

In summation, the indication is that pragmatism and stakeholder salience determined whether businesses and industry associations were defiant to activism pressures. Moreover, moral legitimacy, which seemed to be based on the cultural dimension of doing the right thing, shaped the decision by businesses to concede to activism pressures. The interactions of the reactive responses are illustrated in Figure 9.6.

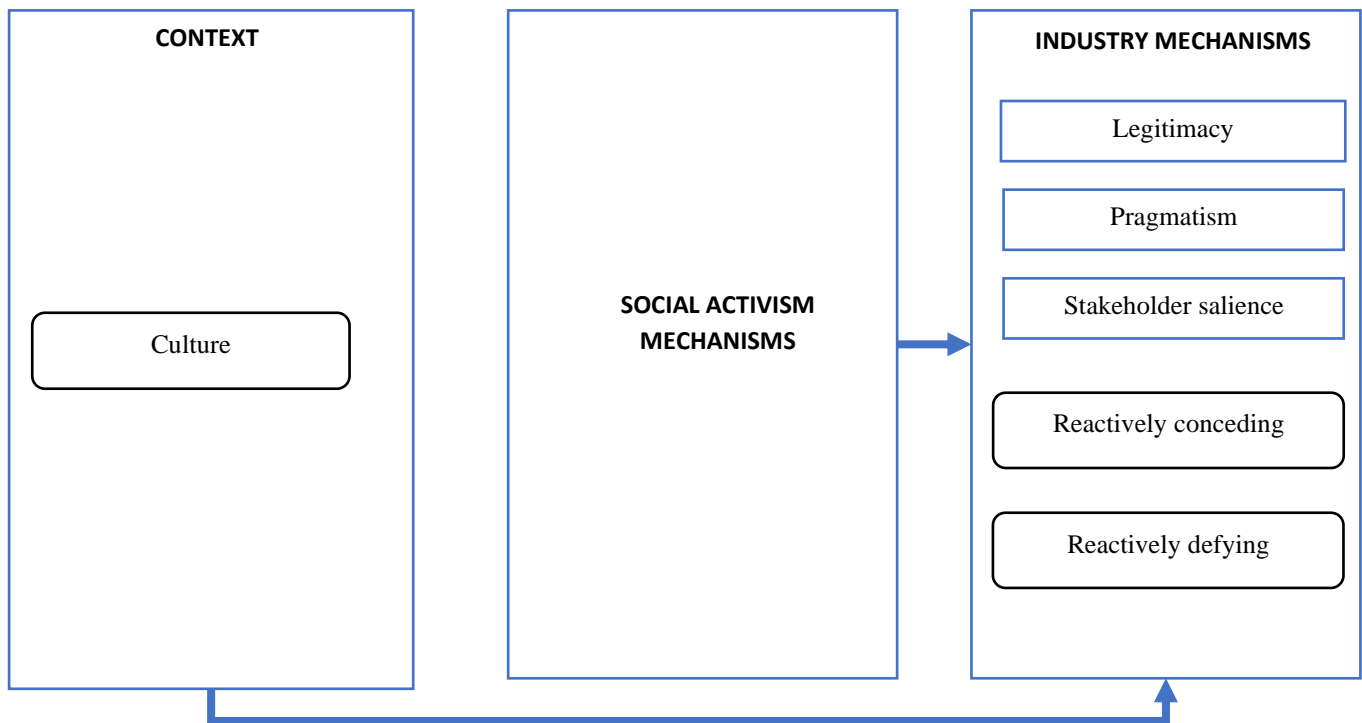


Figure 9.6: Reactive Responses Cross-Case Analysis

Outcomes

In the two case studies, the outcomes are at *individual*, *organisational* and *structural* levels. This section is organised based on these three levels of analysis.

Individual Outcomes

The individual outcomes pertained to received entitlements and agency. Specifically, in the precarious work case, workers received their wage entitlements after businesses conceded to activism pressures. Moreover, for precarious workers, especially workers on temporary visas, there have been no significant changes that decreased their levels of precarity or vulnerability. Demonstrating this, during the COVID-19 pandemic, workers on temporary visas were not eligible for the economic stimulus, *JobKeeper*, and the social safety net, *JobSeeker*, programs (Clibborn & Wright 2020). While Australia's industrial relations system is seemingly based on collectivism, the broader Australian culture is based on individualism (Hofstede 2011; Hofstede Insights 2021), as highlighted earlier in this chapter. In a similar vein, past and current Federal Governments'

primary concern for Australian citizens and permanent residents, is indicative of nationalism and neoliberalism, with the plight of workers on temporary visas being overshadowed by the economic well-being of the country.

In the climate change case, at an individual level, participants described actions that demonstrated agency in relation to climate action. However, similar actions were not described by precarious workers in relation to their rights as workers. The interviewed workers did not seem to have a similar form of agency in relation to their rights as workers. The lack of inaction in the precarious work case might be attributable to the mobilising structures. That is, in the climate change case, formal mobilising structures such as SMOs and informal groups, which included individual activists, were used, which enabled mobilisation to be more inclusive. In the precarious work case, the mobilising structures seemed to be predominantly formal structures such as unions, which required workers to pay a membership fee. An illustration of the individual outcomes and associated factors is presented in Figure 9.7.

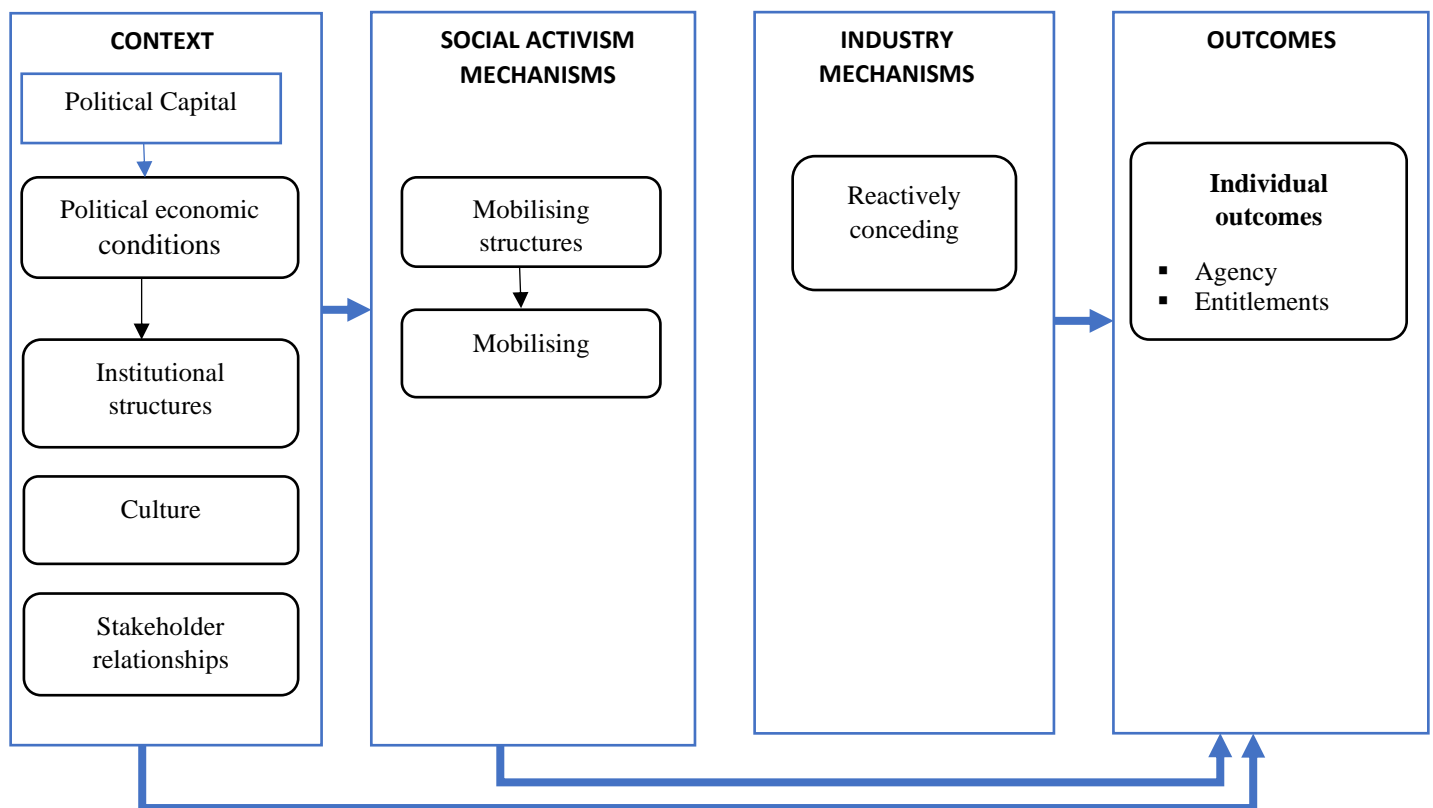


Figure 9.7: Individual Outcomes Cross-Case Analysis

Organisational Outcomes

Legitimacy, Reputational Capital, and Organisational Policy Outcome

The organisational outcomes pertain to changes to legitimacy and organisational policies which, in the precarious work case, threatened moral, pragmatic, and cognitive legitimacy. The share prices of businesses involved in wage underpayments dropped after media exposés, indicating a loss of moral legitimacy based on ethical judgments and pragmatic legitimacy. The legitimacy was dependent on stakeholders reliant on the businesses for financial returns like investors. Stores that have closed after the exposés indicated a loss of cognitive legitimacy in terms of the businesses not being viewed as a necessity. In a similar vein, activist groups involved in generating the exposés activists seemed to have gained reputational capital due to the success of their advocacy, and in turn seemed able to influence actions of businesses. Specifically, the indication is that businesses such as a franchised food restaurant conceded to demands by an activist group based on the reputational capital it possessed from previous successful advocacy work. Policies changes, specifically the implementation of an internal control biometric system to record workers' shifts, was beneficial to individual workers in terms of being paid accurately for their shifts.

Legitimacy Outcome

In the climate change case the changes pertained to legitimacy and corporate policies. Specifically, the legitimacy of a mining company was threatened, as demonstrated by the impact of its financial performance after being targeted by activists. Civil court proceedings had stalled the construction of its coal mine for several years. Moreover, lock-on protests slowed down the mining company's operations, and secondary boycotts resulted in the mining company losing financiers, insurers, and engineering contractors. These impacts seemed to be associated with the company's pragmatic legitimacy in terms of the risk incurred by stakeholders such as financiers who associated with the company given that it seemed to be a stigmatised organisation. The impacts also seemed to be related to cognitive legitimacy, with the company not being viewed as a necessity by activists seeking climate action. These activism pressures were based on intergenerational equity, a facet of the culture, as well as coal mines being unethical, indicating a threat to the moral legitimacy. Stakeholders such as a conservative think tank argued for prominence to be given to the economic benefits of the mine, which is aligned with neoliberalism that underpins the political economic conditions and structures.

Status Quo

Notwithstanding these changes, there was also evidence of the maintenance of the status quo, which pertained to corporate policies. Specifically, activist groups used shareholder activism for climate change issues such as the resolution to incorporate the *Paris Agreement* 1.5 degrees Celsius target in the constitutions of companies. None of the climate change shareholder resolutions were carried in the annual general meetings, as highlighted in Chapter 8. In this case, the lack of change in relation to shareholder activism seemed to reflect a short-term, shareholder model having primacy over a long-term stakeholder model, which is consistent with Young and Marais (2012)'s framework. A short-termism culture is also reflected in the political economic conditions and structures that are underpinned by neoliberalism.

Summation of organisational outcomes

Collectively, the organisational changes are indications that social activism influences businesses. This is consistent with other research studies that have demonstrated that social activism has led to changes in the corporate policies (Roumpi, Giannakis & Delery 2020; Van Cranenburgh, Liket & Roome 2013), internal controls (Islam & van Staden 2018), financial performance (King 2008; Lewis, O'Donovan & Willett 2017), and reputation (Bartley & Child 2014; McDonnell & King 2013). Moreover, the indication is that legitimacy is an organisational outcome that is shaped by moral, pragmatic, and cognitive legitimacy. The findings also suggest that a change to organisational policy shaped the individual outcomes for the workers with the employees receiving their entitlements after changes to the corporate policies. Reputational capital, an organisational outcome for activist groups, shaped businesses' concession. Moreover, activist pressures that threaten companies' legitimacy appear to be shaped by culture and moral legitimacy. The status quo at an organisational level seems to be based on the culture, political economic conditions, and structures. The interaction of these factors is presented in Figure 9.8.

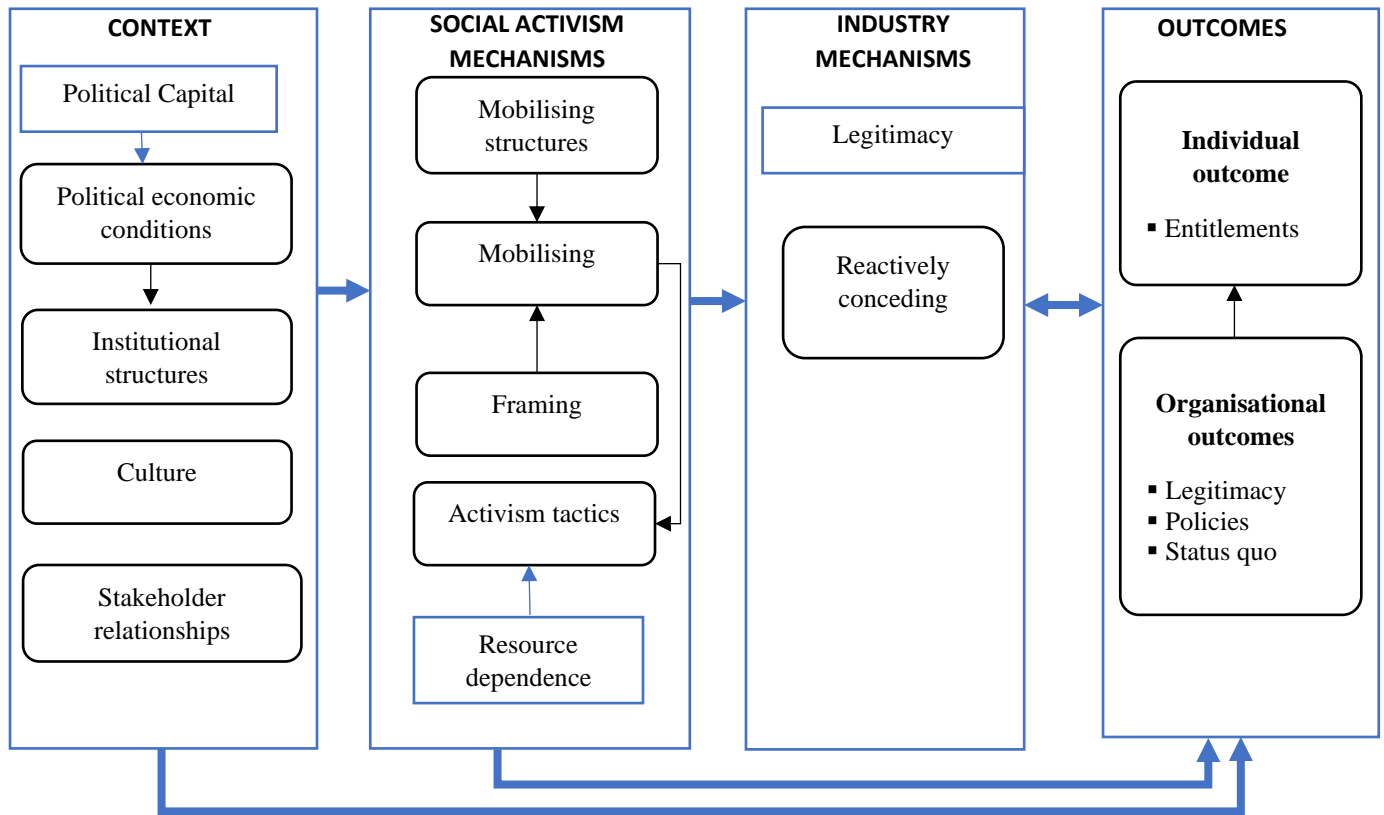


Figure 9.8: Organisational Outcomes Cross-Case Analysis

Structural Outcomes

Status Quo in the Field- Precarious Work Case

In terms of the *field* and *habitus* in the precarious work case, the *field* did not appear to have changed with the tensions between the different stakeholders. There is an indication that the 2020 tripartite group established between a union, industry, and government initially lessened the tensions between stakeholders, but it was not continued. This is supported by the Government's introduction of the *Fair Work Amendment (Supporting Australia's Jobs and Economic Recovery) Bill*, with the main aim being to suspend the use of the BOOT (Stanford 2020), an issue that the union is against. This Bill also demonstrates the predominance of neoliberalism, with precedence given to the economy over the social and environmental dimensions. The predominance of neoliberalism was also supported by the lack of change in relation to basing the national minimum wage rate on a living wage. Therefore, the indication is that the status quo of the structural outcomes was shaped by the political economic conditions and institutional structures that are underpinned by neoliberalism.

Changes to Laws and no Change to Habitus- Precarious Work Case

At a state level, there have been some changes to the industrial relations system with the enactment of the *Wage Theft Act 2020* in Victoria. This legislative change was consistent with the predominant *habitus* that was based on collectivism, given that it sought to protect vulnerable workers. Likewise, at a federal level, the changes in the form of *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) 2017* (Cth), and the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth) also seemed to reflect a culture, that is the predominant *habitus* or predominant institutional logic, that was based on collectivism. The legislative changes in turn became part of the institutional structures in the context.

Status Quo in the Field and no Change to Habitus- Climate Change Case

In the climate change case, there did not seem to have been a change in the *field*. The tensions between the stakeholders were not resolved. The predominant *habitus* with a short-termism focus was also not changed. These assertions are supported by a United Nations report, which stated that, notwithstanding the reduction of emission levels during the COVID-19 pandemic, the world is still not on track to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as per the *Paris Agreement* (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2020). In relation to Australia's climate change policies, the current Federal Government has continued to take a minimalist policy approach to addressing climate change (Crowley, 2017; Hudson 2019). A short-termism culture as well as neoliberal political economic conditions and institutional structures seemed to have enabled the lack of change in the field. Therefore, the status quo seemed to be shaped by the culture, political economic conditions, and structure.

Environmental and Social Value-Climate Change Case

The climate change case findings also indicated that environmental and social value is enabled, at a field-level, by companies blending market and institutional logics. As an illustration, a manufacturing company examined for the climate change case only produced reusable products, and hence contributed to a circular economy, which was beneficial in limiting greenhouse gas emissions and enabling a sustainable society. Likewise, one of the financial companies invested in a renewable energy farm, which also contributed towards environmental and social value. This finding matches with Carberry et al. (2019), who found that their sampled American firms were

contributing to sustainable societies through their implementation of substantive policies that set to reduce greenhouse gas emission levels.

Changes in Mobilisation

In the climate change case, one structural outcome pertains to mobilisation. Specifically, Greta Thunberg's *School Strike for Climate* movement had mobilised young people around a collective identity of intergenerational equity and connected them to form a global community seeking substantive climate action (Boulianne, Lalancette & Ilkiw 2020). Besides the young people, the movement also had allies in the form of the *Not Business as Usual* alliance consisting of businesses from around the world (Not Business as Usual 2019), and SMOs such as SMO3. Evidently, there was a collective identity around this climate change movement, which contrasted with social movement theorist McAdam (2017)'s assertion that the American climate change movement lacked a collective identity. McAdam (2017)'s theoretical paper was however published before the *School Strike for Climate* movement was established, which might explain his assertion. Also noteworthy is that the precarious work movement did not seem to have this level of connection as a global community. The changes to mobilisation seemed to be because of the mobilising structures, especially the mix of informal groups and formal mobilising structures. The indication is that mobilisation as an outcome was shaped by the mobilising structures.

Summation of Structural Outcome

As a summation, the status quo of the structural outcomes was shaped by the culture, political economic conditions, and institutional structures. As an illustration, the status quo seemed to have been because of short-term interests focusing on the economy underpinning the political economic conditions and institutional structure. Changes to the structure, as an outcome, shaped the institutional structures as the context, with an example being the enactment of the wage theft legislation in Victoria becoming part of the institutional structures in the context. Mobilisation seemed to be shaped by mobilising structures such that informal groups and formal mobilising structures were a driving force for the mobilisation of the *School Strike for Climate* movement. An illustration demonstrating the interaction of these factors is presented in Figure 9.9.

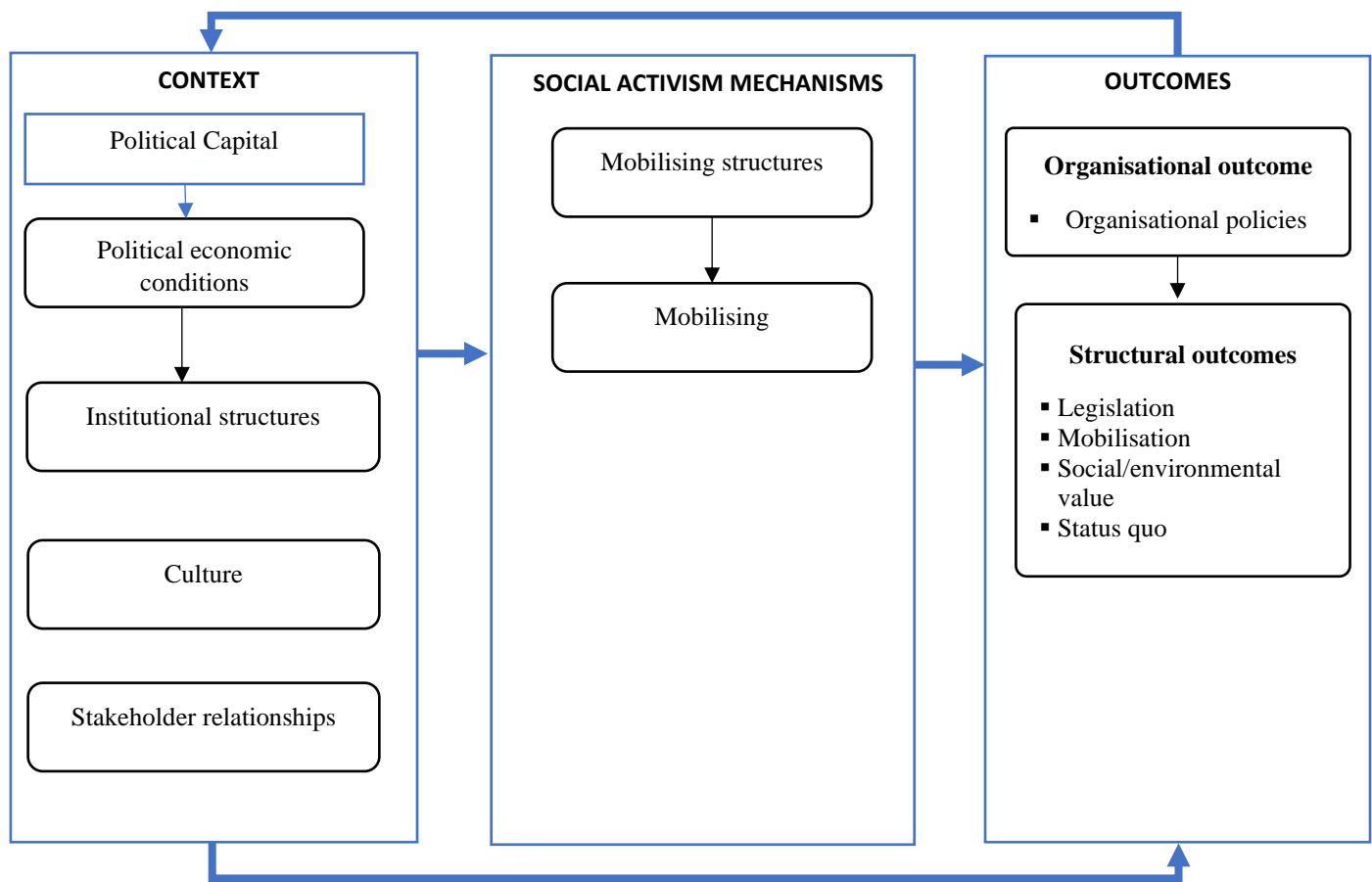


Figure 9.9: Structural Outcomes Cross-Case Analysis

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter aimed to present a cross-case analysis guided by the analytical framework (Refer to Figure 9.1 at the start of this chapter). The analysis of the context demonstrated that political economic conditions, such as the prominence governments gave to economic growth, over the social and environmental dimensions had shaped the institutional structures such that there were inadequate protections for precarious workers and the natural environment. The lack of protections as well as a short-term orientation, culture, and tensions between the stakeholder groups enabled social activism for precarious workers' rights and climate action.

The analysis of the social activism mechanisms demonstrated that framing references such as “fat cats”, as has been used by unions, enabled the mobilisation of political capital, which is a source of power. In this vein, knowledge on the targeted organisation was found to be a determinant of the activism tactic used by SMOs. Moreover, when formal mobilising structures such as SMOs and unions were coupled with informal groups, a wider range of activism tactics were used. This was also the case in relation to climate change where, in comparison to social activism surrounding

precarious work, a much wider range of tactics were used. For example, shareholder activism, lock-on protests and the use of creative artwork by activists were utilised only in relation to campaigns for climate action but not precarious workers' rights. The activism tactics seemed also to have been influenced by resource dependence, such as the use of disruptive tactics like lock-in protests by activists not dependent on the targeted companies. Collective values and libertarianism, which were part of the context, also influenced the tactics, in that the activists and advocacy group espousing these values and ideology used persuasive and not disruptive tactics.

Businesses and industry associations, whose proactive actions were either earning a social licence, blending institutional logics, dissociating, or partnering, seemed to have been influenced by legitimacy. An illustration of this is of mining companies that had long-term contracts at a particular site proactively engaging with the local communities, while the indication was that engineering companies with a shorter-term construction contracts would not necessarily do this. In terms of the reactive responses by businesses and industry associations, pragmatism, legitimacy, and stakeholder salience were determinants of their actions. For example, a financial company pragmatically defied activism pressures on the basis that it was not in their customers' interests, and a mining company that seemed to be stigmatised based on the many activism targets only responded to the salient stakeholders when its legitimacy was threatened.

In relation to the outcomes, the individual outcomes seemed to be shaped by the culture, with an illustration being nationalism and neoliberalism, which had an impact on workers on temporary resident visas receiving support or a safety net from the Federal Governments. Organisational outcomes were influenced by the context. Specifically, no shareholder resolution had been passed in relation to climate change, which indicates a predominance of a short-term shareholder model or the short-term economic interests that neoliberalism supports. Evidence from the study demonstrated that the structural outcomes were influenced by the context. Specifically, neoliberal political economic conditions led to the status quo of the limited protection at a federal level for precarious workers' rights and the natural environment. The limited protection is also a characteristic of the institutional structures, a sub-set of the context, that progressive activists have been seeking action on.

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

Introduction

This concluding chapter of the thesis begins with a summary of the literature reviewed in earlier chapters of this thesis. Thereafter, a summary of the analysis of the two case study topics on precarious work and climate change is presented, after which the answers to the research questions are presented. Then, drawing on the cross-case analysis in Chapter 9, the implications of the findings for theory and literature will be presented. Thereafter, the implications of the findings for practice and the limitations of this study are addressed. The thesis concludes with a discussion on the implications of the findings on further research.

Summary of the Literature

Multi-faceted Nature of Social Activism

With social activism being multi-faceted by nature, literature on social activism, and especially in relation to how it impacts businesses, is situated in different disciplines. Sociology is the predominant discipline with the studies being underpinned by Social Movement theory to examine the impetus of activism, and the tactics used by activists targeting organisations (Bartley & Child 2014; King & Pearce 2010; McDonnell, King & Soule 2015; Vasi et al. 2015). Closely aligned is political science, where, based on Social Movement theory, the focus has been on the public politics of activism, in terms of the coercive influence government has on organisations (McAdam 2017; McAllister & Snagovsky 2018). Another salient discipline is organisational studies, where, informed by Neo-institutional, Power and Social Movement theories, the studies investigated the structures and processes of activism that influence organisations (Kumar et al. 2020; Schneiberg 2013; Yue, Rao & Ingram 2013). Management, which can be considered a sub-set of organisational studies, is also a discipline, whose theorists and researchers have focused on social activism. Specifically, Resource Dependence, Power, Stakeholder and Social Movement theories have been used as foundations to conceptualise social activists as stakeholders of businesses, who can be salient to business decision-makers (Briscoe & Gupta 2016; Cundill, Smart & Wilson 2018; McDonnell & Cobb 2020; Nyberg, Wright & Kirk 2018).

Extant Theories and Studies Summary

The extant theories and empirical studies have provided insight into some of the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism that targets businesses. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, the contextual factors that enable social activism include some form of deprivation that is being experienced, which consequently leads to activism (Smelser 1962); the political and economic opportunities that make it possible for the activists to mobilise (McAdam 1982, 2017); the competition of institutional logics between the social activists and the power holders that they target (Schneiberg 2013); the structure that constrain the actions of activists and businesses (Doh & Guay 2006; Klutzz 2019); and overall, environmental, social and governance concerns that the activists have (Islam & van Staden 2018; Marquardt & Wiedman 2016; McLean & Fuller 2016).

The social activism mechanisms have been found to consist of framing and mobilising processes (McAdam 2017); with activists using a range of persuasive (e.g. lobbying) and disruptive (e.g. protest rally) tactics, that best suit the change they are pursuing (Bartley & Child 2014; Carberry et al. 2019; King 2008; Soule, Swaminathan & Tihanyi 2014). Consequently, businesses can reactively respond to the pressures from social activism (Gupta & Briscoe 2020; Pache & Santos 2010; Schneiberg 2013); or proactively reconcile the market and social welfare logics (Carberry, Bharati, Levy & Chaudhury 2019; Mena & Waeger 2014; Pache & Santos 2013). In terms of the potential outcomes that follow social activism, they include changes to organisational policies (Roumpi, Giannakis & Delery 2020; Van Cranenburgh, Liket & Roome 2013); impact on businesses' financial performance (King & Soule 2007; Lewis, O'Donovan & Willett 2017); reviews and changes to legislation (Bartley 2003; Klutzz 2019); and partnerships with co-opted parties (Van Wijk et al. 2013).

Considering the extant knowledge generated from a wide range of disciplines, there are indications that power underpins the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism. Specifically, in relation to the contextual factors, institutional logics, which are the prevailing values and ideologies in a society, are dependent on the social actors that possess power (Schneiberg 2013). Power also weaves through the social activism mechanisms, such as in the mobilising process where activists seek resources (i.e. sources of power) to facilitate their aims (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). The actions of businesses that are targeted would also be

dependent on power, as they attempt to maintain their legitimacy or position of power and influence (Rehbein, Logsdon & Van Buren 2013). The outcomes associated with social activism will also be dependent on whether social activists or businesses have the resources such as financing, knowledge, and legitimacy (Van Wijk et al. 2013; Wilmers 2017); with outcomes such as the earned reputation being sources of power (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Seemingly, the possession or the lack of power is influenced by, and influences, the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism targeting businesses.

Synopsis of Bourdieu's Power Theory

One way of conceptualising power is based on Bourdieu's Power theory. As discussed in Chapter 2, Bourdieu's Power theory is of value when examining power and the tensions between different social actors, which are aspects inherent to social activism targeting businesses. To reiterate, core to Bourdieu's Power theory is the concept of *habitus*, which refers to the dispositions that people unconsciously possess (Bourdieu 1993). These dispositions are enacted within *fields*, which Bourdieu uses as a spatial metaphor to represent areas in which the tensions between people occur (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The tensions occur because in the fields are limited resources, which people possess in different proportions (i.e. some have more than others), and therefore people in the fields act in their own interests by trying to maintain or enhance the proportions of resources that they possess (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu refers to the resources in the fields as forms of *capital* (Bourdieu 1986), which are conceptualised based on whether they are economic, institutional, reputational, knowledge, organisational, and social types of capital (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Based on the theory, the dominant habitus in a field is indicative of the most powerful social actor in the field, based on the levels of capital possessed (Bourdieu 1993).

In summation of the literature, social activism is multi-disciplinary, and literature from disciplines such as sociology, political science, organisational studies, and management have provided some understanding of the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes of social activism targeting businesses. From these studies it is apparent that power shapes the contextual factors, mechanisms, and outcomes. Bourdieu's Power theory is useful in furthering the understanding of social activism targeting businesses, given its focus on power and tensions between social actors. These theories

and empirical research have been used in this thesis as an analytical framework (Refer to Figure 9.1 in Chapter 9).

Precarious Work and Climate Change

The two case studies examined in this research are on precarious work and climate change, in an Australian context. As highlighted in Chapter 1, precarious work is a significant and topical issue in Australia, and globally. Precarious work is a significant issue given the challenges the workers face, which place them in vulnerable positions. In the last year, at a global level, the ability to attain the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) eight and 10, on decent work and inequalities respectively, have been significantly compromised due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United Nations, in a report on the progress of the attainment of the SDGs, highlighted that workers in informal employment (e.g. independent contractors in the gig economy), and industries at high risk of disruption (e.g. retail and hospitality), have had their employment and wages impacted the most by the COVID-19 pandemic (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2020). In Australia, workers in customer facing roles, such as in the retail and hospitality sectors, have been considerably affected as the consumer spending in these sectors that generally require personal contact, has significantly decreased, leading businesses to shut down and consequently leading to a loss of income for the workers (Borland & Charlton 2020). Moreover, other significant challenges associated with precarious work in Australia include workers on temporary visas not receiving their entitled wages (Thorntwaite 2017); franchisors engaging franchisees with onerous and exploitative contracts; and workers in the retail and hospitality sectors being underpaid (Kellner et al. 2016). In terms of advocacy that pertains to these challenges, as a response to the pandemic, a social partnership was formed that consisted of government officials, executives at trade unions and executives of industry associations. Activists have also been advocating for the rights of workers on temporary visas who have been exploited, workers who have been underpaid based on the enterprise agreements that cover their employment, and low-income earners who have difficulty sustaining themselves. Precarious work is clearly a pivotal and current issue worldwide, and in Australia.

Likewise, climate change is a significant and topical issue. Currently, at a global level, SDG 13 on climate action is far from being achieved, with the United Nations, in its progress report on the

SDGs, highlighting that 2010 to 2019 was the warmest decade on record (United Nations Economic and Social Council 2020). The report also highlights that, despite the levels of greenhouse gas emissions falling in 2020 during the pandemic, because of reduced human activity such as travel, the world will still not meet the targets set in the *Paris Agreement* to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The United Nations has therefore called on governments and businesses to make systemic changes to reduce the levels of greenhouse gas emissions. In the context of Australia, it has the world's largest greenhouse gas emission per capita, with "94 per cent" of the country's energy consumption being generated from fossil fuels, as highlighted in a systematic review of literature on Australia's energy use (Li et al. 2020, p. 15). The systematic review also highlights that Australia has the potential to use renewable energy sources such as hydropower from oceans, solar, wind, geothermal, and bioenergy, which would reduce the current greenhouse gas emission levels. Addressing climate change is also of economic value, given that in 2019, there were "\$3.7 billion" economic losses from climate change related issues, which included "bushfires, cyclones, flooding, hailstorms, and tornadoes" (Zhang et al. 2020, p.492.e7). Also of significance is that, globally, the effects of climate change are experienced at the greatest level by people who are already vulnerable, making it difficult worldwide for worldwide social justice and equality (Nerini et al. 2019). In terms of activism, climate change activists in Australia have targeted companies and governments (federal and state) through campaigns that sought to prevent the construction of coal mines, and to prevent fracking by directly targeting energy companies, or through secondary boycotting where they targeted associated companies. Governments have been targeted in movements such as the *School Strike for Climate* movement. Like precarious work, climate change is an important issue in the current milieu.

Summary of the Findings

Context Findings

The precarious work and climate change cases share key factors. Specifically, in their contexts, the political economic conditions and institutional structures were underpinned by neoliberalism, and the stakeholder relationships were characterised by tensions such as between civil society and business. A difference in the contextual factors is that in the precarious work case culture was based on collectivism while in the climate change case a short-term orientation. Noteworthy is that historically in Australia the institutions around work and industrial relations have grown from a

collectivist frame of reference where, since Federation, the industrial relations system has been based on notions of workers being represented by unions, rights of entry, rights of representation, collective bargaining, and enterprise bargaining. In the past few decades, the political and economic context, being based on neoliberalism, has intersected with this collectivist culture resulting in tensions to adopt more individualistic notions of culture such as individual bargaining alongside reducing the power of unions and decreasing union membership. In terms of climate change, activists pursuing climate action have been seeking transformation from a culture underpinned by a short-termism to one that has a long-term focus like intergenerational equity and systems thinking. A similar long-term orientation pursuit pertains to Aboriginal knowledge whereby Aboriginal communities consider the impacts of their actions on generations up to seven generations in the future, as an interviewed Aboriginal activist advised.

An analysis of the context indicates that neoliberal political economic conditions had influenced the institutional structures such that there were limited protections for precarious workers and the natural environment. Consequently, the lack of protections, aspirations for a culture in which collectivism and a long-term orientation are upheld, as well as the tensions between the stakeholder groups, have enabled social activism for precarious workers' rights and climate action. An illustration of a tension is between the Federal Government's prioritisation of the economy and short-term benefits relative to progressive social activists seeking an adoption of intergenerational equity in policy decision making.

Social Activism Mechanisms Findings

The precarious work case and climate change case had similar social activism mechanisms in terms of framing and mobilising for political capital. For example, framing references on power inequality in the precarious work case and the protection of Aboriginal culture in the climate change case were used to mobilise political capital. Political capital is a source of power that includes economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational and social capital types of capital (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Differences in the social activism mechanisms in the case studies pertain to the mobilising structures and the activism tactics. In the climate change case informal activist groups and formal mobilising structures such as social movement organisations (SMOs) were used, while in the precarious work case only formal mobilising structures like unions were

evident. In turn, a wide range of activism tactics were used in relation to climate action relative to precarious workers' rights. Examples of activism tactics only used in the climate change case were shareholder activism, secondary boycotts, lock-on protests by informal groups, and use of activists' creative artwork skills similarly by informal groups.

An analysis of the social activism mechanisms indicated that the activism tactics seemed to have been influenced by resource dependence. For example, disruptive tactics like lock-in protests were used by activists who had low levels of resource dependence on the targeted companies, in comparison with activists that had a high level of resource dependence, such as employee activists reliant on the targeted organisation for their incomes. Another indication from the analysis was that the context influenced the social activism mechanisms. Specifically, collective values and libertarianism, which were part of the context, influenced the activism tactics. Two charities whose missions were underpinned by collective values, and a conservative think tank that espoused a libertarian ideology had low levels of resource dependence and used persuasive but not disruptive tactics.

Industry Mechanisms Findings

In both the precarious work and climate change cases, businesses and industry associations acted proactively and reactively. The proactive actions in the precarious work case included firstly, dissociating, which entailed businesses owners in sectors stigmatised by wage theft distancing themselves from other businesses in their sector; and secondly, partnering, with an example being the industry sector forming a tripartite group with union and government sectors for industrial relations reforms. The proactive actions in the climate change case were firstly, blending market and social welfare logics, for example, a financial company's mission being underpinned by reconciling the economic dimension with environmental and social dimensions; and secondly, earning a social licence where mining companies provided employment opportunities to the communities, at their mine locations. The difference in the proactive actions was due to the type of organisations sampled, with some companies in the climate change case perpetually blending market and institutional logics. The reactive responses in the two cases were the same. The organisations reactively defied activism pressures, such as divestment from fossil fuels, and

reactively conceded to activism pressures, for example an engineering company that conceded to secondary boycotts by a SMO.

The analysis indicated that proactive actions were determined by legitimacy. This is illustrated by mining companies earning their social licence by positively engaging with communities to protect their legitimacy. There was also an indication that the proactive actions influenced the context, and this was specifically in relation to the industry actors proactively partnering with each other to achieve a common goal. That is, the partnership between industry associations, unions and government aimed to reform the institutional structures in relation to industrial relations. In terms of the reactive responses, the analysis indicated that the organisations' defiance of activism pressures was based on pragmatism. For example, a financial company defied pressures to divest from fossil fuels because it was not in the financial interests of their customers. In a similar vein, the businesses conceded to activism pressures, such as the secondary boycotts by a SMO that targeted an engineering company, to protect their legitimacy. The businesses also conceded to the pressures based on the salience of the stakeholders and this was more so for a mining company that appeared to have been stigmatised due to several informal activist groups and SMOs that targeted the company.

Findings on the Outcomes

The individual outcomes in the precarious work and climate change cases are different, seemingly because of differing aims of the activism campaigns for precarious workers' rights and climate action. In the precarious work case, an individual outcome was workers receiving their entitlements, while in the climate change case it was individuals demonstrating agency in relation to climate action. The organisational outcomes were similar in the two case studies. For example, in both cases, there were outcomes pertaining to organisational policies such as internal controls in the precarious work case, and divestment from fossil fuels in the climate change case. Likewise, in both cases, organisational outcomes pertaining to the effect social activism had on the legitimacy or reputation of the organisation. The structural outcomes were also similar across the two cases in terms of a regulatory status quo at a federal level, with the implication being that vulnerable workers and the natural environment were not adequately protected. There is, however, a difference in the structural outcomes in that while union membership in Australia appeared to be

decreasing, the climate change movement, in particular the *School Strike for Climate* movement, seemed to have mobilised a considerable number of young activists.

An analysis indicated that an outcome on an individual level was influenced by an organisational outcome. Specifically, the workers' entitlements resulted from changes in the formal and informal organisational policies for companies implicated in wage theft. The analysis also indicated that the structural outcomes were influenced by the context, as demonstrated by the status quo in relation to workers earning a living wage and substantive climate action by the Federal Government being based on neoliberal principles, where the focus is on the free market, and economic growth. Moreover, these structural outcomes had influences on the context. That is, the status quo in the precarious work and climate change cases translate to institutional structures that do not offer sufficient protection for vulnerable workers and the natural environment. A summary of the findings is presented in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Summary of the Findings

			Precarious Work Case	Climate Change Case
Similarities	Context	Political economic conditions	Political economic conditions and structures were underpinned by neoliberalism	
		Structures		
		Stakeholder relationships	Tensions existed between stakeholders	
	Social activism mechanisms	Framing	Framing enabled mobilisation of political capital	
		Mobilising	Activist groups mobilised political capital	
	Industry mechanisms	Reactive responses	Defying and conceding were reactive responses	
		Legitimacy and salience	Legitimacy and the salience of stakeholders were determinants for the reactive responses	
	Outcomes	Organisational	Maintenance of the status quo and outcomes on legitimacy and policies	
		Structural	Maintenance of the status quo at a Federal level in terms of protecting vulnerable workers and the natural environment	
Differences	Context	Culture	Collectivism	Short-term orientation
		Mobilising structures	Formal	Formal and informal groups
		Activism tactics	Protest rallies, civil proceedings, lobbying/private dialogue, and media influence	Protest rallies, private dialogue, civil proceedings, shareholder activism, lock-on protests, secondary boycotts, online petitions, educational seminars, and activists' artwork.
	Industry mechanisms	Proactive actions	Dissociating and partnering	Blending institutional logics and earning a social licence
	Outcomes	Individual	Workers' entitlements	Agency
		Structural	Changes to institutional structures at a state level, and decreasing union membership	Mobilisation of activists to climate change movement

Answers to the Research Questions

The main research question is *how does social activism emerge and consequently affect business and its stakeholders?* The subsidiary research questions (SRQ) are first, *how does the context enable social activism?* Second, *how do social activists use a range of mechanisms for change?* Third, *how do businesses and their representatives respond to social activism?* Fourth, *how do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?* The subsidiary questions will be used to address the main research question.

SRQ1: How does the context enable social activism?

The research has found that the context enables social activism based on culture, political economic conditions, institutional structures, and stakeholder relationships. Culture is the predominant habitus or predominant institutional logic, and examples can be a culture that is based on collective values or a short-term orientation. The political economic conditions influence the institutional structures, and the stakeholder relationships encapsulate the tensions between stakeholders in a *field*. Therefore, the context enables activism as follows: social activists *mobilise political capital* within a *field* as they seek to change the predominant *habitus* or the institutional structures that support the actions that they oppose. The mobilisation of political capital is in a *field* where the values of the powerholders are reflected by the predominant *habitus*. Therefore, as the social activists mobilise political capital, the powerholders seek to maintain their political capital. This is consistent with Bourdieu's view of *fields* and *habitus* (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). These tussles create grounds for social activism.

SRQ2: How do social activists use a range of mechanisms for change?

The social activism mechanisms are framing, mobilising and different activism tactics. Framing was used to enable the social activists to mobilise political capital. The research also indicated that formal mobilising structures like unions, together with informal groups where the activists are not registered with a structured advocacy group, led to a wide range of activism tactics that were used by the activists. In the relation to precarious work, the tactics included private dialogue, civil proceedings, grassroots activism and at a broader level, social movement unionism in which protest rallies were used. The tactics used in relation to climate change were protest rallies, lock-in protests, secondary boycotts, activists designing artwork sent to government officials,

shareholder activism, private dialogue, educational seminars, civil proceedings, and online petitions. Disruptive tactics like lock-in protests influenced the operations and legitimacy of businesses. Conversely, persuasive tactics like private dialogue focused on convincing powerholders of the merits of the activists' demands without creating reputational costs for businesses. The choice between the two types of tactics seemed to be based on whether the activists were dependent on the targeted firm for resources. If they were independent, they could use disruptive tactics. Activists were not restricted to one tactic as they could use any that met their purpose and appeared to align with their ideologies.

SRQ3: How do businesses and their representatives respond to social activism?

The research found that businesses and industry associations acted proactively, or responded reactively, to social activism pressures. For the proactive actions in relation to activism for precarious workers, the organisations in stigmatised sectors dissociated from other organisations in their sectors, and some organisations partnered with each other to increase their institutional capital to change the institutional structures. In relation to climate change, some businesses persistently blended market and social welfare logics, an attribute that seemed intrinsic to their operation and some proactively sought to earn a social licence. The proactive actions were determined by the organisations seeking to project their legitimacy, such as through *B-Corporation* certification or by protecting their legitimacy in the communities in which they operated. For the reactive responses in relation to precarious workers and climate change, the organisations defied and conceded to the activism pressures based on legitimacy and the salience of the stakeholders.

SRQ4: How do the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders?

The outcomes of social activism affected the context, businesses, activist groups, workers, and communities. The context was affected through structural changes to legislation, which became part of the context. For example, the 2020 enactment of wage theft legislation in Victoria has become part of the institutional structures in relation to precarious work. The outcomes for businesses included threatened legitimacy, for example, a mining company that has been stigmatised due to many accounts of activism that targeted the company, rebranded its trading name. Activist groups' legitimacy was also affected by activism, with successes in their claims

providing an activist group with reputational capital. Some workers were positively affected by activism in that they received their underpaid entitlements.

Model

In summation, the analysis has contributed to a model that incorporates the context, mechanisms, and outcomes. The model presented in Figure 10.1 is processual and cyclical and is an integration of the cross-case analysis presented in Chapter 9. The analysis indicates that the processual component consists of the sequence from context to mechanisms and thereafter outcomes. The context consists of political economic conditions, which influence the institutional structures; culture; and stakeholder relationships. Political capital arising due to tensions in stakeholder relationships is also a key factor. These contextual factors influence the social activism mechanisms. As an illustration, neoliberal political economic conditions could lead to weak institutional structures in terms of protecting precarious workers and enabling climate action. In relation to culture, a short-term orientation could be an impetus for climate action by progressive social activists, and upholding collectivism would likely be the aim of unions. In summation, the analysis suggests that the contextual factors, and social actors trying to maintain or acquire political capital influence the social activism mechanisms.

These social activism mechanisms consist of mobilising structures and framing processes, which influence activists' mobilisation of political capital. The mobilising structures include formal structures like unions and SMOs, and informal activist groups. The framing process generally aims to use framing references that resonate with the targeted audience to mobilise political capital. Also part of the social activism mechanisms are the tactics, such as protests and private dialogue. The activism tactics are determined by resource dependence and the context (e.g. the ideology an activist group espouses).

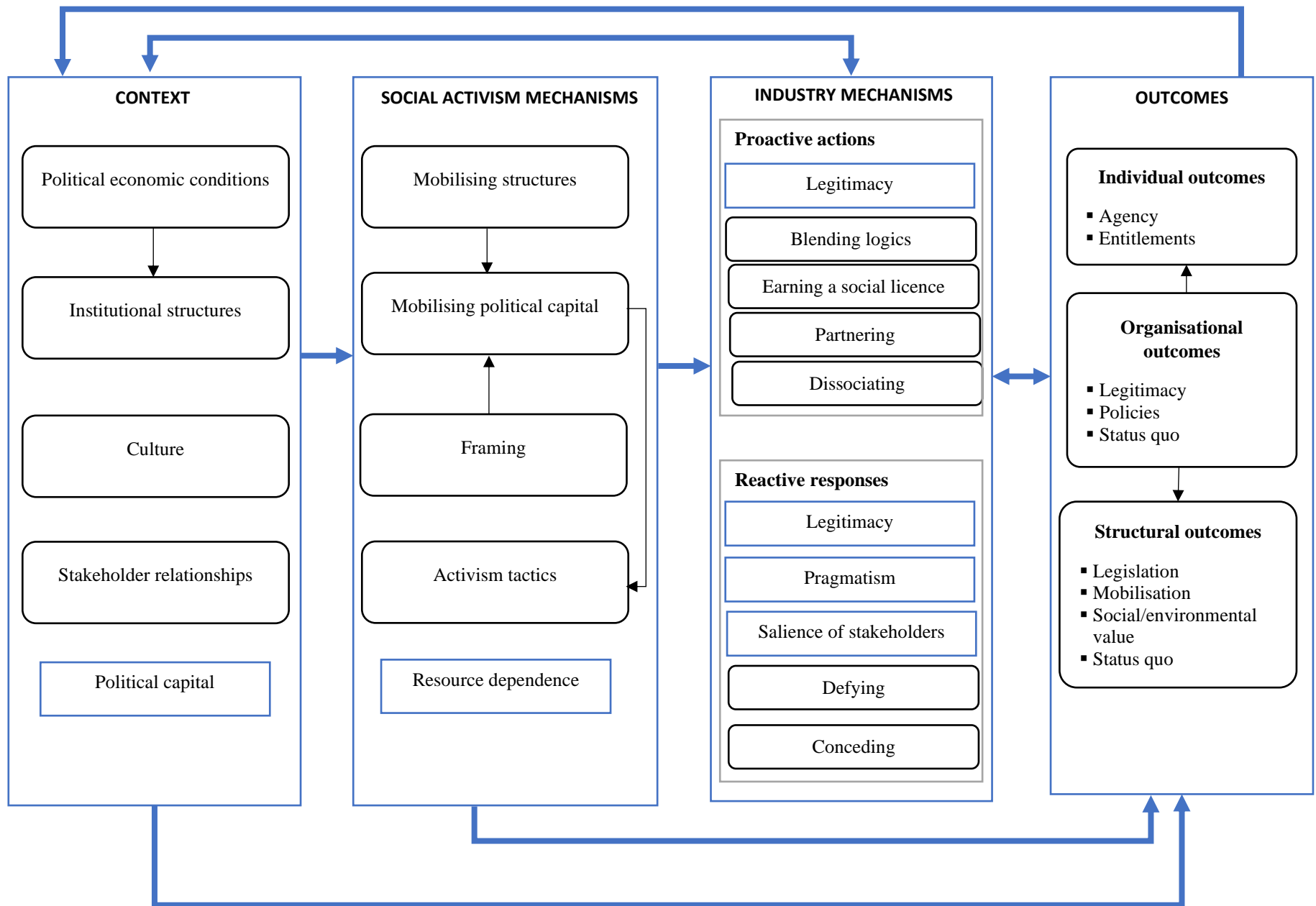


Figure 10.1: Context, Mechanisms, and Outcomes of Social Activism Model

Consequently, in response to activism tactics, industry can respond reactively by defying or conceding to activism pressures. This response is determined by a pragmatism stance that industry can take, and the business decision-makers' view of the salience of the stakeholders. Alternatively, industry could have act proactively to activism pressures by using mechanisms such earning a social licence, blending logics, dissociating, and partnering with stakeholders. The industry mechanisms thereafter lead to outcomes at an individual level, for example, underpaid workers receiving their entitlements. At broader levels, the outcomes can pertain to an organisation, such as its legitimacy, and the structural or field level, with an example being changes in the laws.

Representing the cyclical nature of the model, the analysis suggests that there are associations between firstly, structural outcomes and context, and secondly, industry mechanisms and context. Firstly, structural outcomes like an enactment of legislation consequently become the institutional structures in the context. For example, the enactment of wage theft legislation in Victoria in 2020, became part of the institutional structures that impact precarious work. In a similar vein, the maintenance of the status quo in relation to substantive climate change legislation, translates to institutional structures that have supported substantive climate action. Secondly, the context influences the industry mechanisms in the form of the enacted legislation that industry is required to comply with. Vice-versa, industry mechanisms influence the context as demonstrated by a tripartite group consisting of representatives from industry associations, the union movement, and government that proactively partnered to reform the industrial relations system. In relation to climate change, industry has been influential in repealing policies that pertain to an emission trading scheme (Wright & Nyberg 2014), and the Resource Super Profits Tax (Murray & Nyberg 2020). For the interaction between the context and outcomes, the model highlights that political economic conditions and institutional structures that are underpinned by neoliberalism seem to reinforce the status quo, where the focus is on the economic dimension, with limited protections for vulnerable workers, and policies at a Federal level that enable substantive climate actions.

Implications of Findings

Original Insights Based on the Main Research Question

The research has generated original insights that pertain to the main research question. As stated earlier, the main research question is: *how does social activism emerge and consequently affect*

business and its stakeholders? The main research finding, as presented in the process model is that the contextual factors, social activism mechanisms, actions of businesses, and outcomes, interact recursively, with indications that political capital, which is a source of power, shapes the context, and the mechanisms. In addition, legitimacy, pragmatism, and stakeholder salience influence the proactive and reactive actions of businesses, with the structural outcomes shaping the context and consequently, the mechanisms. The process model is a contribution to recently published management literature, in which it has been empirically demonstrated that social activism influences businesses and their decision-makers (e.g. Gupta & Briscoe 2020; McDonnell & Cobb 2020). The main research finding therefore contributes to the literature by providing insights into *how* social activism influences business and its stakeholders.

Implications for Theory

This thesis aimed to explore the contextual factors of social activism, its mechanisms and the outcomes for business and stakeholders by focusing on the social activism surrounding precarious work and climate change, in an Australian context. Given social activism is multi-faceted, the thesis drew from Social Movement, Neo-institutional, Stakeholder, Resource Dependence and Bourdieu's Power theories. The implications of the findings are:

Social Movement Theory

Social Movement theory explains the impetus for social activism (e.g. Smelser 1962), social activism mechanisms like mobilisation of resources (McCarthy & Zald 1977), and the outcomes of social activism (della Porta 2015). The theory's focus is on social activists, and therefore does not capture the perspectives of the organisations that the activists target. The thesis has therefore contributed to the theory by explaining in depth the actions of businesses and industry associations, which can be proactive actions that align with progressive social activists, or reactive responses based on determinants such as legitimacy, salience of the stakeholders, pragmatism, and political capital.

Neo-institutional Theory

Neo-institutional theory focuses on how organisations conform to their social contexts with intentions to gain or protect legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). An extension to the theory has

highlighted that organisations need not necessarily conform to their contexts but can be agents for change or institutional entrepreneurs (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum 2009), which matches with the findings in this study. Specifically, companies that blended market and social welfare logics were found to be agents for change in that they contributed towards environmental and social value. Moreover, the thesis also demonstrates that organisations can reactively defy external pressures based on pragmatism and stakeholder salience.

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory posits that organisations are influenced by their stakeholders, who similarly influence the organisations' decision-makers (Freeman 1984). Moreover, the theory proposes that decision-makers prioritise stakeholders based on the salience, specifically in terms of the power of the stakeholder, urgency of the stakeholder's demand and the legitimacy of organisation (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997). The theory, however, does not consider the context of the stakeholders and the organisations. This thesis has analysed the context of social activism and demonstrated that it is not only defined by stakeholder relationships, but also the political economic conditions, institutional structures, and culture.

Resource Dependence Theory

Resource Dependence theory proposes that an organisation is constrained by its reliance on resources provided by other social actors (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978), with the focus of the theory on the organisation's responses to the constraints (Biermann & Harsch 2016). The thesis has indicated that social activism tactics, whether they are persuasive or disruptive tactics, are shaped by not only resource dependence but also collective values, and libertarian ideology espoused by the activists. The activists that espoused these values and ideology only used persuasive tactics despite a seemingly low level of resource dependence in relation to their targeted organisations.

Bourdieu's Power Theory

Bourdieu's Power theory posits that the tensions in fields are due to the limited resources, and social actors driven by self-interest to retain or increase the resources that they possess (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). It aims to explain why inequalities exist in society with so little resistance (Swartz 1997). The thesis has shed some light on why this occurs, and particularly so in relation

to precarity. Specifically, the thesis indicated that precarious workers might not seek to redress their circumstances due to contextual factors like an institutional structure that requires union members to pay a membership fee. Moreover, the thesis indicates that political capital, which is a key element in Bourdieu's Power theory (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020), is also central in relation to the social activism mechanisms and structural outcomes. That is, for social activists to achieve structural outcomes such as a change in legislation, political capital is required.

Implications for Literature on Social Activism and Business

The findings for the first SRQ on *how the context enables social activism* indicate that political capital shapes the political economic conditions and consequently the institutional structures. Moreover, these findings support research demonstrating that the drivers of social activism include neoliberal political economic conditions (Bartley 2003), institutional structures (Doh & Guay 2006; Kellner et al. 2016; Kumar et al. 2020), culture (Amenta & Polletta 2019), and the stakeholder relationships (Grant & Vasi 2017; Van Wijk et al., 2013). Recently, in the management literature political capital was conceptualised as a source of power in organisations (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020). Adding to this knowledge, a novel insight that the thesis presents pertains to the influence political capital has on the contextual factors of social activism targeting business.

For the second SRQ focusing on *how social activists use a range of mechanisms for change*, the thesis conceptualised *how* the social activism mechanisms interact with each other and the contextual factors. Specifically, the indication is that framing enables mobilising of political capital, with the mobilisation aim being to change institutional structures. In addition, mobilising capital determines the activism tactics, and shapes framing, and as an example, informants of a SMO can in developing tactics targeted at a company. Mobilising structures also shape the mobilisation of capital, and the range of social activism tactics, which are either persuasive such as private dialogue, or disruptive like lock-on protests. The findings on these interactions contributes to the management and industrial relations literature. Specifically, the novelty lies in this thesis conceptualising mobilisation for social activism in terms of economic, institutional, knowledge, reputational and social types of capital. Furthermore, the findings on the interactions extend findings from empirical studies that have demonstrated the importance of mobilising and its associated structures in achieving social activism goals (Chuang, Church & Hu 2018; Yaziji

and Doh 2013). The findings also support empirical research that has found that disruptive tactics such as protests generated considerable media attention (Eesley and Lenox 2016). In summation, the contribution to literature pertaining to the second SRQ consists of firstly, a novel insight on the interactions between social activism mechanisms and contextual factors; secondly, an extension to findings on mobilising and its structures; and thirdly, a corroboration of findings on disruptive tactics.

The findings on the third SRQ on how *businesses and their representatives respond to social activism* indicate that business and industry associations reactively defy or concede to activism pressures to protect their legitimacy. This is consistent with prior empirical research (Bartley & Child 2014; Carberry et al. 2019; King 2008; Soule, Swaminathan & Tihanyi 2014). The thesis extends this knowledge on reactive responses by also conceptualising the actions of business and industry associations as being proactive. Dissociating is an example of a proactive action by business, and the findings suggest that to protect their legitimacy, businesses will dissociate from stigmatised businesses in their sector. The findings relating to the third SRQ therefore support existing research on the reactive responses by business and provide new insights into proactive actions taken by business and industry associations, which include dissociating and blending institutional logics.

The fourth SRQ focuses on *how the outcomes of social activism affect businesses and stakeholders*, and its associated findings indicate that individual, organisational and structural outcomes are influenced by the contextual factors. As an example, the thesis found that neoliberal political economic conditions have contributed to the status quo of the limited protection at a federal level for precarious workers' rights and the natural environment. Prior studies have also obtained similar findings, indicating an influence of the contextual factors on the outcomes of social activism (Burgmann 2008; Cole & Limb 2017; Klutzz 2019; Markey & McIvor 2019). The thesis extends the management literature on social activism targeting business by conceptualising the recursive interactions between the outcomes and contextual factors of social activism. As stated earlier in the chapter, this interaction indicates that the outcomes and contextual factors influence each other. An example of the influence of the outcomes on the contextual factors is a regulatory change that activists have pursued forming part of the institutional structure after the change is enacted. In

summary, the findings relating to the fourth SRQ support extant empirical studies and contribute to the knowledge on recursive interactions between the outcomes and contextual factors of social activism.

Implications for Policy

The findings have implications for policy because they can assist governments and regulatory bodies identify areas where there are policy gaps. When the policies are implemented, they can ideally generate value for society and the environment. Based on the model, it is evident that the political economic conditions influence the institutional structures. Therefore, policy gaps can be identified by examining the political economic conditions and the institutional structures. For example, in relation to precarious work, the examination of the political economic conditions and institutional structures demonstrates that neoliberalism is an underpinning principle, which reflects that recent Australian Federal Governments have given prominence to the free market and economic growth. The indication is that unless the federal government intervenes to provide safety nets for vulnerable workers, including those in informal employment and on temporary work visas, and enact laws that protect these vulnerable groups, then these workers will be highly susceptible to exploitation. Likewise, for climate change, the political economic conditions, and institutional structures, which are underpinned by neoliberalism, do not support climate action unless it generates economic value in the short-term. For value to society and the environment, the target of policy makers should be on the political economic conditions, institutional structures, and culture. Moreover, businesses that are implicated in practices that exacerbate precarious work and climate change, will continue to be targeted by activist group campaigns.

Another pathway for policy changes would be to enable social activists to mobilise political capital to change the predominant *habitus* or the institutional structures. Structural level changes that result from this, in the form of laws, will in turn lead to changes in the institutional structures that are part of the context. For example, positive outcomes for climate change entails enabling political capital to be mobilised by social activists seeking to promote intergenerational equity in the *field*. Intergenerational equity contrasts with the predominant *habitus* in relation to climate change, which is based on short-term orientation. If the activism results in structural change, such as in relation to legislation, then it would change the institutional structures. This demonstrates the

cyclical nature of the model given the structural outcome provides a new institutional structure contextual factor. For precarious work, enabling political capital to be mobilised by social activists seeking to uphold a collectivism culture could lead to structural outcomes which then alter the institutional structures.

Practical Implications

In terms of practical implications, the findings are useful for businesses as they proactively conduct environmental scanning. In environmental scanning the aim is to gain an understanding of the external environment in which businesses operate (Pryor, Holmes Jr, Webb & Liguori 2019), which is of value for businesses in their forecasting and planning processes. The analysis indicates that proactively blending market and social welfare logics or proactively dissociating can protect businesses from organisational changes that arise from social activism. Moreover, businesses can act proactively to project moral legitimacy. In contrast, businesses that reactively respond to social activism by defying and/or conceding to the pressures, the model indicates that it can lead to changes to their legitimacy or organisational policies. The changes to legitimacy can be quite significant for companies in averting financial losses and damaged brand names.

The findings are also useful for social activists in identifying suitable tactics to use as they pursue change. Specifically, the model provides mobilisation as a structural outcome. This means that a social movement can recruit participants to form a collectively identity and subsequently address the movement's aims. The indication is that successful mobilisation comes about from a combination of formal mobilising structures such as unions and informal groups, including individual activists who are not part of a structured activist group. The combination of formal structures and informal groups can be a source of political capital not only in terms of mobilising supporters but also the variety of activism tactics that seem to come about due to the use of both formal mobilising structures and informal groups.

Limitations of the Research

This has been quite an ambitious research project and in turn there are limitations. These limitations are in relation to the research being a cross-sectional study, perceptions of illegality, precarious workers sampled, time constraints, and the generalisability of the research findings.

Cross-Sectional Study

This research is a cross-sectional study given it was conducted at a single point in time, which contrasts with a longitudinal study conducted with the same group of participants over an extended duration (Creswell 2014). A longitudinal study would have been useful in tracing developments that relate to the participants (Creswell 2014). However, for practical reasons this was not possible given that within the four-year period, the PhD student had to complete four coursework units, collect data, analyse the findings, and write up the thesis. In addition, it would be difficult to trace all participants with the possibility that some do move on and change contact details. Additionally, it would be a significant sacrifice for the research participants, who had voluntarily participating in the study.

Perceptions of Illegality

Several media reports of wage theft during the data collection period, seem to have resulted in some individuals and organisations in the precarious work case being hesitant to participate in this research. This had been anticipated, and it was therefore highlighted in the participant information statement that the research did not aim to uncover unethical or illegal conduct. The study sought to understand the processes around social activism. Stating this aim, did not seem to allay the fear of participants, especially among franchisors, franchisees, two large retail companies and a trade union, who did not participate in the study.

Precarious Workers Sampled

A finding in the precarious case work case study was that the interviewed precarious workers did not participate in activism like young people did in the *School Strike for Climate* movement. This could be because all the interviewed workers were all students, and they expected, once they embark on their careers, that they would not be in this category of workers. Workers stuck in a cycle of precarity, might not have had similar views.

Time Constraints

The participants were also limited by their available time. The interviewees were advised that the interview would take approximately 40 minutes. Participant were also requested to review their

respective transcripts and advise of any amendments. Such an exercise would require the participants to sacrifice a substantial amount of time. An implication of the time constraints was that some prospective participants, who were approached and requested to participate in the study, were not able to do so. For example, government officials were approached but they declined, citing the lack of time.

Generalisability of the Findings

Given the qualitative case study methodology adopted for this research, the findings are not generalisable to the population. That is, the findings pertain to the businesses, industry associations and activist groups that were examined at a given point in time, with the possibility that a replicated study will not yield identical and generalisable findings. The research did not intend to provide generalisable findings but was guided by the research questions, and their most adequate methodology. Yin (2014) stated that methodologies like the one adopted for this research can develop theoretical propositions, which can thereafter be tested.

Further Research

Further research on the interactions posited by the model is warranted. The research can test the model's validity. In addition, the model can be tested in a different context in terms of geographical location or the social movements that are part of the units of analysis. Based on the indication that young people do not view unionisation to protect precarious work rights as a critical issue, future research can examine the mobilisation processes, in contemporary precarious work and climate change cases studies, to explore why participants identify with one movement over another. In a similar vein, with the study only interviewing precarious workers in tertiary institutions, future research can also examine the activism of precarious workers who are not university students, or who have been stuck in a cycle of precarious work. Additionally, another potential area for future research relates to the findings indicating that while mining companies invested in earning a social licence to operate, engineering companies did not seem to have the same concerns, perhaps based on the time horizon of the investment. Further research can examine the mechanisms that pertain to legitimacy and social activism in the engineering and mining sectors and include time as a key variable. Notwithstanding these unanswered empirical research questions, this thesis has offered a

contribution to the discussion on these matters by exploring social activism and how it has influenced businesses and stakeholders.

Appendix A: Glossary

Key Term	Definition
Advocacy	Through advocacy, social actors use their resources to influence power holders (Kraemer, Whiteman & Banerjee 2013), and thereby effect change that will be beneficial to a person or a group (London 2010).
Anthropogenic climate change	Climate change or the production of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming is anthropogenic, when it is attributable to human activities (Höök & Tang 2013).
Campaign	In a campaign, organisers collectively and publicly make claims that are targeted at a particular audience, and these efforts by organisers go on for an extended period; meaning that the claim-making is not limited to a single event (Tilly 2006).
Culture	Culture has been conceptualised as the symbolic representations of regulations and practices within a social context (Amenta & Polletta 2019).
Institutional logics	Institutional logics consist of a set of implicit values and ideologies to interpret behaviour that is construed as appropriate as well as how success can be attained (Thornton & Ocasio 1999).
Legitimacy	Legitimacy is a judgement call that the actions of an organisation are “desirable, proper, or appropriate” in a social context (Suchman 1995, p.574).
Mechanism	A mechanism provides an explanation of how and/or why a phenomenon operates as it does (Anderson et al. 2006).
Moral Market	A moral market differs from a traditional market economy in that the goods and services produced and sold to create social and/or environmental value, with social movements typically supporting this type of market based on ethical considerations, contrary to the pursuit of economic interests (Georgallis & Lee 2020).
Power	Power has been conceptualised as the capacity a social actor has to influence outcomes in a social context in which relationships between different social actors exist (Ocasio, Pozner & Milner 2020).
Pragmatism	Pragmatism has been conceptualised as practical behaviour that is based on common sense, and is flexible to the circumstances (Farjoun, Ansell & Boin 2015)

Key Term	Definition
Precarious work	Precarious work has been used to refer to work that is “uncertain, unstable and risky” (Kalleberg 2009, p. 2), in the sense that the risk associated with work is primarily borne by the worker and not the government or employer (Kalleberg & Hewison 2013).
Social activism	In social activism, people who have limited access to “channels of influence” or have limited power, join forces to collectively redress a particular social or environmental problem, advocate for changes in extant structures or advocate against changes in the existing structures (Briscoe & Gupta 2016).
Social movement	A social movement is characterised by an extended period of making claims by activists who use activism tactics (e.g., boycotts and protests) and publicly demonstrate their “worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment” to their cause (Tilly 2006, p. 183).
Stakeholder salience	Stakeholder salience involves an examination of the “power” of the stakeholders, “legitimacy” of the organisation’s actions and “urgency” of the stakeholder’s claim (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997, p.873).
Structure	Structure has been conceptualised to consist of the regulations or rules that constrain practices within a social context (Cassell 1993).
Tactics (social activism)	Social activism tactics are the “routines” undertaken by activists to obtain “concessions” from their targets, gain “attention” to their causes and/or mobilise people to join their cause (Briscoe & Gupta 2016, p.675).

Appendix B: Participant Information Statement



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The research is being carried out in partial fulfilment of a PhD degree that is being pursued by Michael Gatumu (the PhD student) under the supervision of Professor Suzanne Young (the chief investigator) and Dr Swati Nagpal (the associate investigator). The research is looking at how and why activism, which is synonymous with advocacy, could have an impact on businesses. You were requested to participate in this research because based on your experience as a manager dealing with personnel as well as industrial relations matters you can provide insight into the influence of activism or advocacy (for example by trade unions and welfare agencies) on businesses.

2. Background of the research and its aim

Activism, which is synonymous with advocacy, seems to be a salient theme in our contemporary society. In the business and management field, most of the research that has focussed on activism in a business context uses data from the United States of America. Given the saliency of activism and the research gap, the purpose of the research is to explore the influencing contexts, mechanisms and corporate outcomes of activism using data from Australia. It is important to highlight that the purpose of this research is not to investigate and report any illegal activity. The collection of any information that pertains to illegal activity would be outside the scope of this research and furthermore it would be unethical to place participants in a legally risky situation for the sake of research.

3. Participation in the research

Being part of this research is voluntary. We request you to read the information contained in this participant information statement carefully, ask us any questions and then decide if you want to participate in this research. We will be pleased if you participate in the research but if you decide not to participate, your decision will **not** affect your relationship with any party at La Trobe University. If you take part in this research, we will request you to participate in a semi-structured interview. The interview will take approximately one hour of your time and will be organised for a time, day and place that will work best for you.

4. Benefits of participating in the research

We will be pleased to provide you with a report on the grouped findings of the research. Your participation in this research will potentially contribute to an in-depth understanding of the influence activism has on businesses as well as a conceptual model that shows the relationships between the influencing contexts, mechanisms and outcomes of activism or advocacy. In practice, the findings from the study could potentially provide a basis for managerial decision-making training.

5. Risk management

First, we will de-identify all the data that has been collected and permanently delete any information that has unique identifiers, you will also be provided with a copy of your de-identified transcript of the interview for you to review, reflect-

upon and subsequently inform us if you are comfortable with the content and the level of de-identification used in the transcript. If you are not comfortable with either the content or the level of de-identification, please let us know of your amendments within 7 days from when you received the transcript. **Therefore, you and your organisation will not be named when reporting the findings.**

Secondly, as stated at the outset of this participant information statement, the collection and reporting of illegal activity are not aims of this research. The research has been designed such that semi-structured interview questions are being used to collect the data on the influencing contexts, the mechanisms and the outcomes of activism, which is synonymous with advocacy. We do not anticipate that any participant will disclose any illegal information based on the research design and the reports that similar studies have not resulted in the disclosure of illegal activities. However, in the unlikely event that this happens, we will maintain your confidentiality.

6. Data management

The only data that will be stored about you will be de-identifiable. This data will be kept for five years after the project is completed under the custody of the chief investigator. After the five years, the chief investigator will delete all files and safely destroy any paper copies of the data that relates to your participation in the research. These actions are in accordance with La Trobe University's Research Data Management Policy which can be viewed online using this [link](#).

The information you provide is personal information for the purposes of the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic). You have the right to access personal information held about you by the University, the right to request correction and amendment of it, and the right to make a complaint about a breach of the Information Protection Principles as contained in the Information Privacy.

7. Right to change your mind on participation in the research

At any time, you can choose to no longer be part of the research. You can let us know by either completing the *Withdrawal of Consent Form*, which will be provided to you on request, calling one of us or emailing one of us. When you withdraw, we will delete and/or safely destroy all information that pertains to your participation in this research. Please note that your decision to withdraw at any point will **not** affect your relationship with any party at La Trobe University.

8. Researchers' contact details

Please feel free to contact us using the details below:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Professor Suzanne Young	Chief investigator		
Dr Swati Nagpal	Associate investigator		
Michael Gatumu	PhD student		

9. Complaints pertaining to the research

If you have a complaint about any part of this study, please contact:

<u>Ethics Reference Number</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Email</u>
HEC181182	Senior Research Ethics Officer	61 3 9479 1443	humanethics@latrobe.edu.au

Appendix C: Consent Form



Consent Form – Declaration by Participant

I have read and understood the participant information statement, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the research, I know I can withdraw at any time. I agree information provided by me or with my permission during the research may be included in a thesis, presentation and published in journals on the condition that I **cannot** be identified.

I agree to have the meeting audio recorded.

I would like to receive a copy of my transcript to review the content and the level of de-identification, which I will then return to the researchers stating whether I am comfortable with the content and level of de-identification. If I am not comfortable with either the content or level of de-identification, I will then provide to the researchers my amendments within 7 days of receiving the transcript.

Participant's Signature

Participant's printed name:

Participant's printed signature:

Date:

Declaration by Researcher

I have given a verbal explanation of the research, what it involves, and the risks and I believe the participant has understood.

I am a person with knowledge on the research, its associated risks and can answer relevant questions on the research.

Researcher's printed name:

Researcher's signature:

Date:

* All parties must sign and date their own signature

Appendix D: Coding Examples

Precarious Workers Case

Code	Examples
Right to organise	<p>The rights of employees to associate and form trade unions and for those trade unions to be able to pursue interests of employees, a fundamental human right, which we are, we could not be more supportive of and in turn our right to join as business and pursue our collective interests, equally supported by them (IA2a 2019).</p> <p>We are very supportive of organisation as a matter of principle, we are very supportive of the right to collectively organise. So, does not mean that we support whatever unions do, but we support the notion that unions are important and that they exist (C1 2019).</p>
Vulnerable workers	<p>The focus of what we do is around advancing issues to do with people who are on low income, who are living in poverty, or are otherwise experiencing social marginalisation or exclusion in some form or another (C1 2019).</p> <p>I initially thought it was one person being underpaid and I wanted to help him. You know, an Indian student, and I wanted to help him, and then I realised as I got into it more, that it was not just him, it was everybody, and you just cannot walk away once you start, because there is nobody else helping them (WC1a 2018).</p>
Temporary work visas	<p>Getting enough shifts is also a big problem, they don't give us enough shifts. Sometimes the manager maybe is kind of racist and they don't give enough shifts to the international students, they give them mostly to the local students (PW7 2020).</p> <p>I would say we walk a very, very fine line and very difficult to articulate line around migration... And we are very conscious that in those sorts of discussions there is obviously a job security issue, [and] there is obviously a fair pay issue. In those sorts of discussions, the potential for what I would say are negatively motivated people to engage in racism, xenophobia, to try and get leverage fear for a political outcome is very high (TU2 2019).</p>
Politics and economy	<p>If you look at the graph that shows wage growth and productivity growth, you will see there comes a point about 2013, where the two lines have been roughly going at the same pace, productivity then starts to go like this [The Executive showed an upward movement with his arm], wage growth starts to go flat. So, essentially fair pay is that working people should share in the gains of their productivity (TU2 2019).</p> <p>...it has to be understood what they [TU2] are campaigning for. Now, to them a change of government is both a means and an end... You are talking to us four or five months from an election in which they have absolutely invested millions of dollars to secure a change outcome and in which they are making claims in a highly politicised context, which we viscerally disagree with (IA2a 2019).</p>
Industrial relations policies/structure	<p>With too major changes to the franchising code of conduct in the last 10 years. That each [change] provides legal accountabilities for businesses delivers uncertainty and a lack of clarity as to what the requirements may be (BO1 2018).</p> <p>Employees are looking at [having a] work life balance and different arrangements and perhaps not working a typical nine to five work anymore. For some people, you know they want to sound early to be able to get their kids at 3.30, for example. And if you've got an agreement that says you have to work between these hours, or you have to pay overtime, outside of these hours, for example, then that makes it really hard to employ that person (IA2b 2019).</p>

Code	Examples
Minimum payments	<p>I think it's pretty clear that it means that they [the FWC] have to take into account the living conditions of families and not that they are obliged to set a minimum wage that is sufficient say for families with no children but to take into account the living conditions that the average family, the average worker with children, dependent children (C2 2019).</p> <p>Obviously, bigger businesses have to some extent, greater resources and capacity to, provide the programs or certain benefits in organisations. But when it comes to debates over what our minimum safety net should look like, for employment entitlements and employer obligations, the needs of small businesses need to be considered. And so, we [IA3] regularly put forward considerations about small businesses (IA3 2019).</p>
Stakeholder relationships	<p>The way in which casual work is used is overwhelmingly to the advantage of employers (C2 2019).</p> <p>The profit split was too in favour of [the FR1 franchisor] and not enough money went to the franchisee. As a result, because they were not making much money, they were forced to underpay their workers to survive (WC1a 2018).</p>
Framing	<p>...when the union say fat cat businesses made huge profits...it suits [TU2's] campaign to beat up on corporate fat cats and big business, but the true impact of what they are talking about will be felt in the small and medium sized enterprises and they can't afford the policies that they are going for (IA2a 2019).</p> <p>[In FF3, FF1 and R2] ...all of these other employers have legally engaged in moral wage theft by having these agreements with [TU3 (identifiable name deleted)] (TU1 2018).</p>
Mobilising	<p>We wanted to talk to as many people as we could, but we had limited resources and we thought the best way to have everybody know what we are doing is to announce it and then let the company tell everybody not to talk to us and therefore ensuring everybody knows what we are doing (WC1b 2018).</p> <p>Despite having a very young membership and a very gendered female membership, it [TU3] has maintained very strong anti-women and anti-same sex positions for a very long time (TU1 2018).</p>
Activism tactics	<p>We [TU1] don't look to build a coalition of activities with other organisations. We see that at this stage of, less than two years old, that is not going to be particularly fruitful. We are realistic that [a larger Trade Union] has so much money, power and influence that many other organisations are scared to deal with us. So, we don't really even bother. We have a large network of supporters and activists [at a local level] who we draw on (TU1 2018).</p> <p>The campaign [for a fairer industrial relations system] came out of a survey of 60,000 union members and then on top of that research with the general public. We did one piece of research that was absolutely eye-opening. It was a major poll of three and a half thousand people (TU2 2019).</p>
Defying	<p>And then they wrote back and said all we not offering to help with Fair Work, you misunderstood. It could not have been clearer, so they can kind of do some backflip. Anyway, so it is a bit of backwards and forwards with the company who didn't want to know anything about it really (WC1a 2018).</p> <p>Our view importantly and one that we've raised consistently and has had some media attention is that the proportion of the workforce who are engaged as casual, has remained the same for 20 years (IA3 2019).</p>

Code	Examples
Conceding	<p>Some people had claims of \$200,000 that they were underpaid, because this exposé happened, because this investigation happened, they were now in a position where they could claim you know that kind of money and receive it in backpay and that would just not have happened if the media turned a blind eye and nobody cared about it (WC1b 2018).</p> <p>We' are supporting a member... in his termination application of the [R3] agreement. Having made that application the company has straightaway tried to push through now towards an agreement and they've got an agreement that they want to put for ballot next month... [with their] desire to avoid a termination hearing (TU1 2018).</p>
Dissociating	<p>...It is important to make sure that the message goes out to those inquiring about franchising or inquiring into franchising that the missteps are unrelated to us (BO1 2018).</p> <p>I would always do whatever I had to do by the letter of the law. So, that was never on the table, I never had to worry about that. And I knew that I was managing the staff in a very respectful way (BO2 2020).</p>
Partnering	<p>...our theory was that [the FF1 franchisor] was sending all of these favourite franchisees to us, writing to us and trying to get them to meet with us so that they could try and put a stop to any imminent scandal that was about to be exposed (WC1b 2018).</p> <p>...politically it wasn't the easiest thing for us to do but that was a case where we ourselves and business actually do share a nuanced position and came out publicly with it. And it probably got the strongest negative reaction from the public to anything in the entire time that I've been involved with [Trade union 2] (TU2 2019).</p>
Workers' activism/unionisation	<p>I'm not really into the activism or fighting for my rights as an employee, which I guess is a little bit of may be silly of me. But particularly when it is a casual job, I go, it is putting in more effort than it is worth. (PW1 2018).</p> <p>We had one union that manages the labour rights of [the workers at the fast-food franchised restaurant] but I'm not a member (PW7 2020).</p>
Individual outcomes	<p>And so the Commission agreed to terminate the agreement from the 24th of January, which was a fantastic success. And it meant that on the 24th of January, a lot of [FF1] workers would be entitled to a lot more [that is, penalty rates and a casual loading if they are employed as casuals] (TU1 2018).</p> <p>...with the program over a few years now got 3600 odd workers around 160 million in back pay (WC1a 2018).</p>
Organisational outcomes	<p>In the week after the story came out, over a week it fell over \$900 million in their [FF1's] market capitalisation (WC1b 2018).</p> <p>There was a time I think, not so long ago, where the public's perception of unions was very low, very low... There is, if you look at the participation say in the rallies last year, you know, very big rallies... Lots of public. You know, the Premier of Victoria mastered the final rally in an election campaign. So, that says that there is political value in being associated with us. Now, if the general public were very opposed to unions, that wouldn't happen (TU2 2019).</p>

Code	Examples
Structural outcomes (secondary data)	<p>The nation's first wage theft laws have been passed in Victoria but federal legislation criminalising serious forms of employee underpayment is likely to be enacted before the state laws come into effect in 12 months (The Australian 2020).</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Australian Government amend the Franchising Code of Conduct to require, as part of mandatory disclosure, guidance on employment matters, especially Awards, minimum wages, and overseas workforce issues to be developed by the Fair Work Ombudsman (Franchising Inquiry Report 2019).</p>

Climate Change Case

Code	Examples
Inter-generational equity	<p>Climate change is real; it is happening now. It is our responsibility right now. So, do we have a responsibility to future generations? Sure (SMO2 2019).</p> <p>I think the public has future generations interests, or you know, a lot of our members have future generations interests at heart and their huge involvement in things like the climate strike. And that is about supporting students and supporting people in the fight for climate action. Knowing that the change that we want is for their generation (SMO4 2019).</p>
Systems thinking	<p>There are some really interesting cases where a tree has died, and the other trees have fed the root system to keep the trunk alive. And this doesn't make sense to us. But there are reasons why that might be the case, where the forest doesn't want one system to fail because it could cause disease for other parts of the system (EngCo2 2020).</p> <p>So, our mission, our purpose and our goal is to show that finance can be a force for good. So that finance can work in a way that is good for the planet, and good for people (FinCo1 2019).</p>
Aboriginal knowledge	<p>And yet, we are disrupting the very life support system that makes all that possible. So, that was not part of our system that we were thinking about and yet that seems so obvious to us. And I would think it is obvious to First Nations people in Australia that say, you can't live that way. Societies that have lasted for thousands of years, could never have survived, based on that kind of thinking (EngCo2 2020).</p> <p>People are experiencing climate change now. You can point to a whole heap of examples of food scarcity and all that now. I get people are facing climate change issues now, but not to the same severity as Indigenous people ten, twenty thousand years ago. And that knowledge is still there....It is oral knowledge.... It is not just going to come because you want the knowledge. There has got to be something deeper behind that...And it is about reconciling properly, not having systemic racism. Like, it has got to be a narrative at that level for Indigenous communities to engage (AA 2020).</p>
Activism views	<p>We think of our team, our organisation as a community. And I'm going to use that language for a moment. So, as a community we support the climate strikes and the alliance, ... [which is an opportunity] for companies to support their workers who feel aligned with the climate strike and want to support the climate strike (FinCo1 2019).</p> <p>I think, until you see Indigenous activists, you can't be an Indigenous activist and you can't stand up for what's right. So for me, kind of that Black Power movement in the US, which kind of helped spur some of the other cases across Australia and other places, you know, until that happens, the rest of it wasn't going to follow (AA 2020).</p>

Code	Examples
Politics and economy	<p>I think that when government oversteps the mark and it enhances the market in many ways, the process where people can maximise prosperity gets damaged. So, if you think about, like, say price controls and these sorts of things that hamper the ability for the market to work (CTT 2020).</p> <p>And then the other reason, of course, is the opportunism of the Liberal party. You know, you had Tony Abbott, who, to be fair to him, he was a very good campaigner and he campaigned on one idea and that was repealing the carbon tax. You know, if you say something often enough and lie often enough, people will believe it. Unfortunately, the Labor Party didn't have the conviction to fight them on the actual substance of the issue. And, you know, five years later, we're in the situation we're in now (SMO2 2019).</p>
Climate change policies	<p>So right now, there's a lot of consternation in Australia, not because we don't have a carbon price, but because we don't have certainty over what the carbon strategy is, and the carbon policies and how it's gonna affect business. So, it's not that business will come out against it, we actually just need certainty and our long-term trajectory and then people will invest their energy and resources accordingly (EngCo2 2020).</p> <p>Section 487 actually fails to have any meaningful changes to any environmental conditions. So, on one hand, I think we've got very small environmental gains and a very large cost to the Australian economy (CTT 2020).</p>
Risk	<p>There's risk in lots of different spaces. So, there's a risk with you, as a company obtaining products you sell, like insurance or like financing. I guess it's the same as financing. If the financing company has a certain level of conditions, and they say if you don't meet these, we can't lend to you, then that's a risk. And likewise, with an insurer, you cannot get access to insurance policy without meeting those conditions, that's also a risk (MinCo1 2020).</p> <p>And in the settlement, it was found that Rest did need to take climate risk into account. Um, now like, because that has happened, I can foresee a lot of superfunds moving on that issue, because they don't want to be the next company targeted with a legal case (SMO5 2020).</p>
Social actors' power	<p>... the fossil fuel industry they have money, and political power. The climate advocacy movement has people (SMO3 2019).</p> <p>You know, we listened to stakeholders, but the point is, as a company, you can't value every stakeholder's voice at the same level. They are not all the same weight. You've got to really think about which ones are important (MinCo1 2020).</p>
Social actors' characteristics	<p>We engage with large ASX listed companies. The likes of [mining companies and energy company names omitted]. Typically, large carbon emitters, but not necessarily. Sometimes we will engage with companies who have more strategic influence, for instance (SMO2 2019).</p> <p>We had NGO groups for example that would pop up like grass growing in the garden. There would be 10 people in them. But others might be a tree. So, might be something like a WWF or something like that is quite established (MinCo1 2020).</p>
Framing	<p>I think it is part of the role to give people the confidence to become active. But I also think we need to be very careful that we don't go out and say something that is not verified and true. Because the other side of the debate will take that and damage our reputation and the reputation of advocates for better policy and climate change (SMO3 2019).</p> <p>Yeah, I think that the fossil fuel companies have capitalised on people's fears. As you know, a lot of community people fear that they are going to lose their jobs because coal-powered stations would shut down. And I think that the climate movement needs to do more to address those fears (SMO4 2019).</p>

Code	Examples
Mobilising	<p>it's almost exactly 10 years since the first global set of actions happened. And that mobilised hundreds of thousands of people around the world. And that's almost seven million people around the world get on the streets, including 300,000 in Australia with the biggest climate rally that we have ever seen (SMO3 2019).</p> <p>I would say like we often base out tactics on, you know, intel information that people know about the campaign. So, for example, in the ...campaign at the moment they're trying to target corporations who are going to potentially work with ...to let them know that the ...coal mine would be really bad for the environment. And I guess they get information from that company or from staff there about the likelihood of that company you know dropping their contract or, you know, refusing to work with them (SMO4 2019).</p>
Activism tactics	<p>With a handful of those companies, depending on how the engagement progresses, we may proceed to filing a shareholder resolution. And then that's where I guess the really interesting work for us is trying to mobilise institutional investors to not just support resolutions, but to actually have much deeper conversations with companies about those issues (SMO2 2019).</p> <p>So, the way the sort of advocacy world looks at how different organisations work is, we talk about an inside track and an outside track...Outside track is bringing the community along with you and doing things that aren't directly focused just on decision-makers, but in building power through bringing a large community along with you. And so, our primary role is outside track. We generally try and bring people with us and build that power (SMO3 2019).</p>
Defying	<p>We come under pressure to divest from fossil fuel companies across the board and we push back Against that challenge by saying, “well, we are not going to do it”. If we think investing in a fossil fuel company is a worthwhile way to invest, that we can make money from we are going to do it (FinCo4 2020).</p> <p>The ... Climate Change group came to us and they said, 'could you stop what you're doing, stop your business!' And I thought, you know, that's not a conversation starter when you come to a room and say, 'right, we want you to stop everything you're doing and go away'. You know, that's really hard for a company to enter into that conversation if there's not even one thing you can agree on, because what they want you to do is shut down completely (MinCo1 2020).</p>
Conceding	<p>They withdrew their involvement in that particular project. And they did that publicly. They received a lot of abuse from a certain ...politician (EngCo2 2020).</p> <p>In terms of super funds, we have seen a fair, like a bit of a shift this year, because for so many years, super funds were refusing to divest. And this year, we have had [some financial companies] all divest from thermal coal (SMO5 2020).</p>
Blending logics	<p>So, our mission, our purpose and our goal is to show that finance can be a force for good. So that finance can work in a way that is good for the planet, and good for people (FinCo1 2019).</p> <p>we want to be a pillar for celebrating diversity. We find that money can be quite overwhelming for a lot of people. That might be women who feel intimidated, it might be people of the LGBTIQ+ community, it might be migrants and refugees because they find it overwhelming that it is a new system (FinCo3 2019).</p>

Code	Examples
Earning a social licence	<p>I participated in a range of different discussions with Traditional Owner groups, whether it was to do with those statutory processes or to look at economic and employment opportunities as well... in the area of environmental management, we have awarded some very substantial packages of work to a majority Indigenous owned business, an environmental services company, we have assisted Indigenous businesses to partner with other companies and then win work (MinCo1 2020).</p> <p>What was the driving force... a recognition that to maintain your social licence to operate, you have to engage with your community (MinCo2 2020).</p>
Individual outcomes	<p>For me I intended to attend the climate strike anyway. When I saw this, I just thought it was something I didn't want to miss out on being a part of. Because, you know, going right back to the start of why I started the business (FinCo2 2019).</p> <p>So, you know that is without agitation. You are kind of doing it subtly and slowly and creating that change. So, you know, that for me was a big win (AA 2020).</p>
Organisational outcomes	<p>So, they did not get rewarded for that [dissociating from MinCo1]. But they have remained true to that commitment, and that has been important to their ability to go and work with other clients (EngCo2 2020).</p> <p>As a global organisation, I would say they take climate change very seriously, I would say. And they have just come up with a system, which allows us to report on a global level. So far in the one year that I've been there. Is that they have been working steadily to harmonise greenhouse gas capture and reporting across the whole organisation globally. (EngCo1 2020).</p>
Structural outcomes	<p>We have built five solar farms and a wind farm. We have another solar farm in construction. Those solar farms are avoiding the need to burn a certain amount of fossil fuels. The carbon emissions are thereby reduced. Or rather, demand is reduced for the causes of the carbon emissions and so effectively carbon emissions are reduced. Those renewable energy generators also avoid water use, which is related to climate change (FinCo1 2019).</p> <p>And it does have an impact. So, today, for example, we have just seen the federal government put a billion dollars extra into the Clean Energy Fund. That would not have happened without massive community pressure to see the government act on climate change (SMO3 2019).</p>

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