

Corporate Social Innovation and Intrapreneurship in South Africa Through the Lens of Institutional Theory

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Abstract

As an institution, business creates wealth, life-changing innovation, livelihoods, and is a vehicle for self-expression and identity. Especially at scale, it is also often an engine of environmental destruction, inequality and social harm. The response of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is increasingly falling short of stakeholder expectations. The separation of social impact and core business that characterises CSR in South Africa will not realise the promise of sustainable development. This requires a transformation in the way business is done – a systemic change that must start somewhere.

Corporate Social Innovation is inspired by the idea that the strengths and scale of business can be applied to addressing our most pressing social concerns. It applies a company's core capabilities to creating simultaneous social and commercial value. Corporate Social Intrapreneurship is Corporate Social Innovation that is driven by change agents inside a company.

This dissertation is a qualitative, inductive study of four cases of Corporate Social Intrapreneurship in companies in South Africa. Data was collected through interviews and documents and was analysed through the lens of institutional theory.

This theoretical perspective enables an examination of the intrapreneurship process as an engagement with the elements of social structure that are present in organisations and the broader social systems around them. It sheds light on the individual-level actions and interactions that signal the earliest moments of institutional change.

The findings are a rich descriptive account of the organisational context and nature of each project, and the intrapreneurship process as experienced by the intrapreneurs. The findings describe how intrapreneurs engage in legitimation and institutional work aimed at maintaining, creating or disrupting institutions; how they wield symbolic, cultural, social and material capital; and what influences their reflexivity and agency.

The dissertation concludes with suggestions for future research, and implications for academia and practice emerging from the insights of these case studies.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research area

1.1.1 *Research context*

The world is grappling with the challenge of sustainable development – “how the advancement of wealth and provisions for the health and education and other measures of social well-being can be accomplished in ways that can be sustained within the resource endowments and systems of the planet” (Roome & Louche, 2016: 13). In South Africa, unchecked ecosystem deterioration threatens to erode gains that have been made in improving human quality of life (Department of Environmental Affairs, 2016), even as the country carries the unenviable ranking of the most unequal in the world and a burden of widespread poverty and unemployment (The World Bank, 2020).

The corporation as a powerful societal actor stands central to this. Companies have been instrumental in advancing ground-breaking technologies, fostering economic growth, industrial- and social development (Roome, 2014). Yet, in their pursuit of short term profit, companies have harmed society – business and the neoliberal paradigm that governs it are key drivers of current social and environmental problems (Campbell, 2007; Googins, 2014; Scheyvens et al., 2016).

Some form of responsible action is now a legitimate expectation from business (Brammer et al., 2012), even though Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) remains essentially contested and interpreted in a myriad of ways in different contexts (Matten & Moon, 2008). In South Africa, CSR is built on taken-for-granted moral underpinnings arising from the country’s social and historical realities (King et al., 2010), shaped by a regulatory environment that strongly compels certain kinds of CSR (Ramlall, 2012), and guided by philanthropic norms, typical of developing markets and African countries (Idemudia, 2013). CSR still stands separate from core business operations: for many companies in South Africa, CSR is a vehicle “to dispense with (rather than fulfil) their social obligations and to externalise (rather than address) their social impact” (Rajak, 2016: 930).

Yet, in South Africa and around the world, social and environmental challenges are growing and accelerating. Stakeholders from all sides are calling on companies to do more. Traditional approaches to CSR are no longer adequate to satisfy stakeholder demands and it

is becoming apparent that they are insufficient at meaningfully addressing social issues. In addition, ever-present pressure on profitability and competitiveness means that companies are looking for new avenues of growth (Mirvis et al., 2016). These realities have seen ideas like Corporate Social Innovation (CS Innovation) receive increased attention in the last decade as promising alternatives to CSR (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020).

CS Innovation is a way to harness the financial and managerial capabilities of business to take innovations with a positive social impact to scale, while enhancing business competitiveness (Martinez et al., 2017). Motivated individuals play an important role in realising social innovations – not only as senior leaders, but also as change agents working from the bottom up (Alt & Craig, 2016; Arnold & Hockerts, 2011; Martinez et al., 2017). These change agents who are advancing CS Innovation initiatives within their companies are Corporate Social Intrapreneurs (CS Intrapreneurs) – people who act like social entrepreneurs within an existing organisation (Kistruck & Beamish, 2010), in this case, a for-profit business.

1.1.2 Conceptual inquiry

There is a growing interest in the study of CS Innovation, but it is still relatively unexplored (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020). More specifically, research on Corporate Social Intrapreneurship (CS Intrapreneurship) is scant (Alt & Geradts, 2019), and almost non-existent in a South African context: A literature search for “corporate social intrapreneurship” AND “South Africa” on Google Scholar in early 2020 returned only two results, both only mentioning CS Intrapreneurship as a subset of social entrepreneurship and not specifically exploring the phenomenon in South Africa.

Research on CS Intrapreneurship helps to build an understanding of how bottom-up change agents can help move companies beyond the current CSR manifestation, how intrapreneurs can work not only for business success, but also for social impact, and how the simultaneous creation of social and commercial value plays out in a for-profit organisation (Alt & Geradts, 2019). In a South African context, the corporate sector is relatively well resourced. CS Intrapreneurship is one way that these resources can be used to meaningfully address the country’s social ills and environmental challenges.

This study uses the lens of institutional theory to look at the CS Intrapreneurship process. A company can be regarded as a micro-institution, with its own guidelines for action, and CS

Intrapreneurs need to take on the role of institutional change agents, or institutional entrepreneurs, within their companies (Alt & Craig, 2016; Kistruck & Beamish, 2010; van Dijk et al., 2011). Institutional entrepreneurs deliberately leverage resources to create new institutions or to disrupt the institutions they are embedded in (Tracey et al., 2011). They engage in institutional work: a purposeful effort aimed at maintaining or disrupting existing institutions or at creating entirely new ones (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). For CS Intrapreneurs, this involves legitimating these innovations within their organisations and specifically to senior managers, to unlock the resources that they need (Alt & Craig, 2016).

Micro-level, individual actions can amplify to influence organisations and broader social systems (Gray et al., 2015). Examining micro-institutional processes, such as CS Intrapreneurship, helps to open the black box of organisational decision making, and in so doing, builds a better understanding of institutional change as it unfolds at the individual level, through the actions of social change agents in organisations; and a better understanding of their lived experiences (Schilke, 2018; Sonenshein, 2016; Voronov & Vince, 2012).

1.1.3 Contribution to practice

Findings from the research can guide current and would-be CS Intrapreneurs on how they may go about advancing CS Innovation in their organisations. It will also complement the existing practice literature, aimed at business leaders, on how to foster social intrapreneurship in an organisation.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

The purpose of this research is to build a better understanding of the micro-institutional processes of CS Intrapreneurship, through which individuals can advance CS Innovation in their organisations. This has the potential for organisation-wide and even systems-wide change, advancing beyond current CSR manifestations towards a paradigm where the strengths and scale of business are applied to addressing the most pressing social issues, while supporting commercial success. It is descriptive, qualitative research that applies the lens of institutional theory to CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship in South Africa.

1.2.1 Research questions

The primary research question is:

What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations?

The sub-questions focus on aspects highlighted in the literature as being important to the intrapreneurship process: The creative acquisition and use of different forms of capital; and the corporate social intrapreneur's reflexivity and agency as antecedent factors -

How do Corporate Social Intrapreneurs wield different forms of capital in the process?

What are the factors, at the field, organisational or individual level, that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs perceive as triggering their 'mental alarm', conscious reflexivity and agency?

1.2.2 Research approach

The answer to the research questions above is a descriptive account of individual actions and experiences within a real-world context. An inductive, qualitative approach is therefore suitable, as this research looks into real world, contextual conditions; the processes through which events and actions take place; participants' perspectives and the meaning of those events to participants; and with the aim to provide a rich understanding of a complex social phenomenon (Gaudet & Robert, 2018; J. A. Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2016). To answer the research questions, I have chosen a case study design, looking into four instances of CS Intrapreneurship in depth (Blatter, 2012).

CS Intrapreneurship is an embedded process that creates and disrupts institutions and is reliant on the actions of motivated individuals. Recent institutional theory perspectives, which balance structure and agency and examine micro-institutional processes, are a valuable lens for the topic. At the same time, the intentional agency demonstrated by the institutionally embedded CS Intrapreneurs makes for rich subject matter for the institutional theory field.

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The research purpose is to explore how corporate South Africa could contribute meaningfully towards creating sustainable solutions to social and environmental problems, by engaging in Corporate Social Innovation (CS Innovation), and specifically Corporate Social Intrapreneurship (CS Intrapreneurship).

This literature review first examines how thinking around the role of business in society has changed, by focusing on the evolution of the meaning and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which has been one of the dominant concepts in this domain in the past few decades (Carroll, 1999). I then contextualise South African CSR and how it has been influenced by the country's socio-economic circumstances, political history and the transition to democracy.

CS Innovation, and some of the other concepts that have appeared alongside it, are discussed next, including the driving forces behind the emergence of these ideas.

CS Intrapreneurship is the specific form of CS Innovation that is the focus of this study, and can be viewed as a form of institutional intrapreneurship (Kistruck & Beamish, 2010). I present the main institutional theory concepts that will be used here, followed by an application of institutional theory to the CS Intrapreneurship process. Specifically, I look at the institutional work and legitimation of social innovations, including the influence of individual, organisational and societal factors, which then provides the framework for the research methodology.

2.2 CSR: from emerging idea to institutionalised practice

2.2.1 Introduction

Companies have played significant social and political roles throughout history and today business is one of the most important institutions of society around the world (Djelic & Etchanchu, 2017; Painter-Morland, 2014). While business has never existed independently from the societies that it operates in, formal inquiry into what role business does and should play in society emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, giving rise to various competing, complementary and overlapping concepts, such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), business ethics, sustainability and corporate citizenship (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Lee, 2008; Schwartz & Carroll, 2008; Wang et al., 2016).

CSR was one of the earliest frameworks used to explicitly discuss the relationship between business and society and remains a dominant albeit not exclusive term in this sphere (Carroll, 1999; Schwartz & Carroll, 2008). Despite its long history, there is no consensus on the precise definition of CSR (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). This should not be surprising, however. CSR is an “essentially contested” concept (Matten & Moon, 2008: 405). It has manifested differently over time and in different regions and industries, as the understanding of it depends on its institutional context (Brammer et al., 2012). In practice, CSR has relatively flexible rules for application and the precise implementation is at the discretion of individual firms (Matten & Moon, 2008).

Below I discuss how CSR has evolved in academia and practice since its introduction, as the term’s relatively early entrenchment and ongoing ubiquity make it a useful anchor to illustrate the evolution in thinking around the broader idea of the role of business in society.

Today, the core rationale of CSR – that business has a responsibility to individuals and groups in society beyond its shareholders – is no longer questioned, but this was not always the case (Marques-Mendes & Santos, 2016; Wang et al., 2016). While thinking has indeed evolved, many of the ideas and debates discussed below continue to be part of the CSR discourse. Before the 1990s, the majority of the formal writing on CSR was centred in the USA (Carroll, 1999), and as such, the below leans more towards these perspectives.

2.2.2 The 1950s and 1960s: Philanthropy, morality and a social contract

In the 1950s and 1960s, social responsibility was formulated as something beyond the legal, technical and economic obligations of the firm. The focus was on corporate philanthropy, the social contract between business and society, business as a good citizen, and a connection with morals, ethics and societal values (Carroll, 1999; Ghobadian et al., 2015; Lee, 2008). There was only an indirect link, if any, between CSR and business success (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Preuss, 2011). This sparked criticism from those who saw a more segregated role for business. Milton Friedman, for instance, insisted that managers should focus on maximising profits and leave social issues to the state and civil society – encapsulated in the famous ‘the business of business is business’ axiom (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Lee, 2008). In the absence of a link to financial performance, CSR in the US was primarily driven by compliance with new environmental, consumer and labour laws and acquiescence to social movements such as civil- and women’s rights and environmentalism (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Lee, 2008). In the face of societal and regulatory pressure, CEOs would hardly make public statements without mentioning their CSR. Yet, within the ranks of their corporations, it was paid only cursory attention, and sceptics continued to question the fundamental assumption of CSR – that business had any obligation at all, beyond profit maximisation (Lee, 2008).

2.2.3 The 1970s and 1980s: Linking CSR to business success

The 1970s and 1980s saw a shift towards arguments for CSR that justified it in economic terms – enlightened self-interest, stakeholder management and the search for the business case for CSR.

Enlightened self-interest is the idea that a company’s success is inherently dependent on the success of the society in which it is embedded: if the society around business were to deteriorate, so would corporations’ support structures and customer base, and therefore it is in a company’s long-term interest to support society (Lee, 2008).

The stakeholder approach became one of the most important and dominant perspectives on CSR (Davenport, 2000; Ghobadian et al., 2015; Pedersen, 2011). It defines the different stakeholders of the firm, in addition to shareholders, who have legitimate interest in corporate activity and could defensibly influence managerial action, and links the achievement of

corporate goals such as profit and growth to the management of stakeholder relations (Campbell, 2007; Margolis & Walsh, 2003).

The search for the business case for CSR asks how CSR could improve financial performance, by creating competitive advantage, reducing risk, improving company reputation, and aligning stakeholder and shareholder interest (Preuss, 2011). A myriad of studies emerged during this time aiming to illustrate a concrete link between corporate social performance and corporate financial performance (Margolis & Walsh, 2003).

An essential aspect of CSR was that it was voluntary in nature: that social responsibility started where the law ended, and went beyond a company's economic responsibilities (Carroll, 1999). While there was less research debating whether business should be engaging in CSR or not, controversy around CSR remained, and indeed some of these decades-old arguments against CSR are still repeated today, for instance that CSR dilutes business' purpose and reduces competitiveness, and that business is neither obligated nor equipped to address social issues (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Lee, 2008).

2.2.4 The 1990s and 2000s: Globalisation, strategic management and the institutionalisation of CSR

The 1990s and 2000s saw CSR research and debates expand globally, the emergence of a multifaceted business case for CSR that integrated the stakeholder approach and strategic management, and an institutionalisation and broad acceptance of CSR around the world (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Lee, 2008; Preuss, 2011; Wang et al., 2016).

The application of strategic management to CSR through the stakeholder approach made CSR more practical, while also broadening its scope, the definition of corporate performance, and the business case for CSR (Lee, 2008; Preuss, 2011). Researchers and managers could better envision, manage and measure a company's responsibilities towards one stakeholder group (e.g., employees), the associated benefit for the company (e.g., talent retention), and the relevant management discipline (e.g., Human Resources). CSR could be understood as a strategic activity with implications for profitability, and corporate performance could include non-financial dimensions (Lee, 2008; Van Marrewijk, 2003; Wang et al., 2016). A multifaceted business case for CSR became established in academia and practice: both shareholders and stakeholders influenced a company's survival, and the pursuit of CSR and strategic philanthropy helped to defend its reputation, could integrate with other business

strategies, and was a way to learn, innovate or manage risk (Barnett, 2016; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Kanter, 1999; Lee, 2008).

CSR had become institutionalised by the 2000s, widely accepted and promoted by governments, corporations, NGOs, consumers and international organisations such as the United Nations: the idea that business should engage in some form of CSR had become an expected norm (Brammer et al., 2012; Carroll, 2009; Lee, 2008). Inside companies, board-level CSR responsibilities and CSR departments were established, and CSR reports were published; around them, CSR standards, codes, umbrella organisations, stock market indices and consultants sprung up (Brammer et al., 2012; Carroll, 2009). For multinational firms, whom they are actually responsible to – global citizens, the global environment – is broad and diffuse, resulting in part in them being more accountable to the new ecosystem of mediators and watchdogs (Djelic & Etchanchu, 2017), another marker of the institutionalisation of CSR.

2.2.5 Summary

Since its emergence in the 1950s, CSR has evolved as a concept to delineate and describe the responsibility and purpose of business beyond its mandate to create shareholder profit. Initial thinking concerned questions of ethics, morality and a social contract with society, amidst an institutional environment that increasingly encouraged and compelled CSR. CSR was often expressed as philanthropy, disjointed from strategy, fuelling its critics. The 1970s and 1980s brought CSR closer to business' economic interests, acknowledging the embeddedness of business in society through the idea of enlightened self-interest and the influence of stakeholders on management. The stakeholder approach and strategic management were applied to CSR in the 1990s, creating a multifaceted business case for CSR that integrated financial considerations as well as intangible strategic advantages such as reputation and risk management. CSR became institutionalised in the 2000s – albeit in different guises in different institutional contexts – and an accepted part of management practice around the world.

CSR has remained a relevant concept in academia and in practice, but around 2010, new approaches and terms pitted against CSR started gaining traction (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020). This shift is at the core of this research, but before exploring this further, I will take a closer look at CSR in South Africa.

2.3 CSR in South Africa

2.3.1 Introduction

Countless present-day societal phenomena in South Africa have their roots in colonialism and apartheid: the inequalities that have stubbornly remained (Wilson, 2001); the policies and practices enacted with the sole intention of redressing the imbalances and injustices of the past (Hamann, 2004); the ideas and attitudes forged throughout history; and how these have been entrenched or transformed in a tumultuous change in political power and what is considered to be legitimate, right and wrong. Rather than being proactive, CSR is often a reaction to institutional forces in the form of political and social pressures (Rajak, 2016). South Africa's colonial and apartheid history and the reforms and institutional changes since democracy in 1994 have shaped the regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive institutions around CSR, significantly influencing South African CSR's meaning and practice (Hamann, 2009; King et al., 2010; Patel & Mushonga, 2015; Visser, 2005).

Both multinational business and local white-owned and -controlled businesses were intertwined with the apartheid regime. Below I look at how apartheid and the transition to democracy has influenced how CSR is understood in South Africa today.

2.3.2 Business and apartheid

2.3.2.1 Apartheid

Much of the discriminatory policies of apartheid South Africa was an expansion and formalisation of injustices that were characteristic of colonialism across Africa. White South Africans enjoyed some of the highest standards of living in the world, while Black South Africans were systematically disenfranchised: denied voting and property rights, subjected to repressive labour and movement laws, had their wealth- and skill endowments restricted, received poor investment in healthcare and education, and endured racially discriminatory salaries while their entrepreneurship and self-employment were undermined (Arya & Bassi, 2011; Mangaliso, 1997). Many of the effects of apartheid are still felt in South African society today (Rajak, 2016; Wilson, 2001).

2.3.2.2 Business and apartheid: Co-conspirator or change agent?

Scholars are divided on the role that business played in ending apartheid. However, there is no doubt that profits were made on the back of human rights violations during the colonial

and apartheid times, and that business was complicit in entrenching at least certain aspects of apartheid, particularly the migrant labour system (Fig, 2005; Hamann, 2004, 2009; Hamann & Bertels, 2018).

The differences in opinions are encapsulated in the ‘liberal-radical’ debate that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s (Fig, 2005; Natrass, 1999): Liberals saw apartheid as an economically irrational policy that undermined long term economic growth, and highlighted the actions that business took to improve the lot of Black workers and communities. Radicals maintained that apartheid and class capitalism were but two sides of the same coin – apartheid ultimately benefited business owners by depressing Black labour costs and business was actively involved in maintaining the system.

2.3.2.3 *Business as change agent*

Liberals maintained that if multinational companies stayed in South Africa (instead of divesting) and adopted good corporate citizenship practices, they would put pressure on the government, positively impact labour discrimination, act as a progressive example, and create economic gains that could trickle down to alleviate poverty (Berat, 1990; Mangaliso, 1997; Seidman, 2003). In Britain, wary of the economic and political implications of sudden disengagement, and under the influence of prevailing cold war politics (which had the South African government as a capitalist ally in opposition to a socialist liberation movement), ‘constructive engagement’ encouraged training and higher wages for Black employees and using company influence for reform (Gurney, 2009).

The Sullivan Principles, created in 1977 by Reverend Leon Sullivan, a US civil rights activist and General Motors board member, exemplified this thinking (Mangaliso, 1997). This corporate code of conduct called on US companies operating in South Africa to adopt racially equitable workplace practices, desegregate workplace facilities, give equal pay, support the skilling and advancement of Black employees, improve the quality of life for Black employees outside the workplace, and later, to actively lobby against the apartheid government (Broyles & Aflatooni, 1999; Mangaliso, 1997; Seidman, 2003). The 1976 Soweto uprisings had sparked renewed international attention on the injustice of apartheid, and the Sullivan Principles were voluntarily adopted by several US companies and widely referenced in anti-apartheid advocacy (Berat, 1990; Broyles & Aflatooni, 1999; Mangaliso, 1997; Seidman, 2003). UK and Scandinavian shareholders also divested from firms that did not uphold the Sullivan Principles (Giamporcaro & Viviers, 2014).

South African companies also contributed to social causes benefiting Black South Africans, under pressure from unions, opposition movements and community organisations (Patel & Mushonga, 2015). The Urban Foundation, spearheaded by Anglo American, was also established in the wake of the 1976 Soweto uprisings and through its membership of around 350 companies, it funded and implemented numerous development and educational projects in urban areas, mainly in Soweto (Hamann, 2004, 2009).

Two inter-related aspects for contemporary South African CSR are relevant here – one, the significance of business’ self-regulatory codes of conduct and two, the important but separate, and often expedient nature of corporate philanthropy under public pressure. The Sullivan Principles, for instance, required investment in community development, and many of its adherents established corporate trust funds for this purpose (Kabir et al., 2015). The accounting firm that gave businesses their Sullivan ratings gave disproportionate weight to these community donations, resulting in many businesses simply spending more money in an expedient effort to improve their Sullivan ratings (Seidman, 2003).

2.3.2.4 *Business as co-conspirator*

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) looked into the role of business in apartheid and distinguished between different levels of complicity – active collaboration (first order involvement), supply of goods and services used in oppression (second order involvement) and, benefitting from a racially structured society (third order involvement) (Nattrass, 1999). The agriculture, mining, and armaments industries are singled out for first and second-order involvement: profiting off products used in oppression, benefitting from the control of land and the movement of people, or entrenching the migrant labour system (Nattrass, 1999; Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998).

The migrant labour system also featured in other sectors, notably manufacturing (Wilson, 2001). Employers in apartheid South Africa were dependent on cheap, unskilled and exploited Black labour, and together with the state, kept Black wages extremely low and actively resisted unionisation or union recognition for Black workers (Lichtenstein, 2017). However, strikes protesting low wages in the early 1970s exposed the regime’s vulnerability by showing how mobilising discontent could disrupt the labour system on which the economy and the government depended (Kurtz, 2010; Lichtenstein, 2017). It was the precursor to the rise of militant, political unionism, the independent Black trade union movement in the 1970s and eventual systems of formal recognition of Black unions in the

1980s (Gurney, 2009; Seidman, 1990). Mass strikes and stayaways in the 1980s put enormous pressure on the South African economy and government: Black trade unions were critical to the demise of apartheid, particularly the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in 1985 (Gould IV, 1987; Lichtenstein, 2017; Seidman, 1990).

Radical anti-apartheid activists advocated for total divestment from and economic sanctions against South Africa (Gurney, 2009). The Sullivan Principles, for instance, did not have the impact that proponents had hoped for: employing less than 1% of Black South Africans, US companies' progressive labour policies could only do so much (Berat, 1990). Furthermore, adherence to and monitoring of the Sullivan Principles was flawed (Berat, 1990; Broyles & Aflatooni, 1999; Mangaliso, 1997). Even Sullivan himself eventually became disillusioned. In 1985 he declared his support for complete disinvestment if apartheid was not ended within two years, and in 1987, when the regime had dug in its heels, he made a broad call for US companies to divest from South Africa (Berat, 1990). This pressure, together with broader US anti-apartheid legislation in the late 1980s meant that many US companies did exactly that, and disinvested (Berat, 1990).

Notable aspects for contemporary CSR are the enduring effects of the migrant labour system, the political role of the South African labour movement, and how disinvestment and sanctions underscored the interdependence of government and the business-driven economy. Trade unions are still powerful actors in South Africa, commanding a substantial voting block and advocating for worker's rights as well as social justice. International sanctions and corporate disinvestment were key to apartheid's demise: it delegitimated the government and strained the economy on which it depended (Berat, 1990; Mangaliso, 1997; Paul & Aquila, 1988). This reality was undoubtedly top of mind when in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in the face of the inevitable downfall of apartheid, business engaged with anti-apartheid leaders while they were still in exile with the aim to ensure pro-market policies in the new dispensation (Diale, 2012; Seekings & Nattrass, 2011).

2.3.3 South African CSR since 1994

2.3.3.1 The transition to democracy

Democracy meant dramatic social, economic and political changes for South Africa (Alessandri et al., 2011). Through the transition, additional factors affected South African

CSR: the exposure to and influence of international CSR; racialised wealth disparity and distrust between government and business; and economic empowerment as a moral imperative.

International influences:

Sanctions and trade restrictions had isolated South African business during apartheid. Democracy and reintegration into a globalising economy brought exposure to international CSR thinking, practice and codes, which continue to influence local CSR (Fig, 2005; Hamann, 2009; Littlewood & Holt, 2013; Visser, 2005). South African firms started positioning themselves as global players, with some even moving their primary listings to stock exchanges abroad, placing further scrutiny on their governance and CSR practices (Fig, 2005; Visser, 2005). Multinationals entering or re-investing in South Africa from the 1990s brought improvements in CSR practice, as they ensured compliance with more extensive international standards for their local operations and suppliers (Visser, 2005). International codes, initiatives, certifications and reporting frameworks were adopted by South African companies and multinationals operating locally, such as the ISO standards, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability guidelines, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification, the UN Global Compact and the Carbon Disclosure Project's climate change reporting (Fig, 2005; Hamann, 2009; Littlewood & Holt, 2013; Visser, 2005).

Racialised wealth disparities and government-business distrust:

The historical tension between business and apartheid created a contradictory relationship between the new government and business. Political power had shifted to the Black majority, and now, creating economic opportunities for Black South Africans was an urgent policy mandate (Alessandri et al., 2011). However, wealth and the private sector was still largely controlled by the white minority and the country had maintained a neoliberal and capitalist orientation (Diale, 2012) limiting possibilities for wealth redistribution. Post-1994 corporate profitability remained stable (Seekings & Natrass, 2011) and attempts at litigation against apartheid-era corporate injustices was met with surprising government resistance (Diale, 2012). Yet, in the new government there was discourse about disciplining business, policies that hampered business growth, and high levels of distrust between the state and business, particularly for local white business (Seekings & Natrass, 2011).

Economic empowerment as a moral imperative:

The TRC's recommendations regarding the role of business in apartheid were of a blanket,

systemic nature and did not single out any individual actors, but rather advocated for restitutive wealth taxes on all businesses (Nattrass, 1999; Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998). Nattrass (1999: 390) argues that this “made moral action by business simply a function of the legal-political environment in which it operated. Thus, the second that South Africa made the democratic transition in 1994, all existing firms crossed a moral boundary without doing anything. From propping up and supporting apartheid, they became the engines of growth for the new democracy.” Indeed, under the neoliberal paradigm that came to dominate South Africa in the post-apartheid years, “economic empowerment through enterprise” has become the apparent main driver of development (Rajak, 2016: 932). The wealth tax has not been implemented (Terreblanche, 2018) and ultimately, business escaped any serious retribution (Fig, 2005). Business adopted forward-looking language in describing its role in society, exemplified in the idea of ‘Corporate Social Investment’ (Fig, 2005), discussed in more detail further on.

It is against this backdrop that a regulatory landscape emerged that powerfully, yet indirectly compels CSR, and in many cases makes it a moral rather than a legal obligation (Ramlall, 2012).

2.3.3.2 Regulations

CSR regulations imposed by the state play a more significant role in South Africa than in most other countries, and the state plays a crucial role in defining and motivating CSR (Hamann, 2004; King et al., 2010). The advent of democracy was followed by waves of legislation with direct and indirect implications for CSR and a push by government to harness the resources and support of the private sector in the social and economic transformation of South Africa (Arya & Bassi, 2011; Fig, 2005; Patel & Mushonga, 2015; Visser, 2005). New legislation was introduced around issues such as labour, human rights, the environment, socio-economic development, corporate governance and health and safety, and the revised Companies Act mandates the creation of a board-level social and ethics committee to oversee adherence to law and codes of good practice (Patel & Mushonga, 2015; Ramlall, 2012; Visser, 2005).

An important CSR-related piece of legislation in South Africa is that of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) which expects business to redress economic inequities brought about by apartheid (Arya & Bassi, 2011; Visser, 2006). Initially, BEE entailed the transfer of ownership of white-owned business to Black business consortiums and was criticised for its

narrow focus on equity ownership and the fact that it created a small Black elite rather than benefiting the majority of disenfranchised Black South Africans (Ntim & Soobaroyen, 2013). The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act 53 of 2003, and the associated BBBEE Codes of Good Practice (released by the Department of Trade and Industry in 2007) broadened the scope to include, in addition to ownership, employment equity, skills development, management control, enterprise development, preferential procurement, and philanthropy (Arya & Bassi, 2011; Ntim & Soobaroyen, 2013). Many industries also proactively developed tailored industry BEE charters and targets (Arya & Bassi, 2011; Fig, 2005). A company receives a BBBEE rating from a qualified verification agency, based on its performance on empowering Black South Africans across the various scorecard elements, as laid out in the BBBEE Codes or the applicable industry BEE charter (Arya & Bassi, 2011). A subsequent revision to the Act in 2014 reflects more stringent measures, penalties and enforcement mechanisms (Werksmans Inc., 2015).

Compliance with BBBEE is not mandatory, but, since the 2014 revisions, the country's only stock exchange, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) has made it mandatory for listed companies (A. Maxwell & Pretorius, 2017). There are other strong incentives in place to encourage compliance: a firm's BBBEE rating determines eligibility to tender for government or public entity contracts and obtain licenses in certain sectors (e.g. gaming, mining); other companies expect good ratings from their suppliers in order to boost their own procurement ratings; and misrepresentation of BBBEE information may have criminal consequences (Werksmans Inc., 2015).

2.3.3.3 *Codes of conduct*

In addition to CSR legislation, South Africa also has a culture of business self-regulation and the implementation of codes of conduct, underpinned by the socio-political mandate of nation building (King et al., 2010). This combination of imposed regulation and self-regulation become the framework from which the normative expectations from stakeholders arise (Arya & Bassi, 2011). The mimicking of peers to manage stakeholder perceptions or to maintain and enhance legitimacy is a typical response in environments characterised by rapid change and uncertainty, and appears to drive CSR reporting though not necessarily CSR practice in South Africa (Dawkins & Ngunjiri, 2008).

The King Codes of corporate governance, now in its fourth iteration (King IV) is an influential voluntary corporate governance code that institutionalised corporate governance in

South Africa when it was introduced in 1994 (Ntim et al., 2012). In contrast with other international codes such as the Sarbanes Oxley Act, it goes beyond the financial and regulatory aspects of corporate governance to include significant consideration of stakeholders, independent assurance of CSR practices, and elements of affirmative action (Ackers & Eccles, 2015; Andreasson, 2011; Ntim et al., 2012). The underpinning philosophies are sustainable development, integrated thinking and reporting, corporate citizenship and stakeholder inclusivity (The Institute of Directors in Southern Africa NPC, 2016). Amendments to the JSE listing requirements in 2017 made compliance with King IV mandatory for stock exchange listing, making it a de facto regulation for local listed companies (A. Maxwell & Pretorius, 2017), as with BBBEE.

Despite the extensive considerations for non-financial performance embedded in King IV, the implementation of these aspects of the Codes may still be an aspirational ideal rather than a practical reality in corporate South Africa (Padayachee, 2017). The Codes may provide for CSR assurance, but the lack of uniform reporting standards and the nuanced language in reports that leave them open to interpretation, make it difficult to confirm the veracity of the CSR claims that are made (Ackers & Eccles, 2015).

2.3.3.4 CSR in practice – Corporate Social Investment

A salient characteristic of contemporary South African CSR is the idea of Corporate Social Investment (CS Investment). It is a South African peculiarity that interprets CSR as corporate or strategic philanthropy, emphasising financial or in-kind contributions to societal welfare, education and healthcare (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016; Hamann & Kapelus, 2004; Hinson & Ndhlovu, 2011; King et al., 2010). CSR and CS Investment are so intertwined in South Africa that the terms are sometimes used interchangeably (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016; Patel & Mushonga, 2015).

South African business has favoured the concept of CS Investment, or terms such as corporate citizenship, over that of CSR, despite the prevalent use of CSR in literature and by practitioners: ‘Responsibility’ carries with it an acknowledgement of the legacy of social and environmental injustices perpetuated by business during apartheid, whereas CS Investment is positioned as a good practice, with no call to redress (Fig, 2005).

Pre-1994, CSR in South Africa was dominated by ad-hoc philanthropic contributions, which saw an uptick at the end of apartheid (Hamann, 2009). Today, business philanthropy, and the

measurement thereof in financial terms with only cursory measurement of social impact, is still firmly institutionalised in South Africa, specifically through the BBBEE Codes of Good Practice. The Codes give companies a full score on the ‘Socio-Economic Development’ BBBEE scorecard element for an investment of 1% net profit after tax into social programs that benefit Black South Africans (Arya & Bassi, 2011).

CS Investment explicitly refers to development-focused activities extraneous to the business, and this clear separation between business and development underpins the criticism of the CS Investment-dominated approach to CSR in South Africa (Fig, 2005; King et al., 2010). It is perceived as having a lack of integrity, being misaligned with core business practice and ineffective in addressing real community needs (King et al., 2010). It isn’t uncommon for CS Investment to be managed at the periphery of core business activities, by inexperienced staff, with little sustainable social impact, and often with the sole aim of externalising social and environmental liabilities of the firm (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016). The mining industry is illustrative of the problem with the social impact-business bifurcation: CS Investment in mining communities contributes to development, but does not address the root causes of social issues, many of which directly emanate from the core business practices of the mines, such as the management of their migrant workforce (Hamann & Kapelus, 2004). The South African corporate sector may be recognised as a leader on the continent when it comes to philanthropy, but has lagged behind in addressing issues that have more direct links to core business practice such as the environment and human rights (Arya & Bassi, 2011).

There are a few rationales for the philanthropy-dominant nature of CSR in developing countries, and especially in Africa:

- The business case argument, which echoes the idea of enlightened self-interest – by supporting development business creates tangible and intangible benefits for itself and for society (Idemudia, 2013).
- The institutional void or governance deficit hypothesis: a context of weak formal institutions creates institutional voids, and private actors take on responsibilities that would normally have fallen on state actors (Ahen & Amankwah-Amoah, 2018; Idemudia, 2013). CSR can be a development tool, addressing issues of poverty where the state is unable to provide basic services (Forcadell & Aracil, 2017). However, institutional voids allow business to define CSR on their own terms, and instead of implementing responsible and sustainable innovations, they may mask or mitigate

negative externalities of their operations through philanthropic actions (Ahen & Amankwah-Amoah, 2018; Idemudia, 2013).

- The societal expectations argument, which sees CSR as a tool for ensuring legitimacy and an ongoing social license to operate (Idemudia, 2013).

In a context where poverty and social deprivation are the most pronounced social issues – where government is not providing adequate services and compels only a certain kind of CSR, where the development of the majority of South Africans is still an urgent need, and where there are consistent calls from all stakeholders for the private sector to intervene in issues of social welfare – it is not hard to see why CSR manifests this way in South Africa.

2.3.4 Summary

South Africa's political history has a dominant influence on the meaning and practice of CSR in the country (Hamann, 2009; King et al., 2010; Visser, 2005). Corporate entrenchment of apartheid on the one hand, and resistance to it on the other, involved dynamics that are reflected in contemporary South African CSR: a culture of self-regulatory codes of conduct; the important, but segregated and often expedient nature of corporate philanthropy; the persistence of migrant labour and its socio-economic consequences; labour unions as a political and social justice force; racialised wealth disparities and a contentious but interdependent relationship between government and business.

A democratic South Africa maintained a neoliberal capitalist orientation which gives much leeway to how companies interpret their responsibility to society (Diale, 2012). Together with an increased influence of international codes of conduct, government's attempts at eroding racialised wealth disparities, and an idea of economic empowerment as a moral imperative, the regulatory environment strongly compels certain kinds of CSR, specifically philanthropy and the economic inclusion and fair treatment of Black South Africans who were disadvantaged by the apartheid regime (Ramlall, 2012).

The economic contributions of companies are valued – business creates jobs, provides quality products and services, investment, infrastructure and more (Visser, 2009), particularly in the context of the high unemployment rate that is part of poverty in South Africa (Seekings & Natrass, 2011). More broadly, enterprise is seen as a tool for development and empowerment (Rajak, 2016), with the state's BBBEE policies touted as a means to incentivise inclusive growth and reduce economic inequality (Arya & Bassi, 2011).

CS Investment, a term often used interchangeably with CSR in South Africa, is essentially strategic corporate philanthropy, explicitly external to the core business operations (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016). A philanthropy-centric approach to CSR is emblematic of the practice in developing countries (Ahen & Amankwah-Amoah, 2018), where some form of corporate philanthropy is an expected norm, because of prevailing socio-economic needs (Visser, 2009). The CS Investment approach to CSR separates the economic and social value creation of the firm – activities that are done as part of CS Investment may have a ‘business case’ by contributing to intangibles such as company reputation, legitimacy, risk reduction or employee engagement, but are not core to the company’s day to day operations (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016; Hamann & Kapelus, 2004).

Institutional forces are a strong predictor of the type and extent of CSR initiatives that firms pursue, but can often lead to symbolic rather than genuine CSR, designed to appease stakeholders and meet minimum standards or expectations (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). Indeed, the philanthropy-centric approach CSR is seen by many as a disingenuous tool for legitimisation and improving company reputation, without measurable impact or genuine intent (Patel & Mushonga, 2015). Many executives may view CSR as a costly compliance exercise, or an altruistic concession, with no clear economic benefit for the company (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016; Patel & Mushonga, 2015). BBBEE, intended to promote inclusive business practices, is also often treated as a compliance and demonstrative exercise (Rajak, 2016).

It is not difficult to draw parallels between much older global ideas of CSR and their critiques and contemporary CSR in South Africa. This limits the potential of business to be an engine of inclusive growth and to make a positive social impact at scale. New approaches that integrate social and economic concerns into core business operations are key to unlocking this potential (Ramlall, 2012), and this is where the idea of CS Innovation – rather than CS Investment – holds promise.

2.4 Corporate Social Innovation and Corporate Social Intrapreneurship

2.4.1 Introduction

CS Innovation has been proposed as an evolution of and an alternative to CSR – specifically the kind of reputation- and philanthropy-driven CSR that is emblematic of CS Investment. CS Innovation ties the success of the business to addressing social and environmental issues (Esen & Maden-Eyiusta, 2019; Googins, 2014; Mirvis et al., 2016). Peter Drucker (1984, as cited by Carroll, 1999) was one of the earliest scholars to describe the social responsibility of business as turning social issues into economic opportunities. Rosabeth Moss Kanter put the CS Innovation name to this idea in 1999, after which CS Innovation started getting more attention in academic literature. The departure from CSR and the increased appearance of CS Innovation and related terms in academic literature is marked by the 2011 publication of Porter and Kramer’s Shared Value article (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020).

CS Intrapreneurship is the specific manifestation of CS Innovation that is the focus of this research, and involves the initiative and pursuit of CS Innovation by individual change agents within the company (Grayson et al., 2014; Halme et al., 2012).

Below I introduce CS Innovation, compare it to related concepts that have been proposed as CSR alternatives, and examine some of the driving forces behind the development of these approaches.

2.4.2 Corporate Social Innovation

2.4.2.1 Innovation

Innovation is “the intentional introduction and application within a role, group or organisation, of ideas, processes, products or procedures, new to the relative unit of adoption, designed to significantly benefit role performance, the group, the organisation or the wider society” (West & Farr, 1989 as cited by Wagner, 2010: 583-584); or “the process of discovery and development that creates new products, production processes, organizations, technologies, institutional and systemic arrangements” (Van Kleef & Roome, 2007: 39). These definitions of innovation go beyond purely technical innovations to also include new models, organisations and concepts (Hautamaki & Oksanen, 2016), redefining positioning (e.g. introducing an existing product in a new context, or redefining its meaning) or redefining the paradigm of the firm or industry (e.g. business model innovation) (Preuss,

2011). In a corporate context, the reasons for innovation are not always rooted in problem solving – it is often aimed at increasing competitiveness and profit – and it can range from incremental improvements to systems-altering transformations (Van Kleef & Roome, 2007). While innovation itself is a contested area, the focus of this study is the subset of social innovation, and specifically what conditions may contribute to its emergence in corporations.

2.4.2.2 Social innovation

Innovation is increasingly important in solving society's most pressing problems (Crets & Celer, 2014; Hautamaki & Oksanen, 2016). Social innovation refers to activities that aim to find progressive solutions to social problems such as poverty, inequality, exclusion, and environmental degradation, and generally setting the direction for a more positive future (Moulaert et al., 2013; Tracey & Stott, 2017). An oft cited definition of social innovation is “A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals” (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008: 39).

2.4.2.3 Corporate Social Innovation

CS Innovation is the corporate manifestation of social innovation. The departure point for CS Innovation is a call for business to reframe social issues as economic issues, based on the premise that companies can grow and be more competitive by creating solutions to social problems (Kanter, 1999). It differs from traditional CSR in that it has a strategic rather than philanthropic intent and is managed as such; it applies the full range of corporate assets; it involves deeper collaboration within and outside of the corporation; and importantly, it strives to generate new sources of revenue and innovation that is more relevant to the societal context (Mirvis et al., 2016). It involves intentional changes to the organisation to create simultaneous social value and economic returns (Adams et al., 2016). CS Innovation resolves social and environmental concerns and considers shareholder value (Herrera, 2015), by bringing business solutions to societal needs (Mirvis et al., 2016).

2.4.2.4 Corporate Social Intrapreneurship

Social intrapreneurship can be considered as a subset of social entrepreneurship (discussed in 2.4.3.3 below), referring to entrepreneurial activity with a social intent that takes place within an established organisation (Mair & Martí, 2006; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). It is treated as a form of CS Innovation for this study, as CS Intrapreneurs are “people within a large

corporation who take direct initiative for innovations that address social or environmental challenges while also creating commercial value for the company” (Grayson, McLaren, & Spitzbeck, 2014: 1). It refers not to the executive action of top management, but rather a bottom up process, driven by dedicated individual change agents who behave like entrepreneurs inside an organisation (Alt & Craig, 2016, Halme et al., 2012, Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011).

2.4.3 Related terms

2.4.3.1 Sustainable innovation and eco-innovation

Eco-innovation has an explicit focus on environmental and ecological considerations. Sustainable or sustainability-oriented innovation are sometimes used in the same manner, or interchangeably with the way social innovation is described above: intentional changes to an organisation’s philosophy and values, the development of new products, services, processes or business models that bring benefits to the environment or society – not necessarily disruptive, but with the intent to mitigate negative impacts of current solutions or bring about a positive impact, in addition to economic returns and market success (Adams et al., 2016; Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Ketata et al., 2015; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011).

2.4.3.2 Inclusive innovation

‘Inclusive innovation’ highlights the inclusion of marginalised people in the innovation process and / or as targets for innovative products and services, with the aim to enhance their social and economic wellbeing (George et al., 2012; Heeks et al., 2013). Inclusive growth is the desired outcome of inclusive innovation, ensuring that the benefits of economic development and growth extend to members of society who have been structurally excluded from opportunities and resources (George et al., 2012; Pansera & Martinez, 2017). While these excluded groups could be women, youth, disabled people or ethnic minorities, the focus is typically the inclusion of the poor (Heeks et al., 2013). Inclusive growth (and innovation) has been widely acknowledged as a public and business policy objective in South Africa, exemplified through B-BBEE policies and initiatives, and also elsewhere by authorities such as the World Bank and governments in the EU, UK, and India (Arya & Bassi, 2011; Chataway et al., 2014; Crets & Celer, 2014; George et al., 2012).

Inclusive innovation encompasses ideas such as scarcity-driven innovation, grassroots innovation and Bottom-of-the-Pyramid (BOP) initiatives (Pansera & Martinez, 2017), or the

application of innovations created in developing countries in developed markets, as opposed to the conventional model which is the other way around (George et al., 2012). Corporate inclusive innovation often relates to BOP initiatives, which apply for-profit models as poverty alleviation tools, and considers collaboration with and inclusion of poor consumers as a competitive business strategy (Prahalad, 2014). In addition to broader inclusive business practices, including those under the auspices of B-BBEE, BOP initiatives have also received some attention in South Africa (e.g., Ismail, Kleyn, & Ansell, 2012).

For the purposes of this inquiry, I will use the broader umbrella term of social innovation to cover innovation with positive social impact, sustainability- or eco innovation, and inclusive innovation. Ecological problems are arguably social ones, and while inclusion is inherently part of social innovation (Moulaert et al., 2013), ‘inclusive innovation’ is narrower in scope as it does not explicitly include environmental considerations.

2.4.3.3 Social entrepreneurship and hybrid organisations

Social innovation refers to the process or to the innovation or solution to a social problem. The social entrepreneur is the individual actor creating the innovation or driving the social change (Schoening, 2014) and the creator of the social enterprise. Social enterprises are commonly labelled as hybrid organisations (Pirson, 2012; Tracey & Stott, 2017). Hybrid business models blend not-for-profit and profit-oriented approaches, integrating the social welfare logic typical of a non-profit with the commercial logic of a for-profit business (Ghobadian et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2016). These new kinds of organisations operate in the public, private or social sectors, and the intersections between them, while often intentionally discarding these labels altogether (Tracey & Stott, 2017).

Business already creates social value in a broad sense: it provides useful products, pays taxes, creates employment and supports its suppliers (Pirson, 2012). Business innovations are created with the intention of seeking profit, while social innovations aim to improve society or address specific social challenges (Pol & Ville, 2009). There can be an overlap in these outcomes – business innovations that have positive social outcomes (albeit disproportionately distributed) and social innovations that succeed within the marketplace, but not all business innovations are positive for society and not all social innovations can be profitable (Pol & Ville, 2009).

Social entrepreneurship is typically distinguished from social innovation in its inclusion of market mechanisms, earned income strategies, and creation of economic value in addition to social value, or creation of economic value through creating social value (Agrawal & Hockerts, 2014). It is distinguished from traditional entrepreneurship through the primacy of the enterprise's social value creation mission and the 'social value' that the entrepreneurs aim for is typically understood to also include environmental benefit (P. A. Dacin et al., 2010; Pirson, 2012).

Social enterprise and entrepreneurship have a long history in South Africa, and there are several academic programmes, local and international social enterprise organisations and - networks, and a relatively enabling regulatory environment (Littlewood & Holt, 2015). There is however, no established legal form for social enterprises and they either formalise as for-profit, non-profit or dual linked for-profit and non-profit legal entities (Littlewood & Holt, 2015).

While the blending of social and commercial logics is essential to CS Innovation, hybrid organisations or social enterprise differ from CS Innovation in that they are specifically created from the outset with this in mind, whereas CS Innovation involves the modification of established business models and systems in an existing organisation (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020).

2.4.3.4 Creating shared value (CSV)

One of the most prominent ideas in the business and society literature in the last decade, and certainly in practice, has been Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer's 2011 idea of 'Creating Shared Value' (CSV). It is defined as "policies and operating practices of a company that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates" (Porter & Kramer, 2011: 6). The authors position CSV as an alternative to and an evolution of CSR, and an evolution in understanding of capitalism. It has received enormous attention and CSV has become a buzzword in offices and on business school campuses around the world (Beschorner & Hajduk, 2017), including in South Africa. The Shared Value Africa initiative, for example, is headquartered in South Africa, and is a network of businesses, NGOs and development organisations aiming to advance the idea of Shared Value as an economic development strategy on the continent (Shared Value Africa Initiative, 2020).

CSV has received a fair amount of justifiable criticism. It is critiqued as being only a buzzword and not a solid theoretical concept, having a lack of empirical grounding and a vague conceptualisation (Dembek et al., 2016). CSV is juxtaposed with an outdated conceptualisation of CSR as disconnected philanthropy, ignoring decades of research into the business case for CSR and the entire body of work of ‘strategic CSR’ (Crane et al., 2014).

On the positive side, CSV’s departure from reputation-driven, reactionary business approaches to social progress is lauded, as is the idea of using societal needs as a focal point for innovations, as opposed to conventional products and services (Beschoner & Hajduk, 2017). CSV elevates social goals to a strategic level, as real opportunities and strategic targets, and creates a broad concept that offers promise for integrated thinking about the interface of business and society, including economic value creation for groups other than just shareholders (Crane et al., 2014; Hartman & Werhane, 2013).

The popularity of CSV with practitioners is an important strength: it creates the opportunity for a broader understanding of CSR among leading corporations (Crane et al., 2014) even if they would not use the terminology of CSR. Indeed, the choice of words – the economically oriented ‘value’ as opposed to obligation-laded terms such as ‘responsibility’ or ‘ethics’ – and its congruence with the idea of the firm as a profit-driven entity, has been instrumental to its popularity with managers and in winning over mainstream sceptics of CSR (Beschoner & Hajduk, 2017; Crane et al., 2014). With the tendency of South African firms to also eschew the idea of corporate social *responsibility* in favour of other terms as discussed earlier, CSV may hold promise here as well. The founding members of the Shared Value Africa Initiative for example, includes three major South African corporates – Absa, Discovery and Old Mutual (Shared Value Africa Initiative, 2020).

CSV is similar to CS Innovation in that it directs corporate strategy towards solving social needs, treats social problems as business opportunities and pursues simultaneous social and commercial value (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020; Tracey & Stott, 2017). It differs from CS Innovation in that it is limited to policies and operating practices that focus on economic success (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020). For this study, CSV is therefore treated as a subset of CS Innovation.

2.4.4 Drivers behind the emergence of CS Innovation and related ideas

2.4.4.1 Tensions in CSR and the call for innovation

Contemporary criticism of CSR differs starkly from what it was earlier, when it was said, for instance, that business was not equipped to tackle social issues, or that engaging in CSR would make it less competitive (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). Now, critiques, albeit often levelled against a philanthropy-centred, reputation-driven conceptualisation of CSR, are that CSR inadequately mitigates negative corporate social and environmental impact, does not tap into the potential that business has to make a substantial positive impact, and will not create systemic and sustainable social change (Kanter, 1999; Mirvis et al., 2016; Porter & Kramer, 2011; Visser, 2011). In South Africa, companies eagerly portray themselves as good corporate citizens, but local CSR has been criticized for being superficial, performative and disconnected from core business activities (Ramlall, 2012). As much as CSR has become embedded in business, it needs to become more explicitly strategic and more innovative (Ghobadian et al., 2015; Googins, 2014).

There are fundamental tensions between the economic and the social roles that business is expected to play and navigating these is no simple managerial task (Margolis & Walsh, 2003). The business case for CSR may have been validated (Barnett, 2016) but there is a compelling business case for corporate social irresponsibility as well (Brammer et al., 2012): examples abound of companies engaging in behaviour that is harmful to society in the pursuit of short-term profit, especially where the institutional mitigations are not in place (Campbell, 2007). CSR's institutionalisation, driven by a combination of ethics, compliance, reputation and responses to specific stakeholder pressures, also represents a challenge for CSR – constrained by conflicting demands, complexity and gaps in execution, “companies are pushing forward on CSR – just not very far, or very fast, or very effectively” (Googins, 2014: 91).

A company's competitiveness is enhanced by strategically sensing and responding to opportunities and threats, and CSR should be able to add to this competency as it involves constant interaction with stakeholders and understanding of environmental influences (Herrera, 2015). Effective integration of CSR may create the synergies needed to pursue social innovation, but CSR is not necessarily the underlying force spurring social innovation (Crets & Celer, 2014) and CSR is rarely connected to other strategic innovations (Googins, 2014). This is often because the CSR teams in corporations have more contact with human

resources, public relations and procurement departments, rather than those divisions that lead innovation and strategy, such as R&D or sales and marketing (Crets & Celer, 2014). In South Africa, CSR is often dominated by public relations departments (Ramlall, 2012).

The tensions inherent in CSR, and its failure to drive strategic business innovation have influenced the call for new approaches such as CS Innovation (Googins, 2014).

2.4.4.2 Growing social pressures and new expectations of business

There is increased global economic, political and social upheaval, disillusionment with capitalism, and unprecedented awareness of environmental issues, most critically climate change (Ghobadian et al., 2015; Googins, 2014; Roome, 2014). When capitalism is drawn into question, so is the role of business in society. There are increased expectations of business to integrate social and environmental considerations into their business models (Googins, 2014) and indeed a changing social role for business.

Sustainable development has been an integral part of CSR discussion since the 2000s (Carroll & Shabana, 2010) but the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 marked a shift in thinking about the role of business in sustainable development (Scheyvens et al., 2016). Economic growth has always been an element of the development agenda (with a central role for the private sector), but in the SDGs, it is embedded in inclusive growth and is a means to address inequality. Business had always been considered as a contributor to development, through job creation or investment, for instance, but now, business was positioned as an *equal* player with government, donors or NGOs in contributing directly to initiatives aimed at improving lives (Scheyvens et al., 2016). Where corporations had been questioned about relations with their direct suppliers in the past, they were now being asked to account for the social and environmental impact across their entire value chain (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011).

It is not uncharted territory for business. Companies have been actively working with governments and multilateral agencies to address major social and environmental issues (George et al., 2016). Firms have been self-regulating and engaging in activities that had previously been deemed as the domain of government – public health, education, the protection of human rights and more, especially in the context of globalisation (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). Globalisation itself is not the sole driver of a more political role for the

modern corporation, but it does impact how business engages in social and political roles (Djelic & Etchanchu, 2017).

Business has not been an unwitting object in this process either. Western multinationals in particular played an active role in the creation of the SDGs, embedding pro-business rhetoric in the process and the outcomes (Scheyvens et al., 2016). In Africa, corporations respond to external pressure to act in socially responsible ways as much as they aim to shape and control the discourse (Idemudia, 2013). There is some evidence of this in South Africa as well, where CS Investment projects are increasingly balancing business and social objectives and are shifting from ad-hoc philanthropy to becoming more focused on good governance, partnerships and sustainable development (Hinson & Ndhlovu, 2011; Skinner & Mersham, 2008).

Yet, while many firms declare the centrality of societal concerns to their mission, social problems such as economic inequality, human rights abuses and climate change persist (Barnett, 2016) and almost every macro level indicator of social, environmental and ethical health shows a decline (Visser, 2011). Business has engaged in sustainable development with increased visibility, yet many justifiably consider companies as creators of substantial societal problems (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011).

While business grapples with the increased pressure to address social issues, and the tensions and inadequacies of institutionalised CSR, a new generation of innovators are leading the way and setting an example for a different way to do business.

2.4.4.3 Social innovators leading the way

In the wake of enormous, accelerating social challenges, social innovators and social entrepreneurs from non-business sectors have emerged, with novel approaches to addressing these issues, often incorporating the logics of business (Ghobadian et al., 2015; Googins, 2014; Mirvis et al., 2016). Yet, it is business that has traditionally been regarded as the engine of innovation, driving economic growth and industrialisation through technological and organisational innovations (Martinez et al., 2017). The failure of the current business innovation system to bring about solutions to pressing social challenges, the shift in expectations for business, the call for new ways of doing things, and the examples set by social innovators, all contribute to an interest in the role of business in social innovation (Googins, 2014; Martinez et al., 2017).

In the most optimistic and visionary sense, business has the potential to be an engine of social innovation, applying the power of its systems, scale and innovation capabilities to the problems at hand (Kanter, 1999; Martinez et al., 2017). Innovation is essential for business growth and competitiveness, and some companies are turning to social innovation as their new opportunity (Kanter, 1999; Mirvis et al., 2016; Oeij et al., 2019).

2.4.5 CS Innovation: just another buzzword?

As laid out above, CS Innovation stands as a distinct concept and has the potential to advance the positive social impact of business from the current manifestations of CSR to something that is more systematic and strategic (Esen & Maden-Eyiusta, 2019). However, the examples of CS Innovation that I could find in the literature (and the ones described in this study), are discrete projects within larger organisations, where traditional CSR dominates in parallel to a focus on profit and operational efficiency. Indeed, a salient aspect of this study is the work that CS Intrapreneurs have to do in advancing their ideas, which may deviate from the dominant way of thinking in their organisations (Alt & Craig, 2016). This also means that CS Innovation examples can be co-opted for impression management, falling short of their strategic intent.

2.4.6 Summary

Social innovation delivers novel solutions to social and environmental issues. CS Innovation is the corporate manifestation of this, integrating the simultaneous pursuit of business objectives and encompassing the ideas of CSV, eco-, sustainable-, and inclusive innovation (including BOP initiatives). CS Innovation produces new products, processes, organisational forms, -systems and -structures, and new business models; it is a strategic decision and investment, managed like other strategic initiatives; it brings the company's full assets and expertise to bear on social problems; it involves deeper internal and external collaboration; it aims to bring sustainable solutions to social needs while creating new sources of revenue and competitiveness; and reorients innovation to being more socially relevant (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020; Herrera, 2015; Kanter, 1999; Mirvis et al., 2016).

Social entrepreneurship is the organisational enactment of social innovation and typically includes commercial objectives (Agrawal & Hockerts, 2014). Social enterprises and hybrid organisations are established from the outset with an integration of social and commercial

logic, whereas CS Innovation introduces this integration within an existing organisation (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020).

While CS Innovation as an umbrella concept has limited awareness in South Africa, CSV, inclusive innovation (e.g., BOP initiatives) and hybrid organisations (e.g., social enterprise) have received attention in academia and practice.

The emergence of and interest in CS Innovation is driven by the acceleration of and increased awareness of social and environmental problems; the increased expectations of business to mitigate the negative externalities of current business models and also to directly contribute to creating positive social and environmental impact; the examples being set by the social innovation and -entrepreneurship movement; the need for business growth and improved competitiveness; and an appreciation of the unique strengths of corporates, as individual actors and in collaborative efforts, and their ability to take innovation to scale (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020; Ghobadian et al., 2015; Googins, 2014; Mirvis et al., 2016; Pfitzer & Kramer, 2016).

The specific kind of CS Innovation that is the focus of this study is CS Intrapreneurship, which is a bottom-up process driven by individual change agents (Grayson et al., 2014; Halme et al., 2012). In a corporate setting, CS Innovation through CS Intrapreneurship has the potential to create organisation-wide or even systems wide change – reorienting business to apply its capabilities for taking innovation to scale towards addressing social issues (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; Gray et al., 2015; Mirvis et al., 2016). It is this potential of individual actions to eventually create positive change at a macro level that is of interest to this study, and why CS Intrapreneurship was chosen as the focus.

To understand innovation and change dynamics at the individual, organisational and societal levels better, institutional theory provides a useful lens, and this is where I turn next.

2.5 Institutional theory

2.5.1 Introduction

Institutional theory examines stability and change in social systems on all levels, from personal interactions to macro global frameworks, and provides powerful explanations for individual and organisational behaviour (M. T. Dacin et al., 2002; Scott, 2005). It examines how institutions are created, maintained and changed; how institutions govern action and how human actions constitute and give rise to institutions (Lawrence et al., 2013; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). This section introduces the institutional theory concepts that are being applied to this study.

2.5.2 Institutions and social actors

An institution can be thought of as the more or less enduring elements of social life that give it stability and meaning, providing socially constructed templates for action, cognition and emotion, generated and maintained through ongoing interactions (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Lawrence et al., 2011; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In institutional theory, it is therefore not only formal entities such as government departments or universities that are considered as institutions, but broader sets of socially constructed practices and ideas, like marriage or money. Institutions exist as nested systems across many levels of society (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

2.5.2.1 The three pillars of institutions

A foundational concept, first introduced by Scott in 1995, is that institutions have three pillars: the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive (Decker et al., 2018; Scott, 2013). Scott's framework is discussed below, using a listed company's reporting practices as an illustrative example:

- Regulative elements of institutions are the most formal and influence the behaviour of social actors through rules and regulations, which are enforced through coercion or formal sanctions. In this example, a company's reporting could be determined by business laws requiring certain disclosures, enforced through legal means, or by the stock exchange where it is listed, which may dictate a certain frequency and substance of reporting to maintain a listing.

- Normative elements include social conventions, values and norms, and influence behaviour through a sense of moral obligation and appropriateness, sometimes signified through accreditations or certifications. A company may issue a sustainability report alongside its annual report, a practice that is neither required by law nor by the stock exchange, but is a normative practice that has become established over time, and becomes more entrenched as more companies follow suit.
- Cognitive-cultural elements are the most informal and are taken for granted conceptions of behaviour and shared understandings in a particular society. They often involve symbols, ideas and language and can be so ingrained that they are overlooked as a social construction – in this example, the taken-for-granted idea that a company can be publicly owned by shareholders and therefore has a duty of disclosure to the public.

These three pillars work together in institutional arrangements and may be aligned or misaligned, supporting and motivating different courses of action (Scott, 2013).

2.5.2.2 *Social actors and fields*

In institutional theory, the social actors are either organisations or individuals. Institutions shape the identities of and profoundly influence the behaviour of individual and collective social actors, enabling, constraining and orienting them towards certain kinds of actions (Brammer et al., 2012; Cardinale, 2017; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Organisations can be viewed as micro-institutions with their own sets of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive institutional elements, often interpreted and filtered from the broader institutional context that they are situated in (van Dijk et al., 2011). CS Intrapreneurs operate as social actors within the micro-institution that is their company, while the company is itself a social actor. Companies are in fact significant, powerful social actors: they not only influence the realities of those that they employ or the communities where they are located – they can shape culture (Brammer et al., 2012).

An organisational field is an aggregate of organisations that interact and compete with each other and constitute a recognised area of institutional life (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The institutional forces that drive behaviour are strongest in these fields of diverse and interdependent organisations (Scott, 2005). Exchange fields are defined by the actors' frequent and necessary exchanges with one another – e.g., between suppliers and customers.

Issue fields, which is often where social innovations play out, are characterised by a diversity of actors from different exchange fields coming together around a social issue (van Wijk et al., 2019).

2.5.2.3 *Institutional logics*

Institutional logics are patterns of cultural symbolic constructions, material practices, beliefs assumptions and rules that give boundaries to fields, identities to their members, guide action, decision making and the interpretation of social situations and interactions (Dahlmann & Grosvold, 2017; Maibom & Smith, 2016; Tracey et al., 2011; Voronov & Yorks, 2015; Zhu et al., 2016). Institutional logics exist at the societal, organisational and individual levels, and organisations filter and adapt the logics of the field and society that they are embedded in, reproducing them in a unique way within the organisation (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Institutions tend to have a central logic that moulds behaviour and interests while being available for elaboration (Decker et al., 2018). An organisation's institutional logic defines its primary mission, criteria for initiative success, how resources are mobilised and how innovation is oriented (Khan et al., 2018). A for-profit company, for example, has a commercial institutional logic at its centre – focusing the efforts of its employees and decision making towards maximising profit, and perhaps with underlying assumptions that this is not compatible with making a positive social impact. In this way, CS Innovation may challenge or elaborate on some of the dominant institutional logics of a company.

2.5.3 *Institutional change*

Once established, institutions can take on a life of their own, cementing power structures and shaping the identities of social actors (Brammer et al., 2012). Yet, institutions change: incrementally or abruptly, in a concentrated period of time or over centuries, and proceeding from an interpersonal level to a macro societal level (M. T. Dacin et al., 2002; Scott, 2013). The debates that have characterised the development of institutional theory have oscillated between the primacy of institutional determinism and the agency of actors (Cardinale, 2017); between micro and macro levels of focus (Schilke, 2018); between stability, conformity or homogeneity, and how institutions are disrupted and created (M. T. Dacin et al., 2002; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Today, the pendulum seems to have settled in the middle, integrating the various concepts that were created throughout the years. Institutional theory views both structure and agency as equally important (Cardinale, 2017), scholars are

advocating for multi-level approaches (Smets et al., 2012) and for examining institutional change and disruption as well as stability and maintenance (Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Pertinent to this study, is the question of institutional change – as the actions of intrapreneurs may be part of the earliest, microlevel moments of institutional change. CS Intrapreneurship can be seen as institutional intrapreneurship, aimed at change within the organisation as institution (Kistruck & Beamish, 2010). Institutional entrepreneurs take an interest in institutional arrangements and take the initiative to create new institutions and transform existing ones (Garud et al., 2007; Leca et al., 2009). In viewing CS Intrapreneurs as institutional entrepreneurs it is important to not overemphasise their rational and heroic characteristics but to keep their institutional embeddedness and the role of institutional conditions in enabling change in view (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2009).

Change is a product of forces and enabling conditions at all social levels:

- Sometimes change starts through seemingly mundane improvisations and deviations from institutional norms. A practice approach to institutional change examines these micro-institutional processes and the actions and interactions of individuals (Smets et al., 2012).
- Intra-organisational dynamics, values and interests influence change by shaping how organisations respond to institutional pressures (Smets et al., 2012).
- Change can be triggered by endogenous contradictions, such as the presence of a multiplicity and heterogeneity of institutional arrangements and logics (Dorado, 2005).
- It results from field-level exogenous shocks: A crisis or a jolt (e.g. social upheaval, technological disruption or regulatory changes) or acute, field-level, complex and multi-faceted problems such as climate change, which may precipitate crises (Leca et al., 2009).

At all these levels, functional, political or social pressures are exerted on institutionalised norms and practices. Problems with perceived utility or performance of existing institutional arrangements create functional pressure; political pressure comes from shifts in power or interests; and social pressure arises from divergent beliefs and practices (M. T. Dacin et al., 2002).

Ultimately, change is the product of action – whether intentional or unintentional, proactive or reactive. Between institutional stability and perpetuation on the one hand and institutional change and disruption on the other, lies the ‘paradox of embedded agency’ – how individuals can change the very institutions that govern their behaviour, emotion and cognition (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; Decker et al., 2018).

2.5.4 The paradox of embedded agency

Ongoing interactions are the source of institutional structures, and actors are continuously mobilised through these structures and interactions (Jarzabkowski et al., 2009). As much as institutions govern what people do, feel and think, they only exist because individuals create them. It is the actions of individual and collective actors that constitute and perpetuate them – and also what changes them (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Agency is the actor’s will and creativity to break from scripted behaviour patterns (Dorado, 2005) and their engagement with social structure (Cardinale, 2017). To continue with the example of a listed company’s reporting practices used above: In 2009, then newly-appointed CEO of London Stock Exchange-listed Unilever, Paul Polman, scrapped the standard practice of quarterly earnings reports for his company (Walker, 2018). Quarterly guidance and reporting are neither required by the stock exchange nor by British law, but had become an institutionalised practice. He declared the move an effort to foster longer term thinking in the company, and subsequently several of Unilever’s peers have followed suit and are only issuing annual reports (Walker, 2018).

Agency can be defined as “a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)” (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009: 47). These three temporal dimensions of agency are interdependent (Dorado, 2005).

2.5.4.1 Habit and iteration

Bourdieu’s concept of habitus (1977, 1990, as cited by Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; Cardinale, 2017; Lawrence et al., 2011) describes how individuals enact the institutional macro processes at an individual level, acting and thinking according to expectations of their insitutional arrangements, transmitting habitus not through active discourse but through

practice. This kind of agency is common when there is a dominant focus on the past (Dorado, 2005). It creates a relatively stable disposition for the actor, orienting the individual to certain courses of action which appear as self-evident: actors are neither forced to choose a certain option, nor consciously choose a path of action, but are drawn to a certain course of action over others (Cardinale, 2017). This is not devoid of reflexivity – past patterns may be selectively and purposively reactivated (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009). While the institutional change that happens through habit and iteration is often gradual, that change can be drastic (Dorado, 2005).

2.5.4.2 Imagination and projective agency

Reflexivity is an awareness of institutional constraints and opportunities; noticing the tensions and contradictions of institutional arrangements, and is enabled by a dis-embedded perspective (van Wijk et al., 2019). The projective, imaginative and future-oriented aspect of agency involves reflectively selecting from different possibilities, that emerge from the institutional logic and the toolkits for action they provide, and choosing means towards certain ends (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; Cardinale, 2017). This dimension of agency demonstrates how actors have a capacity to reflect on their institutional embeddedness and develop conscious intentionality (Lawrence et al., 2011).

2.5.4.3 Judgement and practical evaluation

Practical-evaluative agency is oriented towards the present: it involves practical intentionality and judgement, integrating habits and possibilities to manage the demands of immediate situations (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; Lawrence et al., 2011). It is a sensemaking exercise, salient in times of uncertainty (Dorado, 2005).

CS Intrapreneurship is an expression of the paradox of embedded agency, as individuals engage with the social structures of their organisation. Institutional work, discussed next, aims to reconcile the paradox of embedded agency and integrates the different forms of agency described above.

2.5.5 Institutional work

Institutional work is the purposeful effort of individuals or organisations, embedded in institutional arrangements, that is aimed at maintaining or disrupting existing institutions or at creating entirely new ones (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Actors are embedded in

institutions, but intelligent, aware, and reflexive, and creatively work within the institutionally defined logics that they find themselves in (Lawrence et al., 2011). They actively interpret and draw from a range of possible actions that are outlined by the institutionalised rules, resources and skills available in the field or organisation in which they operate (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). “Institutional contexts determine what sorts of actors would perform what kinds of institutional work” (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011: 65).

It is not only highly visible and dramatic action, but also subtle and sometimes mundane (Lawrence et al., 2009). Intentionality varies: institutions are reproduced, changed or created through habit and iteration; imagination and projectivity; and judgement and practical evaluation, as the actor engages with the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive institutional elements (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; Lawrence et al., 2011):

- **Political work** mainly addresses the regulative dimension and it involves reshaping rules, property rights and boundaries to anchor an institution within the wider social system, enrolling different actors into creating social support for a practice;
- The normative pillar of an institution is affected by **cultural institutional work**, which reconfigures belief systems and revolves around common practices and behaviours, framing the institution in terms of broader values, often involving outside stakeholders;
- **Technical institutional work** relates to the cognitive-cultural institutional dimension, altering shared world views, mental models, and the boundaries of meaning systems, for instance through creating categories, cause-and-effect theories and linking new practices to existing ones (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Perkmann & Spicer, 2008).

In the Polman example, the move away from quarterly reporting was a form of disruptive, cultural institutional work, through undermining the assumptions and beliefs that were the foundation of the practice (Lawrence et al., 2009): e.g. the belief that the tracking of quarterly results is necessary for maximising short- and long term shareholder value. His actions were still institutionally embedded, however: As Polman stepped into the role of CEO, he entered an institutional environment that had been compelling his peers to issue quarterly earnings reports. He chose to break from this institutional norm, but as unusual as this move was at the time, it was still executed within the institutional conventions of the behaviour of a listed company’s CEO – the change was announced to current and potential investors, was justified

in terms of long term shareholder value creation (Walker, 2018), and only the frequency of reporting was changed, not its form or substance.

The study of institutional work focuses on process and the efforts of social actors rather than outcomes, and on the interaction between actor and institutional context (Lawrence et al., 2009). Polman's actions influenced the institutional environment he was embedded in, regardless of his intention, as others started mimicking this practice.

Institutional work is a useful framework to describe the actions of CS Intrapreneurs: Intrapreneurship is a deeply contextualised process and institutional work keeps both the actor and the context in focus. Secondly, as an innovation process, CS Intrapreneurship is not linear and does not always result in exact predetermined outcomes. Institutional work enables an examination of the process, rather than only analysing the outcomes.

2.5.6 Legitimacy

Part of the institutional work of innovation proponents is legitimation: innovations, especially those in conflict with existing institutional arrangements, or with intangible benefits, need to acquire legitimacy to be accepted (Binz et al., 2016). It is a crucial idea in the study of institutional change and institutional entrepreneurship (Harmon et al., 2015; Tost, 2011; Tracey et al., 2011). The legitimation of new ideas, practices and norms, or the de-legitimation of existing ones is part of the decline of old institutions and the emergence and stabilisation of new ones (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; M. T. Dacin et al., 2002; Tost, 2011).

Legitimacy is defined as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995 as cited by Bitektine & Haack, 2015: 50). The dimensions of legitimacy are regulative, moral or normative, cultural-cognitive and pragmatic. Regulative legitimacy refers to conformity with legal or quasi-legal rules; moral or normative refers to congruence with situated norms, morals and culture; cultural-cognitive legitimacy rests on taken-for-granted assumptions and expectations of an entity in its context; and pragmatic legitimacy relates to the utility and benefits an entity delivers (Binz et al., 2016; Suddaby et al., 2017; Tost, 2011). Legitimacy can be approached as a property that a social entity possesses, an integrative process (legitimation) driven by an actor, or a socio-cognitive perception or evaluation made by a social actor (Suddaby et al., 2017). Not conforming to the templates for action, cognition and emotion of institutions is associated

with ‘enforcement’ through social sanctions or loss of legitimacy, or with some kind of cost to the social actors (Brammer et al., 2012; Lawrence et al., 2011). Legitimacy and the legitimation process are necessary components of institutionalisation, as judgements about a social entity’s legitimacy shapes the behaviour of other actors towards it and enables it to become an accepted part of social reality (Tost, 2011).

Legitimacy and legitimation are therefore key to the institutionalisation of CS Innovation as a new concept and to the institutional work of CS Intrapreneurs in advancing specific social innovations.

2.5.7 Summary

The theoretical lens for this study is institutional theory, which looks at institutions as the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive or taken-for-granted ‘rules of the game’ in social structures – from the macro, societal point of view to the microprocesses at interpersonal level (Binz et al., 2016; Scott, 2005). Social actors are individuals or organisations, while organisations often function as institutions in their own right (van Dijk et al., 2011).

Institutional forces exert their strongest pressures in organisational fields of interdependent organisations (Scott, 2005). Institutional logics are patterns of symbols, assumptions, practices and beliefs and the central logic of an institution guides individual and collective decisions and actions (Khan et al., 2018).

Institutional entrepreneurs disrupt existing institutions or create new ones. Their actions are triggered and enabled by functional, political or social pressure and conditions and dynamics at the societal, field and organisational level, such as societal-level shocks or contradictory institutional logics (M. T. Dacin et al., 2002; Smets et al., 2012). The paradox of embedded agency explores how individual actors are able to modify the institutions that govern their thoughts, actions and emotions, and one of the strands of institutional theory that aims to reconcile this paradox is institutional work (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009). Institutional work is the purposeful effort to maintain, change or create institutions through habit and iteration; imagination and projectivity; and judgement and practical evaluation as the actor engages with the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive institutional elements. It focuses on the processes of engaging with social structure and highlights how subtle actions also contribute to institutional change or stability (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). A key aspect of institutional work for institutional entrepreneurs is the legitimation of innovation and the ideas

underpinning them, drawing on the pragmatic, regulative, normative and cognitive dimensions of legitimacy (Binz et al., 2016).

This research frames the actions of CS Intrapreneurs as institutional entrepreneurship, and focuses on the interpersonal processes of institutional work and legitimation as a key aspect of introducing and implementing CS Innovation. In the following section, I expand on this application of institutional theory to CS Intrapreneurship as the focus of this study.

2.6 Corporate Social Intrapreneurship as institutional entrepreneurship

2.6.1 Introduction

Institutional theory contextualises the actions of social innovators within their broader social order and dynamics, and helps to build an understanding of how the actions of change agents can amplify and affect the broader social context (Gray et al., 2015; van Wijk et al., 2019). Looking at the microlevel origins and earliest moments of institutional change (Smets et al., 2012) helps to provide a better understanding of how CS Innovation initiatives by CS Intrapreneurs may today still be “works in progress, but tomorrow they could be the way business is done everywhere” (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2019: 10).

In this section, I apply institutional theory to CS Intrapreneurship: the macro-level influence of the South African CSR landscape; the enabling factors at an organisational level, the individual antecedents of action; and the processes of legitimation and institutional work that are involved in CS Intrapreneurship.

2.6.2 Corporate Social Intrapreneurship in South Africa

Businesses exist and function in the ways that they do because of the institutions that they are embedded in, and CSR as a management practice is just one of the ideological products of this institutional setup (Brammer et al., 2012; Matten & Moon, 2008). A company adopts practices to maintain its legitimacy under mimetic, coercive and normative institutional pressures (Fernando & Lawrence, 2014; Jamali et al., 2017). These pressures could be in the form of social norms, societal knowledge of CSR, laws and regulations, or internal factors (Marano & Kostova, 2016). The institutional pressures in a particular context can be a stronger driver of CSR practice than the company strategy is (Husted & Allen, 2007). Companies can respond to institutional pressures by decoupling of actual organisational motivations and practices and external appearances, that is, only symbolically conforming to institutional norms in their CSR practices (Fernando & Lawrence, 2014; Jamali et al., 2017); by actively shaping and modifying societal institutions (Brammer et al., 2012; Matten & Moon, 2008); or, by adopting similar institutionalised CSR processes to their peers (Jamali et al., 2017)

As elaborated in preceding sections, South African CSR has philanthropy at its core, and apart from compliance or reputation-driven objectives, business success and social impact

stand separate. CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship are still emerging ideas worldwide, and both appear to be relatively unknown in South Africa.

The CSR paradigm in South Africa does present barriers for CS Intrapreneurs. Large organisations in particular, find it difficult to move beyond a separation of business strategy and social or environmental impact and to implement radical business model innovation that pursues commercial and social goals simultaneously (Lüdeke-Freund et al., 2016). There are factors that create opportunities for innovation and change, however. In a globalised world, the same macro-level forces and trends that have given rise to CS Innovation are present in South Africa too. Exogenous shocks or jolts and contradictions in institutional logics and arrangements create conditions conducive to institutional change. B-BBEE regulations create another opportunity: they require companies to invest up to 4% of net profit after tax into a combination of enterprise, supplier and socio-economic development initiatives, and up to 6% of total payroll in skills development. This can add up to a significant amount, and it is unlikely that these costs will simply be put down as costs of compliance every time, without finding a strategic benefit for the business together with creating genuine positive social impact.

Experimentation akin to CS Innovation at the periphery of a company's business model, often in collaboration with social enterprises or NGOs does happen (Lüdeke-Freund et al., 2016). The individual actions of CS Intrapreneurs can amplify to influence organisations and even reshape the social order and broader social systems (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; Gray et al., 2015). What may start as intra-company innovations that create operational efficiency while reducing harm can lay the foundation for new ideas that reorient the value that the company pursues, or the establishment of new platforms for cooperation that involve peers and other stakeholders outside of the organisation, effecting systems-wide change (Adams et al., 2016; Pellegrini et al., 2019; Roome & Louche, 2016). This process may be triggered and influenced by leadership action or external factors, but also involves a host of intra-organisational dynamics, and, importantly for this study, the actions of motivated change agents (Adams et al., 2016; Halme et al., 2012; Pellegrini et al., 2019; Roome & Louche, 2016).

2.6.3 Organisational enabling factors

Researchers have proposed enabling conditions and formal and informal practices at the organisational and issue-field level to foster CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship:

2.6.3.1 *Compatibility between commercial and social logic*

The tension between social and business objectives inherent in CS Innovation and CSR can be framed as the presence of multiple institutional logics in an organisation. In social entrepreneurship and social intrapreneurship, both social welfare logic and commercial logic are present, and the interplay and contradictions between these two logics characterise the process (Alt & Craig, 2016; Pache & Santos, 2013). Even in a for-profit company, where commercial logic is central, multiple logics are present, and there can be some level of compatibility between commercial and social welfare logic, with increased compatibility being favourable to CS Innovation (Alt & Craig, 2016; Besharov & Smith, 2014).

2.6.3.2 *Corporate social purpose*

When an individual is cognitively and / or emotionally disinvested from the institutional order that their organisation represents, some may simply choose to leave, rather than try to effect change (Voronov & Vince, 2012). CS Intrapreneurs, however, demonstrate a strong commitment to their organisations as they advance social innovations (Venn & Berg, 2013). Studies highlight the importance of a strong connection between the individual and the company purpose, which requires a clear articulation of the company's social purpose and how that fits with the broader company goals (Geradts & Bocken, 2019). When a company purpose includes social value, creating a multidimensional mission that serves shareholders and stakeholders, it gives legitimacy to addressing social issues (Sonenshein, 2016). How exactly to address the issue would still be open to interpretation, and serving both shareholders and creating social welfare may create potentially conflicting bases for action (Sonenshein, 2016). However, an underlying interpretation of the company's purpose as serving society supports the motivation, enthusiasm and resilience of social intrapreneurs and signals to employees that social innovations are desirable (Mirvis et al., 2016; Mirvis & Googins, 2018).

2.6.3.3 *Leadership*

Leaders reinforce culture and signal to employees what behaviour is desirable through the attitudes and behaviours that they role model (Herrera, 2016). Senior managers have the power to block, permit or actively enable CS Intrapreneurship, in tangible and intangible ways. Leadership support can be concrete, in the form of rewards and recognition, funding, human resources, or other company resources and infrastructure, or more tacit, legitimising

the social innovation efforts in the organisation through their sponsorship and influence, or through leveraging their social networks.

At the early stages of the project, leadership support enables the allocation of resources to fledgling ideas that may not form part of the corporate plan (Grayson et al., 2013). Later on, leadership support is crucial in ensuring that CS Innovation initiatives evolve from a number of diffuse experiments to becoming part of the company's strategic aims (Mirvis & Googins, 2018).

Often, a single senior project sponsor acts as a major enabler for CS Innovation efforts – and if this person leaves the company or is reassigned, this can stop an initiative in its tracks (Grayson et al., 2013; McGaw & Malinsky, 2020).

2.6.3.4 Accountability and incentives

Management practices such as training and development, creating accountability systems for both social and commercial objectives and positive reinforcement further legitimise CS Intrapreneurship efforts (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013). Giving senior managers social targets in addition to commercial ones could encourage their investment in social innovations within their business units (Geradts & Bocken, 2019) and broader reward and recognition systems can enable and encourage social innovation efforts at all levels (Grayson et al., 2013). CS Intrapreneurship is, however, not only influenced by explicit elements such as policies, decision making structures and company culture – there is usually no job description or title of social intrapreneur (Hadad & Cantaragiu, 2017) – but also implicit elements such as the values and belief systems underlying culture (Herrera, 2016). Together, these extrinsic and intrinsic incentives, collective attitudes, and norms around the potential social and commercial impact of innovation efforts can shape how much effort employees put into this kind of work (Hostager et al., 1998). Integrating social concerns in the company's strategy by analysing the extended value chain, engaging with stakeholders and applying a social lens to other strategic considerations makes it simpler to align social innovation efforts with business strategy (Herrera, 2015).

2.6.3.5 Resources

Tangible and intangible resources are essential for CS Innovation. Intrapreneurs will often employ their own time and resources, or creatively use the means at hand (Halme et al., 2012;

Venn & Berg, 2013). This is due in part to organisational constraints, such as the availability of formal resources, a focus on short-term profit maximisation, business unit based incentives and general uncertainty avoidance (Halme et al., 2012). The relative importance of social versus commercial value creation may also determine how the initiatives are resourced, whether it be from CSR / philanthropic budgets or from within the business unit, and this in turn has implications for the sustainability, scalability and eventual institutionalisation of the initiatives (Mirvis & Googins, 2018).

2.6.3.6 *The 'space' to innovate*

Social intrapreneurs need a degree of freedom to innovate. This includes the freedom to engage and collaborate with internal and external stakeholders; autonomy and flexibility; the ability to take risks and experiment, with an acknowledgement that efforts might fail; and a tolerance for out of the ordinary activities (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012). Some literature advocates for structural safeguards to create a protective space for CS Intrapreneurship efforts, such as a social innovation incubator inside the business, though guarding against its detachment from the company (Venn & Berg, 2013). Often, the time needed for these kind of initiatives to show a return on investment is longer as compared to other typical business projects, and this is another aspect of freedom and flexibility that needs to be taken into account (Halme et al., 2012).

2.6.3.7 *Collaboration with stakeholders*

In Kanter's (1999) seminal article on CS Innovation, she urged business to form strategic alliances with the social sector as a way to enhance business innovation and benefit society. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration has remained a central facet of this strand of research: as a necessity, because the nature of social issues means that no single actor is able to address them alone; as a benefit, because of the creativity and innovation that can emerge from different perspectives and capabilities that a company may not have in house (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Lawrence et al., 2014); and, because of the reflexivity that exposure to different ways of thinking, doing, and emotional responses inspires in individual intrapreneurs (van Wijk et al., 2019). There is no established play-book for companies to innovate in this space and they need to learn with their partners what solutions could work (Mirvis et al., 2016). This collaboration enables both knowledge gathering and analysis around the social issues and proposed solutions (Herrera, 2016) through deeper

understanding of local conditions in a company's supply chain or market, the implementation of social innovations in a particular context, and connections to and legitimacy with local communities (Mirvis et al., 2016). The benefits of stakeholder engagement are enhanced through active engagement across the value chain at all stages of the innovation process (Herrera, 2016).

2.6.4 Enabling conditions for individual agency and action

Some actors are more likely to recognise and engage in institutional change than others (Voronov & Yorks, 2015). These are some of the factors that play a role:

2.6.4.1 Reflexivity and the 'mental alarm'

To recognise and act on opportunities for institutional change, actors need reflexivity: to experience their "institutional milieu as provisional and potentially changeable" (Voronov & Yorks, 2015: 566). Reflexivity is an awareness of institutional constraints and opportunities; a questioning of the extant field frames, practices and the belief systems that undergird them, and becoming aware of the tensions, cracks and contradictions of the institutional order (van Wijk et al., 2019). Their 'mental alarm' needs to be triggered in order for them to reassess previous judgements of legitimacy, and take a more conscious, deliberate approach to evaluating a social entity in moral, instrumental or relational terms (Tost, 2011).

This has various enablers. Jolts, crises, or acute field-level problems enable agency as it exposes the tensions inherent in an institutional framework, sparking reflexivity, as well as necessitating interaction and collaboration with others (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; van Wijk et al., 2019). Interactions with others, especially if they come from a context with different institutional logics, sparks reflexivity and agency (van Wijk et al., 2019) and is key to the "'insider-outsider' mindset and approach" that characterises social intrapreneurs (SustainAbility, 2008: 4). This dis-embedded perspective, even in part, allows for reflexivity and ultimately the conscious intentionality of projective agency (Leca et al., 2009; van Wijk et al., 2019).

2.6.4.2 Emotions and personal characteristics

The cognitive aspect of reflexivity and bounded rationality has received considerable attention (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), and has been complemented with more recent work that integrates emotions (van Wijk et al., 2019).

Cognitive disinvestment from an institutional setup alone is not enough to motivate disruptive institutional work – emotional investment or disinvestment in current or emerging institutions also play a role (Voronov & Vince, 2012). Social intrapreneurship is often driven by personal moral values, oriented towards a particular self-image; or a personal emotional commitment to or compassion for a social group or cause, which channels energy away from sustaining the prevailing institutional order (Hemingway, 2005; van Wijk et al., 2019; Voronov & Vince, 2012). When the institutional environment dictates behaviour that is in conflict with an individual's values, this may result in negative emotions such as guilt or shame (Hemingway, 2005). When the institutions no longer shield individuals from these negative emotions, their emotional disinvestment from the institutional order is often accompanied by a more critical reflection on institutional contradictions and a resulting cognitive disinvestment (Voronov & Vince, 2012). The cognitive and emotional apprehension of institutional contradictions is a “process of wrestling one's own role in reproducing the institutional status quo and exploring a new way of acting” (Voronov & Yorks, 2015: 567).

Intrapreneurs need to be pro-active, innovative, willing to take risks and persevere in the face of challenges (Boon et al., 2013). Individual abilities and the actor's self-belief and perception of those abilities, such as practical skills, technical knowledge, creativity and experience are important (Hostager et al., 1998) but emotions can also inspire and sustain these efforts (Alt & Geradts, 2019). The shared positive social and moral emotional experiences that happen when diverse actors work together on a common cause can help to further dis-embed them from their 'home' institutional logics (van Wijk et al., 2019). Emotions enhance the persistence behind social innovation efforts, alters risk perception and can motivate actors to re-evaluate their self-interest and how making a positive social contribution may be rewarding (Alt & Geradts, 2019; van Wijk et al., 2019). While CS Intrapreneurs do not take on personal financial risk in the same sense that a social entrepreneur would, they do often risk other instrumental gains (such as promotion) by not conforming to the institutional environment, and often reformulate what they consider to be rewarding in a personal sense (SustainAbility, 2008). Different intrapreneurs will perceive various intrinsic and extrinsic motivators differently, and their perception is influenced by the shared norms and beliefs in their institutional environment (Hostager et al., 1998).

2.6.4.3 *Social positions*

Social positions are imbued with expectations, rights and responsibilities, and internalised logics of cognition, emotion, and action which influence the way actors perceive their institutional fields and the opportunities they hold (Battilana, 2006; Cardinale, 2017; Leca et al., 2009; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Before even consciously reflecting on their institutional embeddedness, actors are unconsciously oriented towards certain apparently self-evident courses of action, influenced by their social position and the unique accumulation of past social positions (Cardinale, 2017).

Social positions are formal and informal, within an organisation and within an organisational field, and they vary in status (Battilana, 2006). They affect cognitive and emotional vested interest in a dominant institutional order, and relate to an actor's access to resources and capital (Voronov & Vince, 2012). Dominant social positions are contradictory: they enable the incumbent to impose change, but because the current institutional order advantages these same actors, they stand to benefit from defending and maintaining it and may therefore resist change (Battilana, 2006; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Peripheral actors, those in lower status or lower hierarchical positions within an organisation tend to be more motivated to act, as they are less vested in the dominant institutional order, but their formal positions may hamper their ability to act, in terms of their legitimacy and access to resources (Battilana, 2006; Smets et al., 2012). Overcoming this disadvantage through leveraging social capital is part of the intrapreneurship process, discussed in more detail in the next section.

Individuals with high inter-organisational mobility may also be less likely to take the institutional arrangement in an organisation for granted (Battilana, 2006), but those who are very new to the organisation may struggle to realise their ideas (Grayson et al., 2014). Agency is greatest at intermediate lengths of tenure, when the actor has enough legitimacy and knowledge of organisational systems, but before he or she has become inclined to accept the organisation as is (Battilana, 2006).

2.6.5 Institutional work and legitimation in CS Intrapreneurship

Social innovation reorients the kind of value that the firm pursues, by integrating societal value in addition to business benefit. As much as approaches to CSR are evolving and CS Innovation is becoming more prevalent, for-profit business models are institutionally embedded: some stakeholders may believe that the pursuit of societal and business benefit are contradictory objectives, meaning that CS Intrapreneurs need to challenge extant logics in legitimising and realising social innovations, and take the role of institutional entrepreneurs

(Alt & Craig, 2016; Kistruck & Beamish, 2010). They have agency and engage in institutional work to legitimate their innovations and leverage various forms of capital and resources in the process.

2.6.5.1 Institutional work and legitimation

Because social intrapreneurship is voluntary and informal (Alt & Geradts, 2019) it requires purposive individuals who recognise an opportunity for change and are willing and able to enact change (Battilana, 2006; Martinez et al., 2017). All three temporal dimensions of agency (iterative, projective, and practical-evaluative) are present in any form of action (such as the CS Intrapreneurship process), but one dimension tends to dominate (Dorado, 2005). In this case it is disruptive and creative institutional work and projective agency, based on the fact that social intrapreneurs voluntarily act “inside an environment not fit for purpose”, consciously challenging pervasive institutional norms inside and outside of their organisations (Alt & Geradts, 2019: 2018). Disruptive institutional work lowers the impact of the social controls that perpetuate the institution: disconnecting sanctions, disassociating moral foundations or undermining assumptions and beliefs (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Creating new institutions involves establishing rules and mechanisms of enforcement; or rules, technologies and practices that function in parallel with existing institutions; new norms and platforms for cooperation; or changing abstract categories of meaning (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Integrated in the institutional work of CS Intrapreneurs is the legitimating of their innovations. To successfully sell a social innovation – convince others to give it attention and resources (Mayer et al., 2019) – the social intrapreneur needs to overcome issue illegitimacy, issue equivocality, and frame the solution with an understanding of the institutional logics shaping their organisational context and the attitudes and beliefs of their different audiences (Alt & Craig, 2016; Sonenshein, 2016). Getting the buy-in of their managers unlocks many of the organisational enablers discussed in the preceding section, such as access to resources and the space to innovate and collaborate. In that collaboration, CS Intrapreneurs need to convince their colleagues and partners that it is not only possible to serve both objectives simultaneously, but also that their intent is to genuinely do so (Alt & Geradts, 2019). Through various forms of institutional work, the CS Intrapreneurs actively construct legitimacy for their innovations along pragmatic, regulative, normative and cognitive dimensions (Binz et al., 2016).

In combining social and commercial objectives, CS Intrapreneurs need to navigate resistance from internal and external stakeholders who see these objectives as being at odds with one another, and social innovation as either disingenuous, impractical, or both (Alt & Geradts, 2019; Kistruck & Beamish, 2010). Colleagues and managers may push back against what they perceive as philanthropic work that doesn't serve business objectives, while external stakeholders could label the work as impression management, because of the ambiguity of the simultaneous pursuit of social impact and profitability (Alt & Geradts, 2019; Tracey & Stott, 2017). The institutional logics stemming from the field and organisational levels are interpreted and adhered to in varying levels by individuals and while there is a collective interpretation of legitimacy in an organisation, legitimacy judgements are made at an individual level (Alt & Craig, 2016). If the manager that the intrapreneur is selling to has a lower adherence to the social welfare logic, the intrapreneur is more likely to use restrictive language – instrumental, carrying ideas of efficiency and utility. If there is a higher adherence to social welfare logic, elaborate language that has relational elements and evokes ideas of morality will be used (Alt & Craig, 2016). In addition, when the intrapreneurs make a clear connection to the social purpose in the company mission, their use of moral language can be effective, trumping the conventional wisdom that it is only an instrumental sell, appealing to the core commercial logic of the firm, that is effective (Mayer et al., 2019).

2.6.5.2 *Different forms of capital and resources*

The combination of CS Intrapreneurs' cognitive and emotional investment or disinvestment in the institutional order and their access to capital, influences the kind of institutional work that they engage in. Actors are more likely to be motivated to engage in disruptive institutional work when they have high cognitive but low emotional investment in the dominant institutional order; when the actor has low emotional and low cognitive investment, but limited access to capital; and low cognitive but high emotional investment and decent access to capital (Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Capital and resources are not only material or economic, but also symbolic goods that are sought after and perceived as worthy to pursue: social capital is an actor's networks and connections to others; cultural capital is the access to and ability to mobilise cultural and institutional products (e.g. credentials); and symbolic capital is the ability to wield resources such as language and myth to impose a definition of reality (Voronov & Vince, 2012). Social capital can further be broken down into structural social capital – the potential to access

information, resources and support; relational social capital – the quality of relationships; and cognitive social capital – shared frames and systems of meaning (Mair & Martí, 2006).

CS Intrapreneurs engage in bricolage – creatively and resourcefully bundling the available symbolic, material and relational resources to advance their innovations (Halme et al., 2012). Using cultural and symbolic capital, CS Intrapreneurs can skilfully and strategically frame their change initiatives to mobilise support and quell resistance (P. A. Dacin et al., 2010; Garud et al., 2007). They use social capital by leveraging their ties to more powerful actors to undermine resistance and access resources (Battilana, 2006). They can also use emotions to affect decisions, to persuade and gain support, and to access and further mobilise different forms of capital and resources (Alt & Geradts, 2019; Voronov & Vince, 2012).

2.6.6 Summary

The South African CSR landscape presents both opportunities and challenges for CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship, which may emerge as experiments at the periphery of core business models (Lüdeke-Freund et al., 2016). CS Intrapreneurs need to legitimate their CS Innovation initiatives within their organisations, specifically to senior managers (Alt & Craig, 2016), and they engage in institutional work to do so. Management support unlocks much of the social and material resources and affordances that enable the development of the social innovations. This includes financial and human resources, the freedom to take risks and experiment, the ability to collaborate internally and externally, and the further legitimisation of social innovation to the broader organisation through explicit and implicit incentive and reward structures, and a connection to the organisation's overarching purpose (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012; Mirvis et al., 2016; Mirvis & Googins, 2018).

Whether individuals recognise and act on opportunities for institutional change and social innovation, and then sustain those efforts, is also influenced by their reflexivity, emotions, social position and history of social positions and their personal characteristics and values (Battilana, 2006; Cardinale, 2017; Hostager et al., 1998; van Wijk et al., 2019; Voronov & Vince, 2012). The institutional work aimed at disrupting existing institutions or creating new ones constructs legitimacy for the social innovations on pragmatic, regulative, normative or cognitive dimensions, by engaging with institutional logics as interpreted by the organisation and the individuals in it, and through the creative wielding of different forms of capital and resources (Binz et al., 2016; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Voronov & Vince, 2012).

2.7 Literature review summary

The role that business can and should play in society has been discussed under the umbrella concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which has become an accepted and institutionalised part of management practice (Brammer et al., 2012; Carroll, 2009; Lee, 2008). It is interpreted and practiced differently in different institutional contexts (Brammer et al., 2012). In South Africa, a philanthropic, compliance-centric and often performative approach dominates (Bureau For Economic Research, 2016; Patel & Mushonga, 2015; Rajak, 2016). This is heavily influenced by the country's political history: the intertwining of business with the apartheid regime and the transition to democracy and the changes in the institutional environment that this brought, including the persistence of migrant labour and its socio-economic consequences and an contentious but interdependent relationship between business and government (Diale, 2012; Hamann, 2009; King et al., 2010; Visser, 2005). South African CSR is characterised by a regulatory framework that strongly compels CSR that focuses on philanthropy, economic inclusion and fair treatment of Black South Africans; a culture of self-regulatory codes of conduct; and an important, but segregated and often expedient nature of corporate philanthropy, specifically through the idea of Corporate Social Investment (CSI Investment) (King et al., 2010; Mersham & Skinner, 2016; Ramlall, 2012).

While CSR has remained a relevant concept in academia and in practice, Corporate Social Innovation (CSI Innovation) and related ideas posited as an alternative to and an evolution of CSR started gaining traction in the last decade (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020). The interest in CSI Innovation is driven by an intensification of social and environmental problems; increased expectations of business to mitigate its negative impact and make a positive contribution in this space; the examples being set by the social innovation and -entrepreneurship movement; the need for business growth and improved competitiveness; and an appreciation of the unique strengths of corporates, as individual actors and in collaborative efforts, to take innovation to scale (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020; Ghobadian et al., 2015; Googins, 2014; Mirvis et al., 2016; Pfitzer & Kramer, 2016). In South Africa, this has also received some attention, specifically through BOP initiatives and Shared Value.

CSI Innovation is the corporate manifestation of social innovation. It produces new products, processes, organisational forms, -systems and -structures, and new business models; it is a strategic decision and investment, managed like other strategic initiatives; it brings the company's full assets and expertise to bear on social problems; it involves deeper internal

and external collaboration; it aims to bring sustainable solutions to social needs while creating new sources of revenue and competitiveness; and reorients innovation to being more socially relevant (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020; Herrera, 2015; Kanter, 1999; Mirvis et al., 2016). The specific kind of CS Innovation that is the focus of this study is Corporate Social Intrapreneurship (CS Intrapreneurship), which is a bottom-up process driven by individual change agents, with the potential to create organisation-wide or even systems-wide change (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; Gray et al., 2015; Grayson et al., 2014; Halme et al., 2012; Mirvis et al., 2016).

I apply the ideas of institutional theory to CS Intrapreneurship, framing it as an instance of institutional entrepreneurship within the organisation as institution (Kistruck & Beamish, 2010; van Dijk et al., 2011). Institutional entrepreneurship is triggered and enabled by functional, political or social pressure and conditions and dynamics at the societal, field and organisational level, such as societal-level shocks or contradictory institutional logics (M. T. Dacin et al., 2002; Smets et al., 2012). CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship are still emerging in South Africa, and may manifest as experiments at the periphery of core business models (Lüdeke-Freund et al., 2016).

Whether individuals in companies recognise and act on opportunities for institutional change and social innovation, and then sustain those efforts, is also influenced by their reflexivity, emotions, social position and history of social positions and their personal characteristics and values (Battilana, 2006; Cardinale, 2017; Hostager et al., 1998; van Wijk et al., 2019; Voronov & Vince, 2012). As institutional entrepreneurs, CS Intrapreneurs engage in institutional work aimed at disrupting existing institutions or creating new ones by engaging with the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive pillars of institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). The institutional work constructs legitimacy for the social innovations on pragmatic, regulative, normative or cognitive dimensions, by engaging with institutional logics as interpreted by the organisation and the individuals in it, and through the creative wielding of different forms of capital and resources (Binz et al., 2016; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Social intrapreneurs need to legitimate their CS Innovation initiatives within their organisations, specifically to senior managers, as this management support unlocks much of the social and material resources and affordances that enable the development of the social innovations within an organisation (Alt & Craig, 2016).

New approaches that integrate social and economic concerns into core business operations are key to unlocking the potential of business to be a positive force in the world (Ramlall, 2012), and the idea of CS Innovation holds promise as a means to achieve this. CS Intrapreneurship as a kind of CS Innovation driven by motivated individual change agents is the focus of this study. Specifically, I aim to describe aspects of the intrapreneurship process: institutional work that involves legitimation and engagement with institutional logics, and creative wielding of different forms of capital. I also explore some of the antecedent factors to engaging in CS Intrapreneurship such as reflexivity and emotions. An understanding of these kinds of micro-institutional processes helps to shed light on the role of individuals in institutional change (Tost, 2011): in this case, CS Intrapreneurs within the company as micro-institution, and the change towards more sustainable business models and the adoption of CS Innovation.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research questions

The primary research question is:

What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations?

The sub-questions focus on aspects highlighted in the literature as being important to the intrapreneurship process: The creative acquisition and use of different forms of capital; and the CS Intrapreneur's reflexivity and agency as antecedent factors -

How do Corporate Social Intrapreneurs wield different forms of capital in the process?

What are the factors, at the field, organisational or individual level, that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs perceive as triggering their 'mental alarm', conscious reflexivity and agency?

3.2 Research approach and strategy

The answer to the research questions above is a descriptive account of individual actions and experiences within a real-world context. An inductive, qualitative approach is therefore suitable, as this research looks into real world, contextual conditions; the processes through which events and actions take place; the meaning of those events to participants and participants' perspectives; and with the aim to provide a rich understanding of a complex social phenomenon (Gaudet & Robert, 2018; J. A. Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2016). While a specific theoretical lens was used to interpret the data and observations, I did not start with a hypothesis to be proven or disproven and a deductive approach would have been less suitable to gain insight into these highly context-specific instances of CS Intrapreneurship.

The research strategy, while iterative in nature, started with a literature review to refine the research questions and to inform the research design. The literature review as laid out in chapter two, revealed CS Innovation as a development in CSR, and CS Intrapreneurship as a form of CS Innovation and a form of institutional entrepreneurship involving institutional work. The initial research question – 'What is the perceived institutional work that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs do as they engage in the process of creating and implementing social innovations?' – was refined through subsequent literature review on micro-institutional

processes and institutional entrepreneurship. This highlighted the importance of legitimization, different forms of capital, and individual agency in institutional work, and produced the revised research questions above as well as the research design and methods that are discussed next.

3.3 Research design

To answer the research questions, I have chosen a case study design, looking into four instances of CS Intrapreneurship in depth (Blatter, 2012), exploring the individual-level dynamics of a contextualised and complex social process. The case study design lends itself to producing context-dependent knowledge, unpacking the dynamics present in a single setting and to giving a descriptive account of the of the intrapreneurs' actions and perceptions (Blatter, 2012; Eisenhardt, 1989; Flyvberg, 2006). Multiple cases are examined for this study, enabling not only within-case analysis but cross-case comparison to identify common patterns and properties, adding richness to the descriptive accounts of the intrapreneurship process (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2012).

3.4 Sampling

The sampling aims were to identify and select cases of CS Intrapreneurship in South Africa and to identify and select the individual participants for the research. As the intent was to study cases that demonstrate particular characteristics (CS Intrapreneurship) and the perceptions of specific kinds of individuals (CS Intrapreneurs), sampling was purposive and theoretical (Campbell et al., 2020; J. A. Maxwell, 2013), both in the selection of cases and the selection of participants. The sampling stage itself therefore involved data collection – gathered through online searches of publicly available documents (including company websites) and conversations with practitioners – and basic data analysis to qualify cases.

There were four cases in total for this study, with each case being a distinctive CS Innovation project in a different company: The Solar Branch project in Nedbank, the Bankable Farmer project in Thomson Reuters, the Mum & Baby project in Vodacom and the Peri-Farming project in Nando's. An overview of each of the companies and detailed descriptions of the projects as derived from documents and interviews are in the *Findings* chapter. Participants were the individuals responsible for driving the project within their respective companies and who were willing and able to be interviewed. There was one participant from Nando's and

Vodacom respectively, three from Nedbank and seven individuals from Thomson Reuters, all identified by their first initial going forward.

Selecting a case involved determining whether it would qualify as an instance of CS Intrapreneurship – a corporate setting, the intrapreneurial-ness and innovativeness of the project, and the presence of simultaneous social and commercial objectives in the project. Selecting a participant involved determining whether he or she could be described as an intrapreneur, drawing from the definitions in the literature and discussed in more detail below.

The number of cases selected was guided by literature which generally recommends between four and ten cases for this kind of study (Perry, 1998). The small number of cases selected was further driven by practical considerations. Cases of CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship were not easy to identify, as firstly, these concepts are still emerging ideas, especially in South Africa, and because intrapreneurs may choose to ‘stay under the radar’ especially in the early stages (SustainAbility, 2008). The cases that were selected were the only ones that met the criteria after the abovementioned online searches and conversations with practitioners, and the participants selected were the individuals who were willing and able to discuss their work: full teams in some cases and individuals in others.

3.4.1 Corporate

The relevant corporate setting has a primacy of commercial logic (Alt & Craig, 2016): the cases focus on activities taking place within an existing for-profit business that is privately or publicly owned by shareholders. A social enterprise or hybrid organisation would not be a relevant context: though commercial logics and earned income strategies are included, in social enterprises and hybrid organisations, social value creation objectives have organisation-wide primacy and the competitiveness of this enterprise is already linked to its ability to effect positive social change (Agrawal & Hockerts, 2014; P. A. Dacin et al., 2010; Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020). The research question explores the legitimization of social innovations in a corporate context, and while there may be varying degrees of compatibility of social welfare logics with the primacy of commercial logic, the primacy of commercial logic is a defining feature (Alt & Craig, 2016).

3.4.2 Intrapreneurial

3.4.2.1 Case sampling

For case sampling, intrapreneurial refers to a discrete project or effort, reliant on the initiative and efforts of employees; potentially sanctioned but not necessarily mandated by top leadership. The intrapreneurial nature of the activities point to a bottom-up process, driven by purposeful, motivated change agents, who display agency, and engage in institutional work (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Halme et al., 2012; Kistruck & Beamish, 2010; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). All organisational actors have a level of power and influence and access to various forms of capital, but the intrapreneurial criterion excludes the actions of top management who have the power to mandate institutional change (Battilana, 2006).

3.4.2.2 Participant sampling

For participant sampling, intrapreneurs are the individuals or groups of individuals who were directly responsible for advancing the project (Grayson et al., 2014), and who were willing and able to be interviewed. They were considered if they were directly involved in the project, whether that was formally mandated as part of their job role or not. Intrapreneurs were either identified through personal introductions, or by contacting the companies associated with cases found online and asking for the managers involved.

Solar Branch – Nedbank: The participants were two individuals who were involved in the initiating the project – T., an executive responsible for innovation, and M., her direct report; and a third person, D., whose role was focused on emerging payments and who had become involved in the project after it had already started.

Bankable Farmer – Thomson Reuters: Here the primary participant was S., who was leading innovation for the company in Africa, and had led the efforts to set up a separate innovation lab within the company that housed the project. The secondary participants were the individuals who comprised the innovation lab team – Nz., the project and programme manager; V., the startup ecosystem manager; Ni., the user experience leader; L., an intern; R., the lab coordinator; and A., the data scientist.

Mum & Baby – Vodacom: The participant was B., an innovation strategy manager who was responsible for leading the project in the company.

Pei-Farming – Nando’s: The participant was Y., the assistant farming manager, whose role was dedicated to overseeing the Peri-Farming project.

3.4.3 Innovativeness

This asks whether the project involves novelty in products, processes, or systems or the application of ideas in a new context (Herrera, 2015; Preuss, 2011), and if confirmed, qualified the case for inclusion.

3.4.4 Simultaneous social and business value-creation objectives

The presence of both social and commercial aims and logics determines whether the case can be defined as an instance of CS Innovation and is the crux of qualifying cases for this research. Operational optimisation, where harm reduction or efficiency is the objective would not be relevant here: the value does not primarily accrue to society as a whole, nor is there an aim to create value for society; rather, this involves reducing negative externalities, and typically harnesses existing innovation systems and capabilities (Adams et al., 2016; Arnold & Hockerts, 2011; Phills et al., 2008). While it can be a stepping stone towards shifting norms in the organisation, it is in line with existing business logics and models (Adams et al., 2016). Traditional CSR initiatives would also not be relevant, as the core element absent from these are an aim to produce new sources of revenue, deliberate and core strategic integration or creating commercial value (Grayson et al., 2014; Mirvis et al., 2016). While CSR can support competitiveness through demonstrating responsiveness to stakeholders and improving reputation, it is skewed to philanthropy, does not represent strategic integration, it is separate from company profitability, and does not bring the core competencies of the business to bear on social issues (Mirvis et al., 2016; Porter & Kramer, 2011). The impetus for social innovation can be a business objective that integrates social value creation, or a deliberate intention of social impact that then aligns with business needs (Mirvis et al., 2016).

The aim of this study is not to provide an absolute or relative measure of social or commercial value creation, but a guide to identify and describe the presence of both aims is important in qualifying cases. Social problems and solutions to them, social value creation and social innovation are all embedded and contingent, and innovation efforts have intended and unintended consequences (Lawrence et al., 2014; Roome, 2014). Cases were qualified through the reported *intent* of the respondents for social value creation through their activities, in line with the definition of social innovation as “a novel solution to a social

problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals” (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008: 39). Similarly, the reported aims needed to demonstrate business value creation through alignment with commercial strategy and revenue creation opportunities.

3.5 Data collection

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews from the participants mentioned above and through documents such as company websites, annual reports, news articles, third-party reports or event presentations, which were provided by participants or publicly available (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Data was collected about the specific social innovation initiative and about the perceptions of social intrapreneurs of the intrapreneurship process and its organisational context. The interview guide and the kind of data that was collected was informed by the analytical framework, discussed in the following section, while using open-ended and follow-up questions to allow for participants’ own experiences and interpretations of the situation to surface (Yin, 2016).

As mentioned above, data collection started at the sampling stage, as information collected to identify a case as suitable for the research or not was in itself important contextual data about the case. This data was then supplemented with the interviews and other documents provided by participants. Interviews were conducted between February and December 2018 using the interview guide in the appendix. All interviews were conducted in person and lasted roughly an hour each, except for the interviews with the Thomson Reuters team which included telephonic interviews and a longer in-person group interview.

3.6 Data analysis

The qualitative case study research design relies on the researcher as an interpreter and analyst of the data, describing and constructing the perceptions, experiences and sensemaking of the participants (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2012). I have applied qualitative content analysis as a method to systematically describe the data, using a coding frame derived from the literature (Mayring, 2014; Schreier, 2014). The coding frame serves to first describe the case of CS Innovation and its context, and second, the intrapreneurship process as experienced by the intrapreneur. Qualitative Content Analysis helps to systematically describe the meaning of the material in line with the theoretical framework(s) and focus that have been chosen

(Schreier, 2012). I used *NVivo* software to analyse the data in line with the coding frame, which is described below. While an inter-rater reliability check to avoid biases would have been ideal for this study, practical constraints did not make this feasible, and I took care to remain conscious of how my biases might affect the interpretation of the data.

3.6.1 Contextual information

Each case starts with a general description of its context: the organisation, its primary mission, size, ownership and leadership. I then provide information about the organisation that is highlighted in the literature as being important for fostering CS Intrapreneurship:

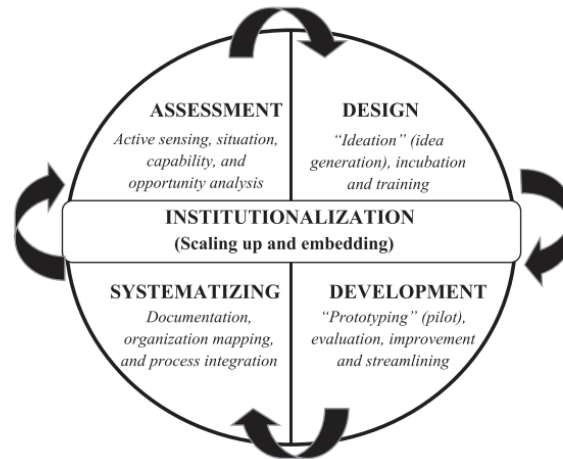
- The perceived compatibility between social welfare and commercial logic in the organisation (Alt & Craig, 2016).
- The integration of a social purpose in the company purpose (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Sonenshein, 2016).
- Top leadership support for social objectives (Herrera, 2016).
- Integration of social objectives in extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and other management practices (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013).

Then the specific CS Innovation initiative or project is described – how it started, who has been involved, how it has been resourced, and which department or division it falls under, and how it conforms with the characteristics of intrapreneurial-ness and innovativeness mentioned above.

Herrera's (2015) frameworks are then used to describe the cases in more depth: firstly, their stage of institutionalisation in the organisation (Figure 1); and secondly, their integration with business strategy and their intended social goals (Figure 2). These have been chosen as they are one of the few examples I could find in literature where CS Innovation is examined from an institutional point of view.

Figure 1

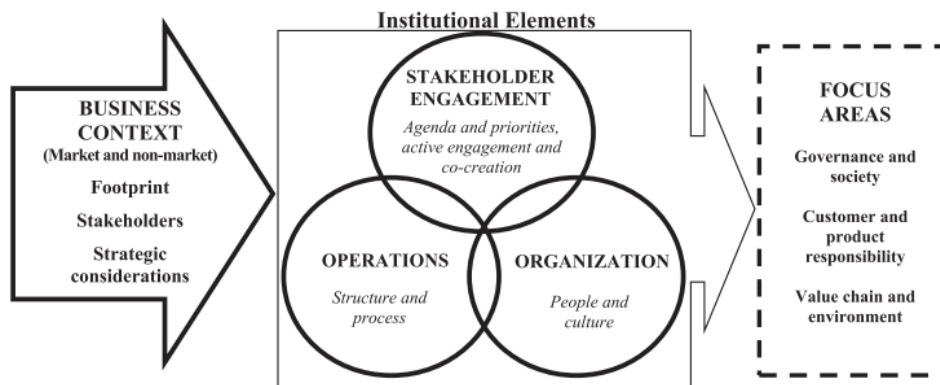
Social Innovation Process



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1469 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

Figure 2

Institutionalising Social Innovation



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1470 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

Finally, a description of the context includes an analysis of implicit and explicit support for the specific CS Intrapreneurship project in the organisation, as reported by intrapreneurs:

- Access to resources, such as budget and people (Halme et al., 2012; Venn & Berg, 2013).
- The freedom to innovate and experiment (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012).
- The freedom to collaborate with outside individuals and other organisations (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Mirvis et al., 2016; van Wijk et al., 2019).

The above points are discussed in more detail in the literature review.

3.6.2 *The intrapreneurship process*

3.6.2.1 *Primary research question*

What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations?

This informs a coding framework with two distinct, but interrelated lenses, to analyse interview data about participants’ perceptions and experiences of the intrapreneurship process: First, responses were analysed and coded to correspond with the different forms of institutional work aimed at creating, maintaining or disrupting institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) as laid out in Table 1. Then, responses were analysed in terms of how intrapreneurs appeal to different dimensions of legitimacy (Binz et al., 2016) as laid out in Table 2. The intrapreneurs’ perceptions and experience of the intrapreneurship process are described in the *Findings* chapter according to these frameworks.

Lawrence and Suddaby’s (2006) descriptions of institutional work are the most extensive that I could find in the literature and made for a useful lens to describe the intrapreneurs’ reported actions. I found Binz and co-authors’ (2016) dimensions of legitimacy to be both practical and illuminating when applied to the data.

Table 1

Forms of Institutional Work

Forms of institutional work		Description
Creating institutions	Advocacy	The mobilisation of political and regulatory support through direct and deliberate techniques of social suasion
	Defining	The construction of rule systems that confer status or identity, define boundaries of membership or create status hierarchies within a field

Forms of institutional work		Description
	Vesting	The creation of rule structures that confer property rights
	Constructing identities	Defining the relationship between an actor and the field in which that actor operates
	Changing normative associations	Re-making the connections between sets of practices and the moral and cultural foundations for those practices
	Constructing normative networks	Constructing of interorganisational connections through which practices become normatively sanctioned and which form the relevant peer group with respect to compliance, monitoring and evaluation
	Mimicry	Associating new practices with existing sets of taken-for-granted practices, technologies and rules in order to ease adoption
	Theorising	The development and specification of abstract categories and the elaboration of chains of cause and effect
	Educating	The educating of actors in skills and knowledge necessary to support the new institution
Maintaining institutions	Enabling work	The creation of rules that facilitate, supplement and support institutions, such as the creation of authorising agents or diverting resources
	Policing	Ensuring compliance through enforcement, auditing and monitoring
	Deterring	Establishing coercive barriers to institutional change
	Valourising and demonising	Providing for public consumption positive and negative examples that illustrates the normative foundations of an institution
	Mythologising	Preserving the normative underpinnings of an institution by creating and sustaining myths regarding its history
	Embedding and routinising	Actively infusing the normative foundations of an institution into the participants' day to day routines and organisational practices
Disrupting institutions	Disconnecting sanctions	Working through state apparatus to disconnect rewards and sanctions from some set of practices, technologies or rules
	Disassociating moral foundations	Disassociating the practice, rule or technology from its moral foundation as appropriate within a specific cultural context
	Undermining assumptions and beliefs	Decreasing the perceived risks of innovation and differentiation by undermining core assumptions and beliefs

Note. Adapted from “Institutions and Institutional Work,” by T.B. Lawrence and R. Suddaby in S.R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T.B. Lawrence and W.R. Nord (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Organization Studies* (p. 215-254), 2006, SAGE Publications Inc.

(<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608030.n7>). Copyright 2006 by SAGE Publications.

Table 2

Key Dimensions of Legitimacy

	Pragmatic	Regulative	Normative	Cognitive
Motivation	Self-interest	Expedience	Social obligation	Taken-for-grantedness
Affect	Utility/indifference	Fear, Guilt / Innocence	Shame / honour	Certainty / confusion
Basis of legitimacy	Personal evaluation	Legally sanctioned	Morally governed	Comprehensible / culturally supported

Note. From “The thorny road to technology legitimation - Institutional work for potable water reuse in California,” by C. Binz, S. Harris-Lovett, M. Kiparsky, D.L. Sedlak, and B. Truffer , 2016, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 103, p 251

(<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2015.10.005>). Copyright 2016 by Elsevier Inc.

3.6.2.2 *Secondary research questions*

How do Corporate Social Intrapreneurs wield different forms of capital in the process?

The intrapreneurs’ accounts of how they leverage different forms of capital in the intrapreneurship process were analysed through Voronov and Vince's (2012) framework in Table 3, and described in the *Findings* chapter. I found these authors’ descriptions of wielding capital to be salient to this study and have therefore structured this sub-question and analysis around their framework.

Table 3

Forms of Capital

Material	Economic and physical resources
Social	Networks and connections to others.
Cultural	Ability to access and mobilise the institutions and cultural products of a social system, e.g., credentials and certifications.
Symbolic	Ability to use and manipulate symbolic resources such as language, writing and myth.

Note. Adapted from “Integrating emotions into the analysis of institutional work,” by M. Voronov and R. Vince, 2012, *Academy of Management Review*, 37(1), p. 58-81

(<https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2010.0247>). Copyright 2012 by the Academy of Management

What are the factors, at the field, organisational or individual level, that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs perceive as triggering their ‘mental alarm’, conscious reflexivity and agency?

Interview responses are analysed to identify and describe experiences as laid out in Table 4, combining aspects of research from various authors as noted in the column on the right.

Table 4

Antecedents to Reflexivity and Agency

Antecedent factors / triggers		Description	Reference
Cognitive disinvestment from the dominant institutional order	Jolts or crises	A dramatic violation of expectations at the individual, organisational or institutional / field level	Tost, 2011; Battilana and D’Aunno, 2009; Voronov and Vince, 2012
	Contradictions	Contradictions in institutional logics that interfere with an individual’s ability to pursue desired outcomes or promote personal values	
	Degree of institutionalisation	The degree to which relevant practices, norms and values are widely used, accepted and taken for granted.	
Emotional disinvestment from the dominant institutional order	Failure of the fantasmic frame	Threats to psychological well-being through an absence of protection from negative emotions.	Voronov and Vince, 2012.
	Challenge by a rival fantasmic frame or object of attachment	Re-channelling of emotional energy towards an alternative fantasmic frame (e.g., triggered through moral shocks and emotions, or a desire to belong to a particular social collective).	
Social position and history of social positions	Access to various forms of capital	Access to different forms of capital defined in Table 3 above.	Voronov and Vince, 2012, Battilana, 2006; Cardinale, 2017
	Current social position of individual	Informal and formal position, and tenure in that position in the organisation	
	History of the individual’s social positions and inter-organisational mobility	Unique combination of historical positions that the individual has occupied; mobility between organisations.	

The coding frames above were revised and expanded throughout the data analysis process, in line with literature (Schreier, 2014).

3.6.3 *Integrative analysis*

Once data had been structured and analysed using the frameworks above, I analysed the different categories of information to find within-case insights, draw cross-case comparisons and describe the data in relation to the theory (Eisenhardt, 1989).

3.7 Research criteria and limitations

Quality criteria for qualitative research – such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability – hinges on the question of trustworthiness (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Miles et al., 2014). For this research, as a descriptive account of individuals' perceptions and experiences, it is important that firstly, the research reflects an accurate interpretation of participants' original views and an accurate reflection of the data collected; and secondly, that participants' self-reported information is a reliable reflection of the actual circumstances and context (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Yin, 2016). This requires an awareness of researcher and participant biases, and of the effect of the researcher on participants and on the setting: things that cannot be eliminated in qualitative research (J. A. Maxwell, 2013).

I have tried to remain self-aware and reflexive of my own ideas, biases and assumptions, to remain critical, and to approach the data collection and analysis with integrity (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Whittemore et al., 2001). My personal experience in corporate South Africa is the most important aspect to remain aware of – while it may influence my objectivity, it also enables me to interpret and understand participants' context and experiences, and makes the field work easier as I know how to 'fit in' in this context and can easily establish rapport with participants.

Participants may show self-reporting bias, for instance if they feel (conscious or unconscious) pressure to reflect the aspects of the case as it has been presented in public company reports, and hindsight bias as some of the information represents historical events (Miles et al., 2014).

In addition to maintaining an awareness of the above, I have also taken steps to increase credibility and confirmability: Maintaining a transparent and detailed description of the research process, searching for discrepant evidence, respondent validation of information, comparison of data from different sources, using a systematic process for data analysis, sufficient data collection, paying attention to variations in the participants' descriptions of their actions and perceptions, and exploring outliers and negative evidence in the analysis (J. A. Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2016).

Qualitative research in social science produces context-dependent knowledge with limited generalisability or transferability, and this is particularly true for research that uses a case study design (Flyvberg, 2006). While the external generalisability of this study is an inherent limitation of the chosen methodology, it still has the potential to produce valuable knowledge in the form of a descriptive account of a relatively atypical phenomenon (Flyvberg, 2006; J.

A. Maxwell, 2013). Thick, rich descriptions that give a lot of information about the context of the cases will aid the reader in making transferability judgements about the research and further supports research credibility (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Miles et al., 2014).

3.8 Research ethics

Data collection was confined to non-confidential documents and interviews that were conducted with informed consent, and did not require the disclosure of sensitive or confidential information. Identifying characteristics of the cases did not make company anonymity feasible or guarantee individual anonymity. However, individuals' identities have been anonymised to an extent by only using first initials and findings have been shared for review with participants to confirm that the information is accurate and appropriate to share. Ethics clearance was granted by the Ethics Committee of the University before research commenced.

4. Research findings

4.1 Introduction

Each of the four cases pertain to a specific CS Innovation project in a different for-profit company. The research findings are presented in two parts:

The first section describes the context of each case separately. I give an overview of the company, and describe organisational factors that are suggested in the literature as being important for fostering CS Innovation. I then describe the specific project, following the frameworks from the literature as outlined in the *Research methodology* chapter.

In the second section, I share combined findings from all cases in response to the research questions about institutional work and legitimation, wielding of different forms of capital, and intrapreneurs' reflexivity and agency. It is a descriptive account of the intrapreneurs' observations and experiences of the intrapreneurship process.

The findings are summarised in chapter 5.

4.2 Contextual description of cases

4.2.1 *Nedbank: Solar Branch*

These findings were derived from interviews and publicly available documents. In-person interviews were conducted in March and April 2018 with three participants who were Nedbank employees involved in the project. D. was interviewed individually and T. and M. were interviewed together, with each interview lasting just over an hour. Documents included annual reports (integrated-, financial results-, transformation- and sustainability reports); news articles relating to the project, and presentations made by company representatives about the project at events. Quotes in this section are from interviews with the Nedbank research participants unless indicated otherwise.

4.2.1.1 About Nedbank

The Nedbank Group is a South African financial services provider that offers retail- and wholesale banking, asset- and wealth management, and insurance. It has approximately 29 000 employees, 7.8 million clients and is the fourth-largest bank in Africa as measured by assets and tier 1 capital (Nedbank Group Limited, 2020). It is listed on the JSE, and is led by Mike Brown, a 25-year veteran of the company, who previously held the role of Chief Financial Officer (Nedbank Group Limited, 2020). The current strategic focus areas for the bank are “delivering innovative market-leading client experiences; growing our transactional banking franchise faster than the market; being operationally excellent in all we do; managing scarce resources to optimise economic outcomes and providing our clients with access to the best financial services network in Africa” (Nedbank Group, 2020: 10).

The research participants were all based in Nedbank’s headquarters in Johannesburg, in the retail and business banking division. T. and M. worked on strategy and innovation, and D.’s role was focused on emerging payment methods, including the bank’s virtual payment tool, Masterpass.

4.2.1.2 Organisational support for CS Innovation

Compatibility between social welfare logic and commercial logic (Alt & Craig, 2016):

While commercial logic is central to Nedbank, it is often described in a way that is highly compatible with social welfare logic, e.g. in this participant comment -- “Doing good, it’s always been a part of, I guess, our DNA” – and in the company’s integrated report:

How we think about our purpose to do good can be narrow or wide. We are bankers, and our role in society is to manage risk, savings and investment, and protect the financial ecosystem of the country. But our expertise can lend itself to several other contributions to our society, engaging with partners to stimulate the development of small businesses and jobs (Nedbank Group Limited, 2018b: 5).

Integration of social purpose in the company purpose (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Sonenshein, 2016):

Nedbank's stated company purpose clearly integrates a social purpose: "To use our financial expertise to do good for individuals, families, business and society" (Nedbank Group, 2020: 16).

This was also expressed in participant interviews, e.g.: "Our brand statement, not in the market, but internally, says that we are money experts who do good. That's our brand statement. Now you can go a hell of a long way on the back of that."

Top leadership support for social objectives (Herrera, 2016):

A quote from the Nedbank CEO in the 2019 integrated report appears to espouse support for social objectives:

We are aware that operating a successful and sustainable business requires a thriving economy, a well-functioning society and a healthy environment. We also know that we have a responsibility and an opportunity to contribute to these. As such, our response cannot be a secondary aspect of our business – it must be central to it, with a commitment to sustainable development as the only reasonable response (Nedbank Group, 2020: 16).

Integration of social objectives in extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and other management practices (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013):

The 2019 integrated report includes performance details on environment, social and governance (ESG) dimensions for the CEO, executive directors and prescribed officers. Key performance indicators (KPIs) have been defined for stakeholder value creation, including for 'society' as a stakeholder. Under the main strategic focus areas for the bank, the only KPIs that relate to social objectives are a stated intention to tilt towards financing activities that support the SDGs, though specific metrics are still in development. The bank further has high ratings on ESG from independent ratings bodies, and claims that its operations are carbon-neutral and have effectively net-zero water use (Nedbank Group Limited, 2020).

Participants described the pursuit of social objectives as intrinsically motivating and while they did not report being incentivised for social value creation, their responses show that there are at least no disincentives for doing so: "...because that [doing good] is part of your brand promise, it does make it much easier for us to us to sell something like this [the Solar Branch project], to say that you want to build on that."

The bank's integrated report hints at favourable conditions for CS Innovation, specifically through this quote that demonstrates an application of core capabilities to social value creation:

Given that the greatest contribution that a bank will make is through its commercial offer, we give primacy to the Sustainable Development Finance lever, i.e. delivering products and services that generate revenue for Nedbank, value for clients and SDG solutions for society (Nedbank Group, 2020: 82).

Overall, the data collected about Nedbank seems to point to strong compatibility between social welfare and commercial logic, an integration of social purpose in the company purpose, leadership support for social objectives and a moderate integration of social objectives in management practices.

4.2.1.3 About Solar Branch

The project uses a solar-powered converted shipping container to bring banking services to Upper Mncwasa in the Eastern Cape, a rural village that did not have access to grid electricity or local banking services. The project also involves bringing the community internet connectivity and introducing them to cashless, digital payment tools in the form of Nedbank's Masterpass, which enables customer-vendor and peer to peer payments. The banking services that the Solar Branch provides are all cashless. ("Nedbank Opens SA's First Solar Branch," 2017).

The participants explained how the project originated: A social entrepreneur had approached the Nedbank sustainability team in 2014 for philanthropic funding for his invention called the Solar Turtle. It is a solar-powered converted shipping container, and its primary purpose is to provide electricity solutions to communities with no or very limited electricity. Local entrepreneurs can buy a Solar Turtle franchise and sell rechargeable batteries and/or charge customers a small fee to recharge devices or batteries at the Solar Turtle. (Peters, 2017).

The social entrepreneur's aim was to secure funding to provide environmentally sustainable electricity solutions to rural communities. However, the Nedbank team saw a potential fit with their *Imbizo* initiative, which was focused on the development of micro enterprises and access to financial services in rural South Africa (Nedbank Group Limited, 2015). They saw that an adaptation of the Solar Turtle concept could enable the provision of financial services to unbanked rural communities, while also contributing to their economic upliftment over time. The Nedbank team travelled to see the Solar Turtle that was operating in Upper Mncwasa and from there refined the concept: "When [he] first approached us, his idea was a CSI [CS Investment – philanthropic] initiative for the bank. And we then took it and evolved it into something that could be a sustainable banking offer."

The refined idea was pitched by the innovation team to the group digital forum for funding: "...we actually saw it a bit, almost as research money: R&D going out to see if we could make this thing really work."

It was in this forum where D. became involved as she had been leading the work on Masterpass and introducing digital payment tools supported one of the aims of the project, which was to enable the community to go cashless.

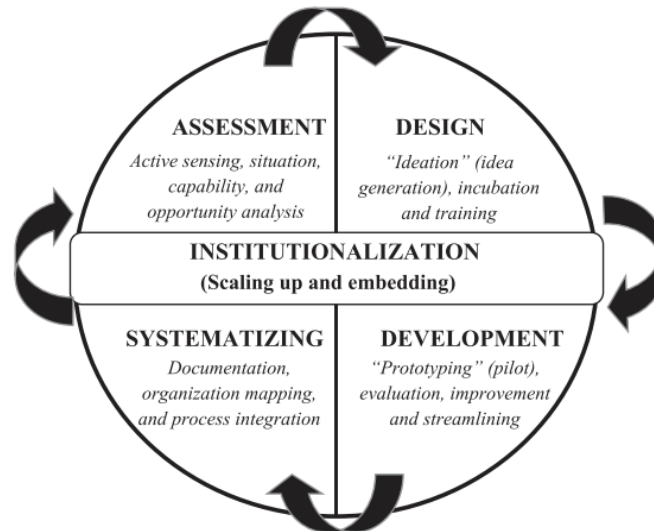
The project meets the criteria of intrapreneurial-ness in that it is driven by the initiative of employees and not mandated by senior leadership, and meets the criteria of innovativeness in its introduction of new technology (the solar-powered unit) and its introduction of existing technology (digital payment and banking solutions) to a new market.

When we see an opportunity that we believe is in line with achieving the strategy it's up to the team that wants to run that project to do the due diligence and investigation, and show what it is that you could achieve with the project.

4.2.1.4 Project's stage of institutionalisation

Figure 1

Social Innovation Process



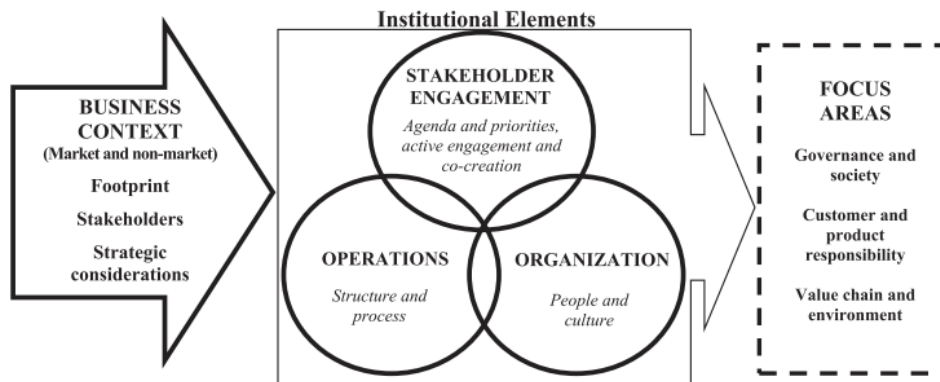
Note. From "Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation," by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1469 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

At the time of data collection, this project was at the "development" stage of institutionalisation: "This was a proof of concept to see if we could take a community cashless... [we will] take the learnings from this project and look at what else can we do." This stage involves the testing of the design through the first Solar Branch pilot that had been launched in the Upper Mncwasa community, the results of which would support the systematising of the social innovation, should it progress (Herrera, 2015).

4.2.1.5 Project's strategic alignment and social focus

Figure 2

Institutionalising Social Innovation



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1470 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

Business context – footprint:

This project includes a new kind of partner in the form of the Solar Turtle social enterprise, a new go-to-market strategy through the unique branch design and offering, and expansion into new geographical and income-bracket market segments.

Business context – stakeholders:

The project is mentioned in the company’s integrated report. This indicates that it is used as a tool to increase the bank’s positive reputation around innovation and social responsiveness with its broader stakeholder base. More specifically, albeit indirectly, Solar Branch has improved Nedbank’s relationship with the Xhosa community’s traditional leadership and with local municipalities:

[I don't see it] purely as a single profit centre or a single loss centre. Through what we've done here, we've got an inroad into the Xhosa king for example... It's also given us inroads into some of the municipal banking tenders.... if we make some profit out of deals like that in the future, that would never be allocated to the [Solar] Branch but we can see that the Branch has sort of stimulated that.

Business context – strategic considerations:

The project aligns well with these Nedbank strategies:

- Accelerating digitisation and reducing cash handling costs (Nedbank Group Limited, 2018a) through increased adoption of digital payment- and banking tools.
- Increasing client acquisition and retention by “delivering innovative market-leading client experiences” (Nedbank Group Limited, 2018a: 36): the project is mentioned in the 2017 integrated report as an example of this strategy in action.
- Advancing financial inclusion by penetrating underserved markets: low-income consumers, rural areas or areas with limited infrastructure:

It allows us to increase the number of transactional accounts we have in a low-income environment... if we want to really create a payments landscape where there is inclusion, financial inclusion, it needs to cater for your low income as well as your high net worth individual.

Participants shared that The Solar Branch’s low-cost, infrastructure-light design makes it a scalable solution for penetrating other rural markets across Africa that have represented hereto prohibitive infrastructure constraints.

Institutional elements – stakeholder engagement:

The stakeholder engagement was focused on the Upper Mncwasa community. This has included building relationships with the local traditional leaders and authorities, signing up local businesses to accept Masterpass, and broad community education and engagement around the bank and its offerings. Participants demonstrated an awareness of the importance of engaging with the local community stakeholders and following local customs in the process:

I think there’s unspoken rules in how you trade in rural anything... if we open a branch, you have to meet the chief, you have to donate the bull or a cow... they’ve got to then bless it... If they don’t... If they turn against you, you are done.

Institutional elements – operations:

The group digital forum enabled intrapreneurial employees to pitch for funding and human resources for a project like Solar Branch, which aligned with the bank’s digitisation strategy. Persuasion and engagement with decision makers was still necessary though: “You always have an element of winning others over with any project, that you need to lobby the organisation. Especially when you need to get budget for it.”

The project involved introducing and leveraging Nedbank's existing systems and processes – such as Masterpass, the Nedbank Money app, and the support and knowledge of staff from neighbouring branches. It also involved customising systems, such as changing the form factor and standard offering of the branch. Lastly, it meant adapting processes to what was feasible in the local context. For example, using a car and a loudhailer and free t-shirts to market the launch event to the community, as opposed to other forms of advertising that would be the norm in a different context.

Institutional elements – organisational culture:

While participants indicated a generally supportive environment for pursuing social innovation, they also pointed out that elements of the organisational culture could create barriers and that they had to work at changing perceptions:

So what traditionally then happens, is that you have an internal bank thing: 'To be a branch you should have cash, you should have accounts, you should have that' ... On the other side of this, you have the client probably saying: 'Well, I need to be able to pay, I need to be able to buy, I need to be able to save, I need to be able to invest, I need to be able to do...' , whatever the case may be. Now what we've built here, is something that can handle all of that, and the staff in that community and in that branch have been taught using those principles. The problem is the rest of the business has not.

Social focus areas:

The main social goals of the project fall under the focus area of “governance and society” and relate to financial inclusion and access to economic opportunity for the village of Upper Mncwasa, a poor rural village with limited resources, infrastructure and access to services and opportunities.

Upper Mncwasa does not have running water or electricity. Employment in the community is concentrated amongst a few teachers and small-scale entrepreneurs, and over 69% of the village is economically inactive (“Nedbank opens SA's first solar branch,” 2017). Economic activity is centred around the local high school, which has been delivering above-average academic results and attracts learners from all around the region as a result. Other forms of income for the village include government grants and lodging fees paid by out-of-town school learners who attend the local high school.

Before Nedbank's entry, almost every financial transaction in the community would use cash. For anyone to withdraw or deposit cash, however, the closest ATM to the village is a R65 taxi ride away, which means that access to and wider use of digital payment tools in this community can eliminate significant cost, time and effort for its members. For instance, payments from learners' parents for accommodation or to the school can now even be done remotely by using Mastercard, instead of requiring the learners to travel and withdraw cash that their parents have deposited into their bank accounts. The branch employs local community members and further economic stimulus is provided through the community-owned microwave Wi-Fi network that Nedbank helped to establish as part of this project. Because much of the economic activity is anchored around the school, peripheral social goals include contributing to education, for example through the iPads installed in the branch that can be used by the school learners for educational purposes, including financial literacy.

4.2.1.6 Implicit and explicit company support for the project

Access to resources, such as budget and people (Halme et al., 2012; Venn & Berg, 2013):

The key enabler for this project has been the digital forum, where the idea could be formally proposed and have resources allocated to it.

We have a massive strategic drive towards digital... and this project was pitched at the group digital forum... [it] contains various parties from across the bank at certain levels, and they then make a decision on which projects will go ahead and which won't, and the funding required.

Once resources have been allocated, there is an expectation that the project team must report the results and learning.

The freedom to innovate and experiment (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012):

The structure that has been put in place for the project to be greenlighted takes its experimental nature into account. Participants used words such as 'play', 'experiment', 'test' and 'learn' to describe the activities and objectives of the project, and acknowledged that experimentation may mean failure as well as learning: "I firmly believe that a project is successful, through failure... well it's not failure, it's learnings and insight. What you do with that insight is what ultimately makes you successful in the next project."

Participants also expressed, however, that beyond the pilot stage, scaling an initiative such as this is more challenging:

The problem resides in the question around – so what then? How far can I take it after that? What’s the appetite to scale it? What do I trade off to make this happen?... The return curve isn’t what you’re used to.

The freedom to collaborate with outside individuals and other organisations (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Mirvis et al., 2016; van Wijk et al., 2019):

The project would not have been established had there not been a degree of freedom for the individuals to engage and collaborate with the Solar Turtle team. This may have been enabled by the mandate of their roles in strategy and innovation as well as their ability to see potential for the Solar Turtle concept to be adapted to serve the strategic objectives of the bank.

Again, participants flagged the scaling of this collaboration as a challenge: “If you work with a small vendor who has got a great idea: for us the learning [is] whether he’s got the right business mind to grow with you, [it] is something you’ve got to challenge.”

4.2.1.7 Summary

Overall, my interpretation of the context for the Solar Branch project is that it is a combination of a supportive organisational environment, availability of resources and systems, a clear strategic fit and motivated intrapreneurs that has enabled its development.

4.2.2 Thomson Reuters: Bankable Farmer

These findings were derived from interviews and publicly available documents. Interviews were conducted in person or telephonically in August and October 2018 with seven individuals who were employees, contractors or interns of Refinitiv / Thomson Reuters and based in Cape Town. S., the lead intrapreneur on the project was interviewed over the phone on two occasions for 30 minutes each time, and the rest of the team were interviewed as a group, in person over half a day. Documents included company websites, press releases, annual- and corporate responsibility reports, news articles, and articles written by company employees. Quotes in this section are from interviews with the Thomson Reuters research participants unless indicated otherwise.

In October 2018, Thomson Reuters concluded a transaction selling a 55% majority stake of its Financial & Risk unit to a private equity firm, Blackstone Group. This created the Refinitiv company and split the Thomson Reuters workforce in half (Thomson Reuters, 2018a, 2019). The formal transition process had just started and the Cape Town office of Thomson Reuters would become part of Refinitiv.

The Bankable Farmer project had been housed in the then Thomson Reuters Cape Town Lab, which briefly became Refinitiv Cape Town Lab and would eventually be closed. Bankable Farmer was eventually spun out into its own social enterprise and housed within AFGRI Technology Services (ATS), Thomson Reuters' co-creation partner for the project.

As the project had originated within Thomson Reuters and the transition process had not yet had a meaningful impact on its operations at the time of data collection, I will refer to and describe the Thomson Reuters company (and not Refinitiv) as the company housing the project. Except for the 2019 press release announcing the launch of the project, which was issued by Refinitiv, I have derived information from documents published by Thomson Reuters or ATS.

4.2.2.1 About Thomson Reuters and Thomson Reuters Labs

Thomson Reuters is a multinational company, headquartered in Canada, that operates the Reuters news service and provides news, information, and analytical tools and systems for market intelligence, mainly serving customers in financial and legal services. Before the Refinitiv restructuring, Thomson Reuters employed approximately 25 000 people globally. The company's South Africa and Africa division was headquartered in Johannesburg with

another office in Cape Town. Thomson Reuters Labs is the company's global innovation arm (Thomson Reuters, 2018a, 2019).

The Thomson Reuters Cape Town Lab and its staff interfaced with the Johannesburg and Cape Town offices of the company, but reported directly into the global Thomson Reuters Labs division. The lead intrapreneur, S. was the Head of Thomson Reuters Labs, Cape Town and the Head of Innovation, Africa. Her direct reporting line was within the Thomson Reuters Labs division, but she was also part of the Africa leadership team with an indirect reporting line to the Head of Africa. The Cape Town Lab opened in 2016 and was located separately from the rest of the company at the Bandwidth Barn in the suburb of Woodstock, alongside many of the city's technology startups. Its objectives were described as innovation and partnership:

Innovation will come through driving creative conversations with our customers and partners through open events and rapid prototyping. Partnership involves collaboration and co-creation with startups and other partners to put new technologies and business models into practice. The Labs provide capabilities across the many disciplines that constitute data science and deliver tools, analyses, dashboards, visualizations and proof-of-concept applications (Green, 2016).

4.2.2.2 Organisational support for CS Innovation

Compatibility between social welfare logic and commercial logic (Alt & Craig, 2016):

Observations from documents (Thomson Reuters, 2018b, 2018a) confirm the centrality of commercial logic in Thomson Reuters, as would be expected in a for-profit company, but also relatively low compatibility with social welfare logic. Innovation is a focus area and one of the company's core values, but that innovation is oriented towards the development of profitable products. Social impact-oriented activities appear to be peripheral to the core business operations and are described in a separate Corporate Responsibility and Inclusion Report. This seems to demonstrate a more traditional CSR approach, where principles of responsibility and ethics are integrated into operations, and voluntary contributions are extolled, but the company's core capabilities are not leveraged towards creating social value.

Participants affirmed the company's commitment to innovation. They expressed a stronger compatibility between social and commercial logic, but as it pertains to their own work (the Bankable Farmer project in particular) and personal perspectives, rather than it being a company-wide approach.

The integration of a social purpose in the company purpose (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Sonenshein, 2016):

The company purpose does not appear to express an explicit social purpose:

Thomson Reuters is one of the world's most trusted providers of answers, helping professionals make confident decisions and run better businesses... We're on a mission to help professionals advance their businesses and gain competitive advantage with the trusted answers only we can provide (Thomson Reuters, 2020a).

Top leadership support for social objectives (Herrera, 2016):

Top leadership support for social objectives are only expressed in company reports to the extent of the traditional CSR approach as mentioned above. Participants confirmed the support of their direct managers and company leadership for the project, though not necessarily for social objectives in general: “It helps to have leadership in your direct line that is supportive.”

Integration of social objectives in extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and other management practices (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013):

Social objectives are reported on in the Corporate Responsibility & Inclusion report (e.g. improvements in third party rankings, volume of volunteer contributions), but there was no mention of specific social objectives in the main annual report (Thomson Reuters, 2018b, 2018a). Social objectives appear to be integrated into management practices in so far as they form part of an individual's specific job role and responsibilities (e.g., as a CSR manager) or if the social objectives are embedded in the work as in the case of the Bankable Farmer project.

The dominant performance metric for the Bankable Farmer project was commercial: “Our biggest KPI was deepening and strengthening the relationships with our most strategic clients.” Participants found the social impact of the project to be intrinsically motivating: “I think the reason why I was so excited to work on this project was... that I felt that I wanted to work on something that could make a difference and work on something meaningful”

Overall, the data collected points to low compatibility between peripheral social welfare logic and central commercial logic in the company, and weak evidence for the integration of social purpose into company purpose, leadership support for social objectives, and management practices that reinforce social objectives.

4.2.2.3 About Bankable Farmer

Bankable Farmer uses data science to build a credit profile for small scale farmers in Africa to increase their access to financial services and allow financial services providers to penetrate this previously untapped market segment (Refinitiv, 2019; Thomson Reuters interviews). It is a 50-50 partnership between Thomson Reuters and AFGRI Technology Services (ATS). ATS is part of AFGRI Group Holdings, an agricultural services company, and is focused on the development and implementation of agricultural technology solutions (AFGRI Technology Services, 2017).

The idea originated from a series of Thomson Reuters and Vodafone innovation workshops with Thomson Reuters' major South African banking clients to explore mobile-centric innovation opportunities in Africa, as S. explained:

It kept coming up that farmers, small holder farmers in particular, was an opportunity, but they REALLY had no concept, or no idea of how to connect with those farmers, and then obviously, whether or not there were credit risks. Their current infrastructure and way of doing business was almost opposed to being able to provide any kind of service at that level.

The project was designed as a proof of concept for a product offering to Thomson Reuters's African financial services clients. It would become the anchor project of the new Cape Town Lab and S. would transition from her role as Head of Global Mobile Strategy and Business Innovation into the newly created role of Head of Innovation, Africa and Head of the Thomson Reuters Cape Town Lab.

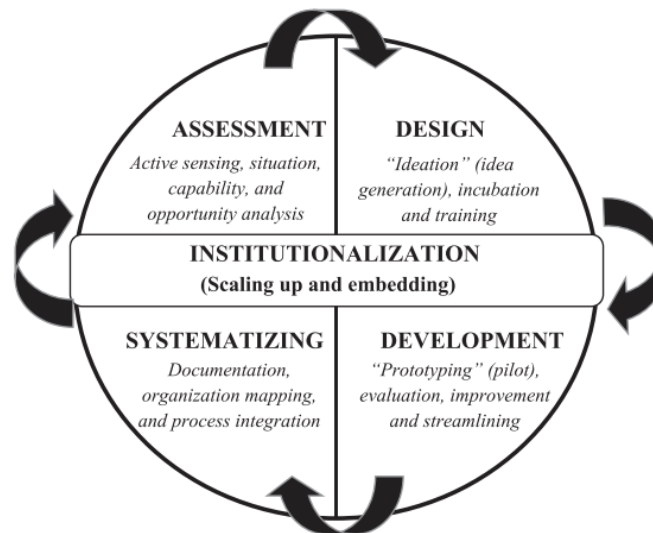
Bankable Farmer was funded in part by the Thomson Reuters Catalyst Fund and staffed by a combination of fulltime employees, contractors and interns. Any Thomson Reuters employee can submit an idea to the Catalyst Fund, and if the initial proposal is successful, the idea is pitched to the company CEO for the opportunity to receive US\$ 100 000 and the needed training and staff to develop the concept (Customer Devoted, 2018).

The project meets the criteria of intrapreneurial-ness in that it was driven by S. from ideation through to development, including securing resources by applying to the Catalyst Fund and lobbying for the creation of her new role and the Cape Town Lab. Its innovativeness relates to the application of an emerging technology to develop a new product / service to unlock access to an untapped and traditionally excluded market segment.

4.2.2.4 Project's stage of institutionalisation

Figure 1

Social Innovation Process



Note. From "Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation," by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1469 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

At the time of data collection, the project was in the "design" stage, with the prototype, or proof of concept (POC), being incubated and finalised:

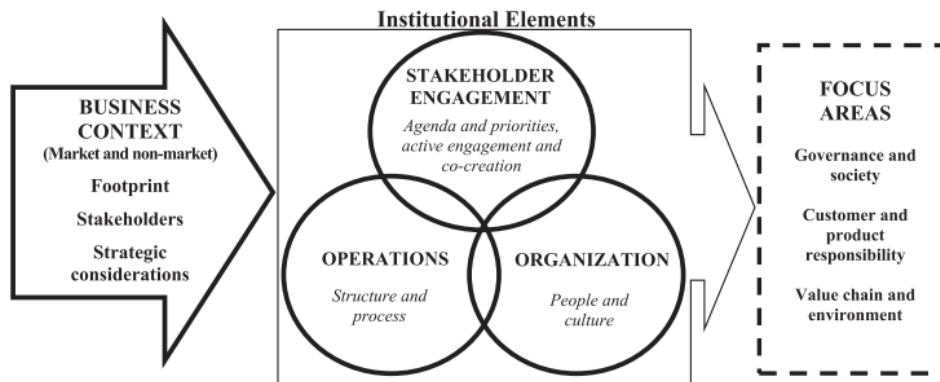
We're ending the R&D portion of phase 1 of the POC. So, this is a very big project as I keep mentioning, so there are multiple tracks to it. But the first phase is the building of this risk model and we're very close to being able to test that.

The launch of the Bankable Farmer Research Initiative, which was what the prototype ended up being called ("development" stage), was announced in a press release in September 2019 (Refinitiv, 2019).

4.2.2.5 Project's strategic alignment and social focus

Figure 2

Institutionalising Social Innovation



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1470 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

Business context – footprint:

Thomson Reuters provides intelligence and software-based tools and systems to its customers. Bankable Farmer deepens the level of market intelligence that the company provides in Africa, by building data sets and tools that help its customers to access the BOP of the agricultural sector. In so doing, the project broadens the company’s extended value chain into this geographic area and market segment.

Business context – stakeholders:

The project had been designed based on insights from, and in order to serve the company’s priority customers, the major South African banks: “We arrived at this idea, frankly, because our customers kept saying it... our customers are saying they want it.”

Financial services tend to be heavily regulated, making the knowledge of regulations and regulatory stakeholders important for the project. Other relevant stakeholders included startups and universities, who would be engaged in the research and design of the offering.

Business context – strategic considerations:

The project applies data science to develop a new market intelligence product offering. This directly fits into the company’s overall innovation and product development strategy:

Through the rapid prototyping of solutions and knowledge sharing, we support the organization and our customers with the understanding and application of new technologies to their businesses... to identify, de-risk and activate future-ready opportunities in AI, data sciences and emerging technologies (Thomson Reuters, 2020b).

Institutional elements – stakeholder engagement:

Participants called out Thomson Reuters' customers as the most important stakeholder for the Lab and for the project, and there was continuous collaboration with them throughout the process. This engagement has also had a strategic benefit to the company: "Almost from day one, the kinds of conversations we were having with clients, this really transformed the way that they thought about us as a partner."

A key challenge of the project expressed by participants was getting to know the small scale farmers, complicated by the limited availability of data sets, difficulty of access to individual farmers for qualitative insights, and the diversity of small scale farmers across different African markets: "You have farmers who are often in remote locations... disconnected from formal infrastructure, they don't have access to banks, they don't even necessarily trust banks... they may not even be literate."

Participants emphasised the importance of the collaboration with their co-creation partner, ATS:

We bring our unique capabilities to the table, they bring their unique capabilities to the table and the complement and the combination of those two – whether its assets, domain expertise, content, data, leadership – it's that combination that will make the project and is making the project successful.

With the Lab being physically and conceptually separate from the local Thomson Reuters business, S.'s involvement in the local leadership team was essential for internal stakeholder engagement: "I was super plugged in... One of the things that we were able to do is to make sure that the projects we were working on were strategic, were relevant, and would actually have relevant impacts for the business."

The participants also mentioned how regular engagement with the Thomson Reuters sales organisation was helpful in enhancing the offering to customers and in keeping the Labs and its offering top of mind within the broader organisation.

Engagement with other stakeholders was designed into the Labs by creating the role of “Ecosystem Manager”, who was tasked with deepening relationships and collaboration with stakeholders such as startups and universities.

Institutional elements – operations:

The Cape Town Lab reported directly into and was well supported by the company’s Global Innovation Labs. They maintain a meaningful connection to the local business operations to ensure relevance to the local business strategy.

Participants pointed out how the partnership with ATS and the different strengths, capabilities and systems that the two corporates brought to the table helped enhance the project offering and mutual learning for both parties.

Institutional elements – organisational culture:

With the Lab operating somewhat separately from the broader organisation, it had a unique organisational culture, which appeared to have a strong influence on the team and the project. A point that was emphasised several times by the Labs team was the high positive regard that they had for S.’s leadership style, the organisational culture that had been created in the Labs, and how this enabled innovation and personal growth: “The leadership skills and the management skills, this has changed my life; the way I see the world.”

Participants also conveyed how the physical space housing the Lab contributed to a different organisational culture, and enhanced their ability to innovate and collaborate: “When you walk in it doesn’t feel like a corporate space, we want people to feel comfortable, we want people to feel like they can think differently.”

Social focus areas:

The social focus area for Bankable Farmer relates to “governance and society” through financial inclusion of the BOP of agricultural producers. The press release announcing the partnership between ATS and Refinitiv captures the intended social impact clearly:

Over 80% of sub-Saharan Africa’s population is engaged in agriculture. Smallholders, micro-commercial farms and the business ecosystem around these farms constitute the vast majority of economic activity on the African continent. The number of small commercial farmers in Africa is estimated at over 30 million, most of which are underbanked, and as a result find it difficult to pay for seed, fertilizer and other inputs. The World Bank’s Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP)

estimates the market opportunity for credit services to small farmers across Africa and South Asia to be \$450bn (Refinitiv, 2019).

4.2.2.6 Implicit and explicit company support for the project

Access to resources, such as budget and people (Halme et al., 2012; Venn & Berg, 2013):

Having an intentional funding mechanism in the company that could support innovative ideas coming from employees in the form of the Catalyst Fund, plus having the semi-separate Labs division to incubate innovations are both key resource enablers for this project. This allows access to, and protection of the resources needed to foster ideas, as well as insulation from the quarterly performance pressures that are typical in a corporate environment:

We're separately funded, which protects the investment... but we're embedded in the business... Innovation needs longer term and a more sustainable investment... for it to yield the returns that we're looking for... it's important to have the budget protected centrally, because the business itself is very sensitive to cost pressure, you miss a number, then money's got to come from somewhere.

The clear strategic fit of the project and efforts by the team to remain relevant to the business further helped to secure resources and the ongoing implicit and explicit support from the broader company.

The freedom to innovate and experiment (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012):

The semi-separate Labs structure within the company and the intentional organisational culture created by S. set up an environment where experimentation and an openness to learning were norms:

[It is an] environment where you can own up to your mistakes... that is something that is very interesting and different about the lab, because you'll get called out on your mistakes... but also people don't have to cover up their mistakes either.

Participants shared how the freedom to experiment extended into a fluidity in their roles within the Lab. For example, one of the participants had started out in a coordinator role, but ended up spontaneously stepping into a data science role that had become vacant. This was much more suited to his skill set and interests, a transition that would typically have significant barriers in a traditional corporate environment.

The freedom to collaborate with outside individuals and other organisations (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Mirvis et al., 2016; van Wijk et al., 2019):

The freedom to collaborate was not only implicit but explicit in the Cape Town Lab: The project itself was a co-creation with ATS; the role of Ecosystem Manager exists to collaborate with external partners; and the project originated from a co-creation workshop with customers.

4.2.2.7 Summary

Overall, my interpretation of the context for the Bankable Farmer project is that in the face of a broader organisational context that is not inherently supportive of social innovation, it is a combination of the Labs structure and systems, the Catalyst Fund, the initiative of the lead intrapreneur, and the clear commercial fit, aside from its social objectives, that have enabled its creation and development.

4.2.3 Vodacom: Mum & Baby

These findings were derived from an interview and publicly available documents. The interview was conducted for about an hour, in person in November 2018 with a Vodacom employee, B., the intrapreneur leading the Vodacom Mum & Baby project as well as other product development and innovation work. Documents included company websites, financial and integrated reports, a third-party socio-economic impact report on the project and news articles. Quotes in this section are from the interview with the research participant unless indicated otherwise.

4.2.3.1 About Vodacom

Vodacom provides communications services such as mobile voice, messaging, data, financial and converged services to consumers and businesses across 51 countries, mostly in Africa (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018, 2020a). The company is headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa and has further operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Tanzania, with associate operations in Kenya through partial ownership of Safaricom. The company's South African operations represents 77,3% of its service revenue and 91,4% of its Earnings Before Interest and Taxes (EBIT). Vodacom is listed on the JSE and 60.5% of the company is owned by Vodafone, one of the world's largest communications companies. At the time of data collection, Vodacom had reported 41.6 million customers in South Africa and around 7 500 direct employees.

The research participant is based at the company's Johannesburg headquarters.

4.2.3.2 Organisational support for CS Innovation

Compatibility between social welfare logic and commercial logic (Alt & Craig, 2016):

There appears to be high compatibility between commercial and social welfare logic in Vodacom, specifically as it pertains to offering low cost or free products and services (including content and information) to low income consumers. This is seen as a tool to increase revenue and market share, by responding to consumer wants, needs and behaviours, while contributing to digital inclusion and promoting access to health-, education- and financial services. (Vodacom Group Limited, 2017a).

The integration of a social purpose in the company purpose (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Sonenshein, 2016):

The company purpose and vision as per the 2018 integrated report incorporates a broad social

purpose: “Our Purpose ... To connect everybody to live a better today and build a better tomorrow... Our Vision... To be a leading digital company that empowers a connected society” (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018: Who we are).

Vodacom’s company purpose has been updated in the more recent 2020 integrated report, and maintains an integrated social purpose: “To provide affordable access to the internet for the next 100 million people in our markets – We connect for a better future” (Vodacom Group Limited, 2020a: Who we are).

Top leadership support for social objectives (Herrera, 2016):

While not explicitly mentioned by the participant, the strong integration of social objectives into overall company strategy, as described in public reports, points to leadership support for social objectives, at least on a surface level and where it aligns with company strategy. For example, the CEO’s foreword to the 2017 financial report includes a specific reference to the company’s contribution to social objectives, specifically digital inclusion:

Cognisant of our responsibility to increase digital and social connectivity in South Africa, we introduced ‘Siyakha’ in early 2017. Siyakha is a platform that offers zero-rated content and lower priced products and services, which form part of our effort to help improve the lives of people that can least afford communication costs (Vodacom Group Limited, 2017b: Vodacom Group CEO commented).

Integration of social objectives in extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and other management practices (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013):

While a broad social purpose is part of the company’s positioning in public reports, commercial logic remains central to the organisation. It appears that social objectives are integrated into management practices, such as performance metrics, when these are relevant to a particular business objective or an individual’s specific job role.

The broader social purpose seems to have filtered through to the individual participant’s specific work goals, and he also expressed how there had been an explicit integration of social impact measures into his performance measures:

When I first started, I asked my new boss, what’s my job? He says: ‘You’re supposed to help people.’ ... It’s kind of been a ... vision statement for all of these products, is that it must start with helping people... It’s very important that your actual KPIs have a social impact, have a positive social impact measure, and it’s not an easy measure to put.

Overall, the data collected points to a relatively high compatibility between social welfare and commercial logic, at least in so far as it pertains to serving BOP consumers; good evidence for the integration of a social purpose in the company purpose; apparent leadership support for social objectives; and some management practices that advance social objectives, in instances where these are compatible with central commercial logic.

4.2.3.3 About Mum & Baby

Vodacom's Mum & Baby service gives subscribers access to tools and information related to maternal, neonatal and child health. It includes an SMS service, which sends users up to three messages a week in one of five languages, based on their stage of pregnancy or child's age; a mobile-optimised website with health-related articles and videos; and tools such as an immunisation calendar, medicine checker and due-date calculator (KPMG LLP, 2019).

It was designed and launched in 2017 as part of Siyakha, a Vodacom prepaid price plan created by the segment marketing team to gain and retain low-income consumers. Siyakha offers affordable price packages, entry-level smartphones, free access to a pared down version of Facebook, and free access to websites related to education, employment, and health. Initially only available to Siyakha customers, Mum & Baby was made available to all Vodacom subscribers in January 2018, and then to any mobile user in August 2018, with free access to content and certain features reserved for Siyakha customers. At the end of August 2018, Mum & Baby had around 1.2 million registered subscribers. (KPMG LLP, 2019; Vodacom Group Limited, 2017a).

Siyakha is part of Vodacom's inclusive business strategy and aims to increase BOP customer acquisition and retention while creating social value through digital inclusion and free access to health and education information (KPMG LLP, 2019). As part of Siyakha, Mum & Baby was developed and funded like other products – starting with a concept, followed by a business case and budget once the right buy-in had been secured.

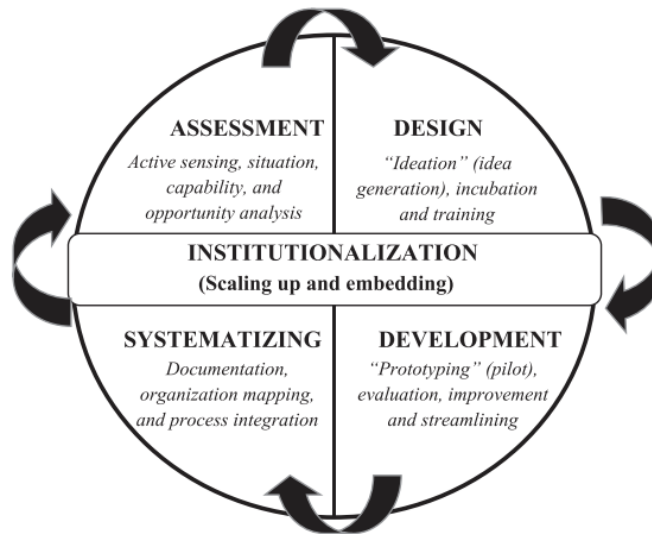
The project meets the criteria of innovativeness as it introduced a new product to an under-served market segment. It continues to meet the criteria of innovativeness and intrapreneurial-ness through its evolution (e.g., broadening and deepening the health care services on offer, or finding innovative ways to offer third party content, products or services), which is driven by the initiative and intrapreneurial approach of the research participant:

It has broken new ground and we're definitely going to do more and more of this. And it gives me the license to go and expand it way beyond what the original paradigm was – which is Mums and Babies – now I can make it much bigger.

4.2.3.4 Project's stage of institutionalisation

Figure 1

Social Innovation Process



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1469 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

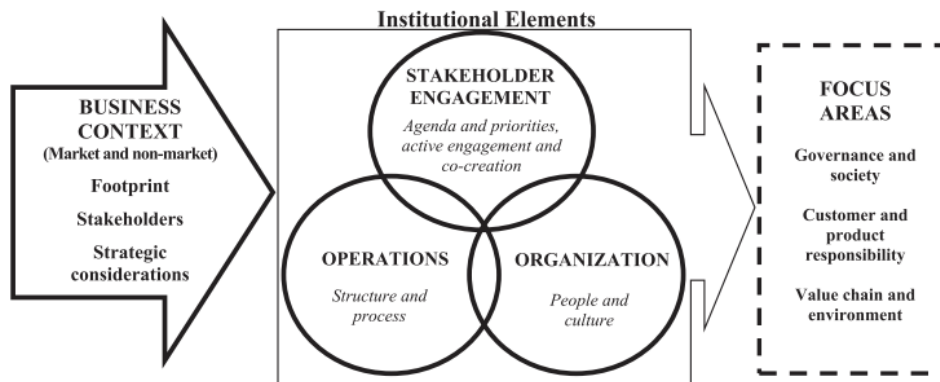
At the time of data collection, the project was in the “institutionalisation” stage as it had been scaled up and embedded in the company’s offering to its customers. It was entering a renewed phase of assessment to design, develop and systematise additional offerings. Vodacom had commissioned advisory firm, KPMG to do research into the socio-economic impact of the project (the report was published in 2019) and the success of Mum & Baby had been mentioned in the company’s 2018 integrated report:

Our Mum and Baby service, launched in March 2017, has shown particularly encouraging uptake with more than one million customers benefiting in the year; paving the way to build on this success and deepen our focus on women as a segment (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018).

4.2.3.5 *Project's strategic alignment and social focus*

Figure 2

Institutionalising Social Innovation



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1470 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

Business context – footprint:

Mum & Baby and Siyakha were designed to grow and retain market share in the low income, prepaid customer segment. Because Vodacom’s network already offered 3G coverage to 99.4% of the population, attractiveness for this market segment would be driven by affordable price plans and relevant value-adds (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018). Research showed the opportunity in healthcare access and information, as women in this segment had a desire for but limited access to reliable health information.

Business context – stakeholders:

The most important stakeholder for the project is the BOP customer who wants a relevant, valuable product offering. Mum & Baby broadly supports positive relationships with stakeholders, by demonstrating Vodacom’s social value creation: “We see our role in society as positively contributing to societal issues like education, health and security... delivering social value through enhanced connectivity and services in inclusive finance, education, health and security” (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018: 10-11).

Mum & Baby’s success has also generated interest from other customer segments, who had been peripheral to the project at first. Government and some of Vodacom’s larger enterprise

customers, for instance, see the platform as a tool to enhance their own social or commercial goals. In the Government's view, Mum & Baby may contribute to improving national health outcomes; for a consumer goods company it may offer an opportunity to do targeted advertising or complement its existing social impact offerings.

The project's commercial success as well as its massive uptake with consumers has had a positive impact on internal stakeholder attitudes, including majority international shareholder, Vodafone.

Business context – strategic considerations:

As part of Siyakha, Mum & Baby is a strategic product offering for the company. It increases customer engagement, and generates revenue through premium (paid) subscription services and promotional revenue from third parties, as the participant explained:

The objective of this is, from a commercial perspective is that you want to drive active customers... a platform that drives engagement and keeps the customer, gives the customer a reason to stay on your network... Mum & Baby is definitely one of the propositions within Siyakha that drives that... it drives revenue as well, and it drives customer stickiness and of course NPS [Net Promoter Score].

Institutional elements – stakeholder engagement:

Siyakha and Mum & Baby are mentioned in the company's integrated reports as initiatives that respond to stakeholder concerns (e.g. data costs, socioeconomic development, financial performance) by providing free access to content and services with social value (e.g. health, education), while also generating revenue (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018). The company has gathered extensive quantitative and qualitative data from Mum & Baby users to understand social and commercial performance and to improve the product. (KPMG LLP, 2019; Vodacom Group Limited, 2020a). Other forms of stakeholder engagement around the project include company publications such as reports, presentations, online content and media releases; and participation in relevant events, meetings and forums (Vodacom Group Limited, 2018).

Institutional elements – operations:

As a crucial part of the Siyakha commercial offering, Mum & Baby is integrated into the company's operations, systems and processes. The KPMG report (2019) details the various partners: Mondia Media is the technology partner and MobiStar is the mobile content supplier. Mondia Media manages the technology functionality and collects user and

registration data, which is used to tailor content provided to the user, including revenue-generating third party promotion. MobiStar develops and updates content, ensuring that it is aligned with national and global best practices, guidelines and standards, such as those coming from the National Department of Health or the World Health Organisation. This is done with the help of an external advisory committee of medical professionals.

Institutional elements – organisational culture:

The participant described experiencing a shift in his own and in the company's thinking around social impact: a move from a purely charitable towards a commercial approach, where social value creation is enabled through accessible, affordable and relevant products. He attributes this in part to the combined social and commercial success of Mum & Baby:

My predecessors have proved that this works... Inside the company... we're at a point where the paradigm has been fully accepted. The shift in the mindset is - it's actually adopting the paradigm of social innovation... the question around it is: 'Surely this is actually a commercial project rather than a CSR project?' It's more than just the Rands and Cents – it's stuff that makes an actual impact on the population.

Social focus areas:

The social focus area for the Mum & Baby initiative is “governance and society”, through enabling access to technology and reliable health information. Thanks to the KPMG report, there is more evidence for the social impact of this case than for any of the others. Per the report (KPMG LLP, 2019), 95% of subscribers surveyed found the SMS information useful, and the majority of focus group respondents agreed that they had learned new information. 98% of survey respondents reported taking action to improve their own or their children's health (e.g., through breastfeeding or immunisations). Only 4% had accessed the mobile website content – possibly because they did not know it would be free of charge – which may have constrained social impact. There is positive evidence from other literature cited in the report for the project's impact on health outcomes and second-order socio-economic impacts (e.g., increased disposable income through a reduction in illness and health costs):

Access to reliable health information plays an important role in improving maternal and child health as quality health information can provide women and partners with information relating to lifestyle risks and health advice throughout pregnancy stages and early years (KPMG LLP, 2019).

4.2.3.6 *Implicit and explicit company support for the project*

Access to resources, such as budget and people (Halme et al., 2012; Venn & Berg, 2013):

The participant shared that Mum & Baby had followed the formal, standard commercial development process to get the needed resources,:

It has a real, actual, feasible business case behind it. So, it follows the formal commercial development process. So, it starts with a concept, which you'll sell to all various quarters, sometimes you need CEO buy in, sometimes you don't. So, you'll start with that and then follow up with an actual business case, with your investments and your OpEx [operational expenses] and how you plan to do it and actually has to be signed off as a formal project and then you get it going.

The freedom to innovate and experiment (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012):

The participant reported how the project's success has allowed ongoing access to resources, as well as the freedom to introduce further innovation into the project: "It's actually a very easy sell when I was talking about where it needs to go – there was no opposition. It was like 'Yes, of course.' Because ... my predecessors have proven that this works."

The freedom to collaborate with outside individuals and other organisations (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Mirvis et al., 2016; van Wijk et al., 2019):

While the research participant did not explicitly mention that he had the leeway to collaborate with outside parties, this was implied through the mention of various opportunities that he foresaw in further expanding and innovating the service that involved collaboration with third parties., e.g., through advertising and promotions (retailers or consumer goods companies) or specialist content (media companies or subject matter experts).

4.2.3.7 *Summary*

Overall, the organisational and broader industry context have created favourable conditions for the emergence of a project such as Mum & Baby. The fact that it was embedded in the standard product development process, enabled it to scale fast, achieve commercial success and social impact, and in so doing become institutionalised in the company while also creating the opportunity for more similar initiatives.

4.2.4 Nando's: Peri Farming

These findings were derived from an interview and publicly available documents. The interview was conducted for about an hour, in person in October 2018 with one of the two Nando's employees managing the Peri Farming project. Documents included news articles, presentations given by company employees, company and third-party websites, videos, academic case studies and reports. Quotes in this section are from the interview with the research participant unless indicated otherwise.

4.2.4.1 About Nando's

Nando's is a privately-owned international fast food and casual dining restaurant chain headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa. Nando's specialises in Afro-Portuguese food, including their signature flame-grilled peri-peri chicken. The company was started in 1987 when friends Robert Brozin and Fernando Duarte were so impressed by the peri-peri-marinated and -basted chicken they ate at a small restaurant called Chickenland in the south of Johannesburg, that they bought the restaurant, renamed it Nando's and started expanding its outlets in the years that followed. Today, Nando's employs over 30 000 people, operates over 1 000 restaurants and distributes its peri-peri-based sauces and spices through supermarkets in at least 24 countries worldwide. (Gander, 2017; Nando's, 2017a, 2017b).

The research participant is based in the Nando's headquarters and works in its "Group" division which oversees operations that affect all regions.

Peri-peri, another name for the African Bird's Eye chili, and styled as 'PERi-PERi' on Nando's documents and websites, found its way into Portuguese food and into kitchens around the world after it had been discovered by the Portuguese in Mozambique (Nando's, 2020). It is a core part of the Nando's brand, the signature flavour of its dishes and what the company considers as its core product differentiator, as the participant shared: "Even though when you say 'Nando's' you think chicken, we are very much peri-peri. We stand for peri-peri."

4.2.4.2 Organisational support for CS Innovation

Compatibility between social welfare logic and commercial logic (Alt & Craig, 2016):

As Nando's is a privately owned company, public annual- or integrated reports are not available. However, the data that was collected appear to indicate an organisational context

where there is a high compatibility between a central commercial logic and social welfare logic:

From the very beginning, the founders wanted Nando's to be more than chicken and profit. Their slogan in the early days was "have fun and then make money" but always in the right way, giving people opportunities and making a positive impact on their lives (Nando's, 2017b).

This was echoed by the participant:

Are we making this decision because it's a pure financial decision, are we making this decision out of integrity, which is one of our values, or family, which is one of our values?... most conversations, road crossings that you get to in terms of conflict can either be resolved by solid data, by showing the proof; or by 'what is our values saying and what decision should we make?'

The integration of a social purpose in the company purpose (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Sonenshein, 2016):

Nando's does not articulate an explicit purpose, but social purpose is present in how the company mission is publicly expressed. In company and brand descriptions and narratives three focus areas dominate: one, the peri-peri spice as core ingredient and brand inspiration and two, a focus on the company's roots and connection to South Africa and southern Africa, e.g.: "South Africa: where the fire began... PERi-PERi is the heart and soul of Nando's. Its story is our story" (Nando's, 2020a).

The third is a focus on people: "It's the people that make the chicken." This statement is reiterated on the company's websites and public documents, by executives in media interviews, and is etched into a prominent wall at the Nando's head office. The company values are listed as Pride, Passion, Courage, Integrity, and Family (Nando's, 2020d). As noted from the interview quote above, these values appear to be as integrated in the company culture so as to drive decision making.

Top leadership support for social objectives (Herrera, 2016):

In a video interview, the company's Chief People Officer, Lucia McMullan, describes how the company values, mentioned above, are ingrained in its company culture, and that the company believes that as a business, it does not have to choose between profits and purpose (The Rewards Factory, 2019).

The research participant expressed how the support from top leadership, specifically the company's owners, has enabled the work on the Peri Farming initiative, particularly in instances where social objectives had to be weighed against strictly commercial considerations:

If there is one thing that I have to say: I don't think you can DO a project like this in any company if you don't have the backing of the shareholders or the backing of the owners of the company – and we do... you are definitely not doing it because it is the cheapest way to do it, and you are definitely not doing it because it is the easiest way to do it.

Integration of social objectives in extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and other management practices (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013):

An explicit example of how social objectives are integrated in management practice, is the way the Peri Farming project's finances are structured. Rather than having to produce an operating profit, it has to operate at a breakeven budget. This also applies to other company projects that are earmarked as 'Purpose' projects.

Overall, data collected point to a high compatibility between social and commercial logic in the company and good evidence for the integration of social purpose into company purpose, leadership support of social objectives, and the integration of social objectives in management practices, in all cases specifically where the social objectives relate to people's wellbeing.

4.2.4.3 About Peri Farming

The Nando's Peri Farming project involves the support of and procurement of a specific variant of African Birds Eye chili, proprietary to Nando's, from small holder farmers across southern Africa through a network of partner organisations. At the time of data collection, Peri Farming involved around 1 400 farmers growing over 360 tonnes of chili. ("How Nando's Creates Shared Value for Farmers in Southern Africa," 2018; Nando's, 2020c.).

The project and its origins have become part of the company's narrative and brand positioning:

Under the hot sun, in the rich, fertile soils of Africa, a wonderful story has been unfolding since 2012. It's one where Nando's and farmers are growing for good. It all started when we decided that rather than outsource the supply of our chillies, we

would get in touch with small-scale farmers in Southern Africa to grow them for us (Nando's, 2020c).

The project was initiated by contracting a third-party consultant, Impact Amplifier, to unpack the existing peri-peri supply chain, and then to design a supply chain to procure the product from small scale farmers. Starting with a partnership with six farms in Mozambique, Peri Farming now supplies 90% of Nando's peri-peri globally through farms across southern Africa. ("How Nando's creates shared value for farmers in southern Africa," 2018; Methvin, 2020).

At the time of data collection, company communication focused on the project's social objectives as its *raison d'être*, while the research participant also highlighted commercial objectives. The fact that a social impact-focused organisation was contracted as a consultant to assess the supply chain and design engagement with small holder farmers from the start (Methvin, 2020), demonstrates that the social objectives were indeed part of the project's inception. Social aims include fair business practice in supplier relationships and the resulting socioeconomic upliftment for marginalised small-scale farmers. Commercial motivations include ensuring a reliable, stable supply of an essential ingredient, price predictability, and quality and safety assurance:

We want to make sure every farmer we work with gets a good deal. So, we decided to find a better way to source and buy the Nando's PERi-PERi Chillies that make our signature PERi-PERi sauce. First off, we developed a trademarked variety of the famous African Bird's Eye Chilli that delivers our unique Nando's PERi-PERi flavour. Then, through local farming organisations, we met with small-scale farmers across Southern Africa to secure a stable supply of these chillies at a fixed and fair price above market value, so farmers can plan and manage their farms without worry. We guarantee to buy all their chillies, to help make sure farmers have a steady and reliable source of income (Nando's, 2021).

The project runs at a breakeven budget – the company invests in farmer support and purchases the crop from them, and then resells it to Nando's spice processors. The two managers of the project are part of the supply chain organisation within the central group, which serves all regional divisions of the company.

Innovation in process is key to this project – the alternative approach to managing the supply chain of a core ingredient, by directly stepping in as an intermediary between the farmers and

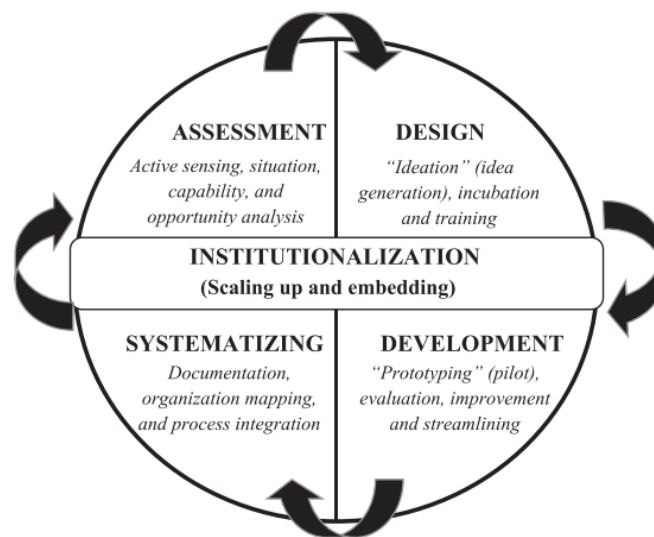
the spice processors; as well as the financial structure of the unit which is neither a cost nor a profit centre. The tenure of the project means that intrapreneurial-ness relates not so much to bringing the new idea to life, but to the ongoing initiative required to manage simultaneous social and commercial objectives, using creativity to solve the attendant conflicting demands, and persuasion to ensure ongoing support for the project, as the participant explained:

You need to keep all the different partners happy to keep the project still going and you need to be able to sometimes put on your quality hat and sometimes put on your social hat and sometimes put on your financial hat to understand that.

4.2.4.4 Project’s stage of institutionalisation

Figure 1

Social Innovation Process



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1469 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

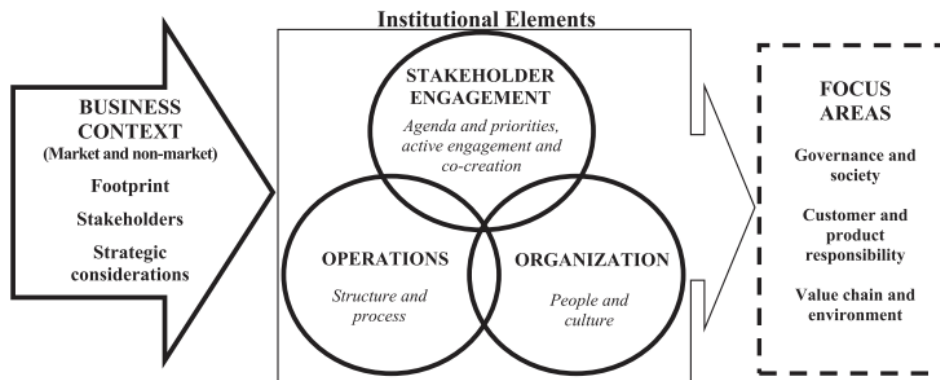
At the time of data collection, the project was at the “institutionalisation” stage. Over 90% of Nando’s peri-peri supply relies on this project (Methvin, 2020). It is mentioned extensively in public company communication and is used as an employee engagement tool: Through the “Farm to Flame” initiative, Nando’s employees from around the world can apply to be part of

the social impact assessments of the project and have the opportunity to visit the sourcing farms across southern Africa.

4.2.4.5 Project’s strategic alignment and social focus

Figure 2

Institutionalising Social Innovation



Note. From “Creating competitive advantage through institutionalizing corporate social innovation,” by M.E.B. Herrera, 2015, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), p. 1470 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.036>). Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Inc.

Business context – footprint:

Scrutinising the company’s peri-peri supply chain revealed that Nando’s had been sourcing the crop through various middlemen, often in India and China. As a labour-intensive crop, growers were mostly small-scale farmers, but the procurement strategy meant that only a small portion of the revenue – as little as a sixteenth – ended up with them. More direct involvement in the supply chain would enable Nando’s to secure a more reliable supply, localise more supply in southern Africa (where its brand and company heritage are), and have a positive impact on rural poverty in the region (Methvin, 2020).

Business context – stakeholders:

The safe and ethical sourcing of ingredients is a salient stakeholder concern for Nando’s’ global customer base, its employees, industry watchdogs and regulators. The smallholder farmers and the intermediary farming partners that Nando’s have contracted to deliver on its supply needs have become critical stakeholders for the company, and their main concerns relate to the ability of the project to secure and improve livelihoods.

Institutional elements – stakeholder engagement:

Employees are engaged through the “Farm to Flame” initiative. Other stakeholders, including customers, are engaged in the aims and impact of the project through company communications: e.g., event presentations or a video series for Nando’s UK and Canada that had celebrities visit the farming operations in southern Africa. There is regular engagement with the farmers through intermediary partner organisations and through the visits to farms by the project managers.

Business context – strategic considerations:

Peri-peri is a core ingredient in Nando’s products and is also foundational to its brand (Methvin, 2020). As such, securing a stable, reliable supply of the crop is an important strategic consideration for the company, and the participant explained how this is embedded in the project:

There were a few problems that came up in our supply chain... we had quality issues with a bunch of chillies... it’s a very volatile crop in terms of supply and demand – price can vary with up to 300%... The other one is IP, just understanding where this core ingredient come from, that we base all our sauces on.

Institutional elements – operations:

The Peri Farming project is an integral part of the company operations, with over 90% of the supply of a core ingredient reliant on this project (Methvin, 2020). Two supply chain managers are dedicated to the project operations, and it interfaces with various other departments and functions: “This is a project that the entire business is involved in, it’s a project that everyone knows.”

A key operational consideration is the financial processes and structure that Nando’s created for their so-called “Purpose” projects. This allows for the eventual establishment of a breakeven budget – rather than managing the project as a cost or a profit centre.

Institutional elements – organisational culture:

The organisational culture appears to be supportive of an initiative with strong social objectives. The “Farm to Flame” employee engagement programme has also helped to generate widespread support for the Peri Farming project: “The people who work in the shops are really passionate about the project as well. We are all invested in the farmers’ lives, we are there to improve it and we all really do care.”

There is still some convincing that sometimes needs to happen to ensure support of the project's design and aims: "Oh there's a LOT of them that's not convinced that this thing is the way to go forward ... it depends out of what lens you are looking at this."

Social focus areas:

The social focus area for this project relates to "value chain and environment" as it aims to improve the social footprint of an aspect of the company's product value chain. Small scale farmers are supported through technical farming support, credit and a contracted fixed price for their harvest before the growing season starts, which helps to maximise farmers' yields and income earned (Methvin, 2020).

The socio-economic impact on the farmers' lives is measured by a third-party consultant, supported by Nando's employees who do data collection through the "Farm to Flame" initiative. The assessment looks at the ability of farmers to address basic human needs (e.g. housing, water, sanitation, education) and their ability to move from subsistence to a position of greater resilience (Methvin, 2020).

We don't just want to say it, that's why we go in and we go measure it. We say that we are changing farmers' lives by doing small scale farming; we want to be able to back that up with knowledge.

4.2.4.6 Implicit and explicit company support for the project

Access to resources, such as budget and people (Halme et al., 2012; Venn & Berg, 2013):

The project has the required human and financial resources through a breakeven budget structure, and does not rely on limited philanthropic budgets: "I don't think we're sitting at a place where we need to beg borrow and steal for every tiny thing we want to get, but we've got solid budgets and we need to try to break even."

The freedom to innovate and experiment (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012):

The absence of evidence in this respect may be due to the project's tenure and high degree of institutionalisation in the company. However, the research participant did talk about the difficulty of balancing the sometimes-conflicting social and commercial demands and the need for a flexible approach to any project that has social goals:

There is no way of doing this that it's just smooth operations, I can't see how... you need to be able to think business and not just emotional... You need to be able to be

pulled in all different directions ... but then to be able to come back to the centre and look at the holistic picture.

The freedom to collaborate with outside individuals and other organisations (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Mirvis et al., 2016; van Wijk et al., 2019):

The project has required significant collaboration with outside organisations, notably the third-party social impact consultant and the local farming organisations who engage with the small scale farmers (Methvin, 2020). The company appears to recognise the need for collaboration on aspects that lie outside of its core competencies:

We're no farming experts, so regional Farming Organisations run the project on our behalf; teaching, empowering and giving farmers access to finance, materials and seedlings as they go along. We meanwhile guarantee that we'll buy the farmers' crops at a fair price (that's determined before the growing season even starts) (Nando's, 2020b).

4.2.4.7 Summary

Overall, the Peri Farming project came into existence in what appears to be a favourable environment for CS Innovation. It is firmly institutionalised in the company and is not only strongly aligned with the Nando's brand identity, but also acts as a tool to reinforce that brand identity to internal and external stakeholders.

4.3 The intrapreneurship process

4.3.1 *Institutional work and legitimation*

4.3.1.1 *Introduction*

This section shares findings in response to the primary research question:

What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations?

The findings are presented in three sub-sections as per the Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) framework: institutional work aimed at 1) creating, 2) disrupting and 3) maintaining institutions. It is an integrated discussion of all cases, including how the intrapreneurs construct legitimacy for the CS Innovations along pragmatic, regulative, normative and cognitive dimensions (Binz et al., 2016).

All intrapreneurs appeared to engage in creative, maintenance and disruptive institutional work to varying degrees, regardless of how institutionalised the CS Innovation project was in their company. The institutional arrangements that the intrapreneurs are embedded in are not limited to their organisations as institutions. Especially in the Solar Branch case, much of the institutional work involved engagement with the rural community where the branch was located.

As the focus is on the self-reported experiences of intrapreneurs, these findings rely primarily on the participant interviews, supplemented with data from documents where relevant.

4.3.1.2 *Institutional work aimed at creating institutions*

Table 5

Institutional Work Aimed at Creating Institutions

Political: relating to regulative institutional elements	Normative: relating to normative institutional elements	Cognitive: relating to cultural-cognitive institutional elements
Advocacy	Constructing identities	Mimicry
Defining	Changing normative associations	Theorising
Vesting	Constructing normative networks	Educating

Note. Adapted from “Institutions and Institutional Work,” by T.B. Lawrence and R. Suddaby in S.R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T.B. Lawrence and W.R. Nord (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Organization Studies* (p. 215-254), 2006, SAGE Publications Inc.

(<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608030.n7>). Copyright 2006 by SAGE Publications.

Political institutional work:

Political, creative institutional work – ‘advocacy’, ‘defining’ and ‘vesting’ – relate to the regulative elements of institutions: it involves property rights, rules that define status and hierarchy, access to resources and mobilisation of political and regulatory support (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Advocacy

“The mobilisation of political and regulatory support through direct and deliberate techniques of social suasion” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 221) was important in all cases to secure approval, resources and leadership support for the CS Innovations. This was done in formal and informal ways.

Formally, intrapreneurs used organisational structures and systems to secure resources, e.g.: Nedbank’s Solar Branch project was greenlit through the bank’s digital forum, Thomson Reuters’s Bankable Farmer was funded by the company’s Catalyst Fund, and the development of Vodacom’s Mum & Baby followed the commercial product development process.

Informally, advocacy happens through ongoing opportunistic conversations. One participant described it as building “coalitions of the willing” and another explained that: “[It] comes

down to how good are you at communicating; how good are you at showing the strategic direction or the strategic initiatives that will be ticked off with this project.”

This quote also reflects how participants would lean on the pragmatic dimension of legitimacy: making the tangible benefits and utility of the project understandable to their audience, by focusing on the commercial opportunity and the alignment with company strategy (Binz et al., 2016). All participants did this, which makes sense considering that they received funding, at least in part, based on the commercial potential of the projects.

Defining

“The construction of rule systems that confer status or identity, define boundaries of membership or create status hierarchies within a field” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 222) was also described by participants. This was often done in a way that contrasted social innovation with CSR to define operational and performance rules for the project, role identities for those involved, and sometimes to subtly emphasise strategic importance of different roles and work to the company and the corresponding status and access to resources:

We want to help people, but we want to help people in a way that we don't have to continually fund it and it becomes self-sustainable. And, this is what makes it a valuable concept and a product to pursue from a commercial perspective. Because no longer is it a CSR effort where you go around with your begging bowls saying 'Please can you help me fund this thing there's all these starving kids' as opposed to saying, 'Guys if we do this, there is value for us and there's value in the society. It's a no-brainer.' (Vodacom participant)

It's in our core, it's not seen as like I think CSI [CS Investment] can most of the time be seen, someone just sits at the side, in the corner, they're the person that does something, that needs to be done there on the side, but no one really cares about it... We are not a CSR project, that's why we run on a breakeven budget, we were subsidised when we started but we're not a CSR project. (Nando's participant)

These two quotes illustrate pragmatic and normative legitimation strategies. Defining also taps into regulative legitimacy by connecting the work with what is formally sanctioned in a company. By distinguishing the project from CSR, participants attract different performance expectations, but also better resource allocation and what appears to be higher esteem.

Vesting

Participants did not share examples of “The creation of rule structures that confer property rights” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 222). This is not unexpected, as this form of institutional work tends to be negotiated between actors with significant authority (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Normative institutional work:

This may lead to the establishment of institutional structures that are complementary to what already exists. Normative institutional work taps into belief systems and norms to define or redefine relationships between actors, between actors and the field or fields they operate in, and between the norms and the field where they originate. (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Constructing identities

This defines the relationship between an actor and the field in which that actor operates (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). It was a salient aspect of the participants’ reported experience of intrapreneurship, specifically constructing their own professional identities. It appeared to be a way for the intrapreneurs to make sense of their personal experience, choices and motivations, and as a way for them to legitimise their work to others.

The Nando’s participant shared how she felt her role was tailored to her as an individual in that it brought together the three areas of professional interest most important to her – agriculture, business and social impact. She spoke about the uniqueness of her role: “We’re the farmers of the company and we look after the chillies. So, you won’t find that specific job in any other company.”

For the Thomson Reuters team, their identity as “innovators” and people who were different from the stereotypical corporate employee was expressed through their casual dress code and the nature of their physical working space:

[She] has mentioned dressing more than once, because you know that is a very strong point. It’s when you walk in here, it’s a physical manifestation of everything that corporate is not...when people leave here, people actually comment on it in so many different ways, which basically translates to ‘you guys are very different’ or, you know, ‘you guys are very interesting.’

A personal motivation to “do good” was often mentioned, and how participants felt this work gave expression to that aspect of their characters: “We’re corporates, and you don’t often get

to play in the depth of rural sustainable solutions. As humans, especially, I'm wired like that and I think so is [M.], we want to do good" (Nedbank participant); "[I] was striving to prove that you can be a very good businessperson *and* want to do good in the world, you know that's who I am" (Thomson Reuters participant).

Being able to balance emotional and rational reasoning was something that participants described as being central to their identities as CS Intrapreneurs: "You need to be able to think business and not just emotional" (Nando's participant); "You **MUST** be careful, also, that you don't become precious about something that you shouldn't be. When you get to this point of making the decision... you do need to take a bit of an unemotional, cold stance on it" (Nedbank participant).

Changing normative associations

"Re-making the connections between sets of practices and the moral and cultural foundations for those practices" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 224) redefines 'why' things are done in a certain way and is an exercise in legitimation. It dovetails with 'defining' and 'advocacy', in its justification of the existence or establishment of a project in a company – why the work is important and deserving of resources and how it fits into the organisational structure. The difference lies in the dimensions of legitimacy and the kind of institutional elements that are being focused on: where 'advocacy' and 'defining' relate to the formally sanctioned structures and practices in the organisation, 'changing normative associations' focuses more on morally governed institutional elements and social practices and obligations.

This form of institutional work is an element of a key CS Intrapreneurship challenge: convincing both internal and external stakeholders that the simultaneous pursuit of social and business objectives is both feasible and genuine (Alt & Geradts, 2019). The Nedbank participants explained the complexity of morally legitimating a rural branch without cash and without amenities such as bathrooms or air-conditioning to some colleagues:

If you ask some of our regional staff, some LOVE it because they can see the rural value of it, they can understand what we are bringing. Others, the risk that you have is that they don't buy in, because they feel that you've just built a container branch. ... because they equate what's in the container with what they have in the full branch, and all they see is a smaller branch. They don't understand that this thing runs on complete sustainable elements, it does a lot for the community, it's brought a lot of goodwill. ... if they don't understand the narrative around the cash, the fact that there

shouldn't be cash because the alternative is this, then all they do, is their narrative back to the community is that 'yes, I understand them, yes I understand it's just a silly branch without cash.'

These participants need to address the perception that the lack of amenities is proof of disingenuous social aims, driven by cynicism towards traditional CS Investment or by the presence of commercial objectives. To do this they used cognitive legitimacy by reframing the branch design from a consumer (or beneficiary) centric point of view, an approach that is comprehensible and culturally supported in the bank:

You have the client probably saying: "Well, I need to be able to pay, I need to be able to buy, I need to be able to save, I need to be able to invest, I need to be able to do whatever the case may be." Now what we've built here, that is something that can handle all of that.

On the flipside, the integration of social objectives in a commercial project is also a challenge, as this sometimes means foregoing total efficiency and profit maximisation, as the Nando's participant explains:

If I'm looking at this through a financial lens, I can see all the financial flaws in it, or how I could have spent this money better on something else. I think if you look at it through a quality lens, you can see how you can get a better quality product with much less risk somewhere else... but then you also have to look at it as a holistic project, to understand that I'm maybe taking one or two more risks of quality – which is all manageable – but for the benefit of XY and Z.

The Vodacom participant appealed to the pragmatic and normative elements of legitimacy: "These are products and services that form a virtuous cycle – they help society, they help the company, they help our stakeholders, and everyone is happy in the system."

Constructing normative networks

This involves the construction of interorganisational connections through which practices become normatively sanctioned, creating a peer group or a proto-institution that drives normative compliance and monitoring (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In these case studies it would happen at intra-organisational level in the company as micro-institution, but I did not find evidence of this form of institutional work. Participants rather leveraged existing organisational networks, and legitimised CS Innovation using the specific dimensions of legitimacy that would appeal to their audiences. For example, the Thomson Reuters team

would use practical legitimacy with their sales colleagues: showing that the project was attractive to customers and therefore served the sales staff's interests. The Solar Branch project was legitimated in pragmatic and cognitive terms through its alignment with the digitisation strategy and its consumer-centric focus, and normatively through its alignment with company social purpose.

Cognitive institutional work:

This relates to the assumptions, beliefs and frames that drive action (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Mimicry

Mimicry associates the new with the old, by leveraging existing patterns of actions and taken-for-granted rules and practices (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). It was evident in participants' descriptions of how their CS Innovation projects would follow similar reporting and accountability structures as other commercial projects – giving their work cognitive legitimacy by making it comprehensible and in line with the accepted organisational cultural practices.

The Nedbank participants engaged in mimicry to drive innovation acceptance in the rural community and to legitimate the project in the company. The Solar Branch launch event mimicked community events such as weddings or funerals, e.g., through ceremonial livestock slaughter. The physical branch has typical elements expected of a bank branch (e.g., counters, uniformed staff, consultation areas), despite not having any cash, and uses the Solar Turtle structure that the community has become familiar with. Nedbank participants drew parallels between the Solar Branch and the first digital, self-service branch that had been opened around the same time at the Gautrain station, emphasising how both were client-centric innovations and contributed to the overall digitisation strategy of the bank (Nedbank Group Limited, 2018b). This comparison was also used in internal organisational discussions.

The Thomson Reuters project mimicked characteristics typical of technology start-ups in the design of the physical space of the Cape Town Labs, signalling their focus on innovation and their distinctiveness from the rest of the corporate organisation. Participants also described how they would adopt sales jargon when discussing their work with their sales colleagues.

Theorising

This involves developing, naming and specifying abstract categories, concepts and practices and elaborating on chains of cause and effect, and in so doing creating the concepts and beliefs that can support new institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Participants legitimated CS Innovation through cause-and-effect narratives of how addressing social need would also benefit the company commercially, consistently involving pragmatic, cognitive and normative dimensions of legitimacy. The pragmatic and cognitive dimensions of legitimacy are closely related here: the pursuit of profit is culturally supported in business and related to employees' self-interest – when the company does well financially, one can typically count on better remuneration and job security. Addressing social needs hints at a sense of social obligation, which is the motivation behind the normative dimension of legitimacy.

The Nando's case was unique in that a specific abstract category for CS Innovation work had been created through the establishment of 'Purpose' projects: "We are a Purpose project... which means that we don't do this to make money, we do this for a purpose, and we do this to create impact and we do this to break even."

This statement demonstrates how theorising helps to create institutions – this abstract category for the project had already been in place when the participant started working on the project. She repeated and reinforced its description and cause-and-effect narrative, and also described how this framework would guide decision making: "Is the purpose of the project to make money? Is the purpose of the project to change people's lives? Is this going to make us money? Is this going to change lives?"

The Solar Branch team used theorising to justify why digital payments could work in this community and why the establishment of a cashless branch made sense: for consumers, the expensive transport and inconvenience involved in going to the nearest ATM to get cash; and for the bank, the prohibitive cost and security requirements of bringing cash to this location.

S. from Thomson Reuters explained how she used pragmatic legitimation and theorising to get the needed support for Bankable Farmer:

I had to OVER emphasise the fact that no this is actually a business opportunity for us, actually this is a way for us to innovate in a mobile-only environment which could give us insights into Western markets which are increasingly mobile only.

The Vodacom participant felt that the initial success of the Mum & Baby project proved the theory that simultaneous business and social value creation was possible, enabling expansion of the project:

We've proven that these kinds of platforms... not only uplift society, but they are also commercially sustainable. Which means that it's definitely not the last. It has broken new ground and we're definitely going to do more and more of this.

Educating

Educating provides the skills and the knowledge that individuals need to support and interact with the new institutions, especially if this involves many new practices (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Efforts at educating others were reported by all participants.

For the Thomson Reuters participants, this often involved an invitation to the Lab:

I saw it as a perfect opportunity to educate them and then invite them [to the Labs] ... the more I explained... what the project was all about, the more I saw this like 'Oh, oh, oh wow, ok cool. Can we bring people over?' And then that was when I was like – 'yeah, absolutely.'

At Nando's, employee experiences of the "Farm to Flame" programme is used as a broader internal and external education tool for Peri Farming, e.g., through videos and online diaries. Nando's' new hires each receive a peri-peri seedling on their first day, reinforcing the strategic importance of peri-peri as an ingredient and as part of the Nando's 'core.' The project relies on a continuous supply of produce that meets Nando's quality criteria, and smallholder farmers are enabled through training and technical assistance from the company's local partner organisations to comply with these requirements.

The Nedbank team considered their educating efforts as an essential part of ensuring innovation adoption in the village. They not only shared information (e.g., through a presentation about Masterpass ahead of the branch launch), but also adapted to local customs to increase acceptance: they employed a community liaison and enrolled employees from neighbouring towns (with similar backgrounds to the village residents) in engagements with community elders. "With Masterpass the fact that this is a mobile transaction and you're asking people that are used to working with hard cash to trust their phones for a payment to go through... there is a trust element... it's difficult"

Educating had helped to build interest and acceptance for Mum & Baby in Vodacom's local and international offices and in the local industry:

It is something that we talk about in various quarters, but it's something that's become more and more recognised in the industry... it's been nominated for an award in Apps Africa in November ... Then, from a Vodafone group perspective – they're starting to ask, "Can we have it?" ... there's lots and lots of interest from other countries looking to get access.

Educating helps to create cognitive legitimacy for the projects. One of the Thomson Reuters participants described seeing others experience a "lightbulb moment" once the Bankable Farmer initiative had been described to them. The integration of social objectives means that a normative element, motivated by a sense of social obligation is also present, and helps to build emotional engagement, as the Nando's participant describes: "I don't have to spend a lot of time to convince people, it's just such a powerful story, that it's easy to invest, or to get involved with."

However, in a context dominated by commercial logic, and to distinguish the CS Innovation projects from CSR or CS Investment initiatives, it is important to appeal to pragmatic legitimacy and self-interest in illustrating the strategic and commercial benefits, and to build cognitive legitimacy to ultimately entrench a CS Innovation approach, as the Vodacom participant explains: "Inside the company... we're at a point where the paradigm has been fully accepted... This is where the other divisions also see value in this, because they have stakeholders who benefit from what you're doing."

Institutional work aimed at creating institutions – summary

There was ample evidence of CS Intrapreneurs engaging in creative institutional work. There appears to be more emphasis on the normative and cognitive types of work, and indirect political institutional work such as advocacy. This aligns with the literature (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Perkmann & Spicer, 2008): political institutional work involves the construction of rules and sanctions that enforce those rules and is something that only some actors can do by virtue of their positions. This would mostly exclude CS Intrapreneurs who are not senior executives. Changing norms or belief systems relies on cultural and moral force and is more likely to result in parallel institutional structures – e.g., where CS Innovation co-exists with commercially driven projects or philanthropically oriented projects inside the same company, which was true for all of the cases.

4.3.1.3 Institutional work aimed at disrupting institutions

Institutions are often disrupted by the creation of new institutions, but these examples, which involve “attacking or undermining the mechanisms that lead members to comply with institutions” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 235) are a distinctive and important category of institutional work.

Disconnecting sanctions and rewards:

Here actors work “through state apparatus to disconnect rewards and sanctions from some set of practices, technologies or rules” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 235). In line with the diminished prevalence of regulatory-focused institutional work in the previous section, I did not find evidence for this. Participants rather described establishing new rules and practices that complemented or integrated with existing rule systems.

Disassociating moral foundations

The disassociation of practices, rules or technology from their moral foundations as being appropriate within a specific cultural context is another form of disruptive institutional work. It is focused on normative institutional elements, and is more gradual in nature (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

An example is the Nedbank team’s legitimation of the cashless Solar Branch with limited amenities to their colleagues. The starting point for their colleagues is a moral foundation where fairness and equity for low-income rural consumers means giving them access to *the same standard* of services as other consumers: a bank branch with modern amenities, and a responsiveness to their banking needs, which are cash-based on the face of it. Participants legitimated the Solar Branch along pragmatic and normative dimensions: the insurmountable cost and security constraints of delivering a cash-based service in this location; the absence of municipal services to enable amenities like air-conditioning or flush toilets; and the way digital payments help customers avoid the cost and effort of ATM withdrawals in the neighbouring town. Ultimately, they worked to establish a moral foundation where fairness and equity meant *enabling* access to *relevant* services, by understanding true consumer needs and adapting to the practical constraints of the environment, and that the evidence of the normative appropriateness in the context was the “goodwill” from the community.

Undermining assumptions and beliefs:

This decreases the perceived risks of innovation (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). For S. of Thomson Reuters, it involved addressing the assumption of some colleagues that Africa does

not represent a meaningful commercial opportunity and therefore an investment in innovation here does not make sense:

You talk about the growth of the continent... you talk about youth dynamic, you talk about mobile penetration, you talk about the opportunity to really do something quite ground-breaking because there is so much white space and opportunity, you talk about the ability to leapfrog over legacy infrastructure which can sometimes be an impediment to innovation in any developed market.

In the Nedbank case, introducing digital payments into a rural community means disrupting assumptions and beliefs held by their colleagues, e.g., that digital solutions are not relevant to rural residents:

How do you change the whole ecosystem of how people pay for things? The intent was to sign up all the vendors... and then instead of getting their local community to buy in cash, to switch them over into a digital form which is intuitively against what most people think about those markets... And it's an incredibly large amount of work to get people to see it differently. I still think that we've persuaded them, and then six months later you'll sit in a room with a very senior person that's actually fairly clever and they'll go 'Ja, I get it, but isn't that really a small branch in a container?'

The Nedbank case also involved shifting beliefs held by the community members to create trust in digital payment systems: “That’s one of the battles we’re having, is getting the community to trust in those e-wallet type payment systems, but it’s slow and it is getting there.”

4.3.1.4 Institutional work aimed at maintaining institutions

Table 6

Institutional Work Aimed at Maintaining Institutions

<i>Regulative</i>	<i>Normative and cultural-cognitive</i>
Enabling work Policing Deterring	Valourising and demonising Mythologising Embedding and routinising

Note. Adapted from “Institutions and Institutional Work,” by T.B. Lawrence and R. Suddaby in S.R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T.B. Lawrence and W.R. Nord (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Organization Studies* (p. 215-254), 2006, SAGE Publications Inc.

(<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608030.n7>). Copyright 2006 by SAGE Publications.

Ongoing maintenance of institutions is required for their perpetuation, especially if there is a relatively low level of institutionalisation of a set of practices to begin with. This form of institutional work supports, repairs or recreates the social mechanisms that ensure compliance (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). It was most evident amongst the participants involved in the two more entrenched cases of CS Innovation: Nando’s Peri Farming and Vodacom Mum & Baby.

Regulative:

This includes ‘enabling work’, which is the creation of rules that support the institution; ‘policing’ – enforcing, monitoring or auditing to ensure compliance with institutional rules; and ‘deterring’, which creates coercive barriers to change (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). ‘Enabling work’ and ‘policing’ were both evident through participants’ interviews.

In the Nando’s case, rules relating to quality and finance were often enforced by some of the other parties involved in the project. The intrapreneur described her role as supporting and balancing these various interests together with the project’s social objectives to ensure its continuation, drawing on the pragmatic and regulative dimensions of legitimacy, by demonstrating how the project aligns with profit-oriented goals and the food quality standards that the company has set for itself: “You need to keep all the different partners happy to keep the project still going ... [To] make sure that the project survives... you need to be able to make the hard calls when it’s time for hard calls.”

In the Vodacom case, establishing standards for measuring the project's success (in social impact or otherwise) and then reporting against these, increases pragmatic and regulative legitimacy for the project. Concrete measures are part of the "rules" of management and demonstrating increased customer engagement shows pragmatic legitimacy through alignment with commercial goals:

People want something that they can measure easily that they can put in their KPIs. Because if you make it look fuzzy, then no-one does it... this is one of those instances where we've actually managed... to measure it. Because I can say I have so many engaged customers, I had so many then and I've got so many now – progress.

Normative and cultural-cognitive:

These kinds of institutional work reproduce the norms and beliefs that undergird the institution.

'Valorising and demonising' involve publicly giving positive and negative examples to illustrate the normative foundations of an institution (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

In both the Vodacom and Nando's examples, the participants contrasted their projects with CSR or CS Investment initiatives to demonstrate their pragmatic legitimacy, either by highlighting how the integration of business objectives created a self-sustaining funding model or how the project was of more strategic importance to the company: "No longer is it a CSR effort where you go around with your begging bowls" (Vodacom participant); "It's not seen as like I think CSI [CS Investment] can most of the time be seen... the person that does something, that needs to be done there on the side, but no one really cares about it" (Nando's participant).

Mum & Baby was also valorised by its nomination in the Apps Africa competition.

By creating and sustaining myths around the history of an institution, its normative underpinnings are preserved (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). The most salient example of 'mythologising' was the re-telling of the Peri Farming origin story: "It started about 10 years ago, when our two founders... sat together on the beach in Mozambique... and wondered: 'Where does our chilli come from?'"

The origin story and the underlying intent to make a positive impact and entrench the brand's connection with southern Africa is further mythologised through its repetition in company communications.

Finally, ‘embedding and routinising’ involve the active infusion of the normative foundations and beliefs of an institution in participants’ routines and in organisational practices (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

In the Nando’s example the normative foundations that were infused in company practices were the company connection to southern Africa, that having a positive social impact was part of the company culture, and the strategic importance of peri-peri to the brand and the product. The Farm to Flame employee programme is an example of embedding and routinising – it is an annual initiative with a standardised application and selection process, and gives employees a first-hand encounter with southern Africa, the social impact of the Peri Farming project, and the peri-peri product. Peri-peri is embedded in the Nando’s brand, not only through its communication materials but through direct visual integration: the shape of the apostrophe in the “Nando’s” brandmark is the shape of a peri-peri chilli and the brand’s red colour is based on the colour of ripe peri-peri chillies (Nando’s, 2017b).

In a corporate environment, an important practice is the definition of goals and targets for individuals and the measurement of their performance against these. Performance management embeds norms and beliefs – it illustrates what kind of behaviour is valued in the company. While social impact measures were integrated into the participants’ performance measures in some cases, all projects had commercial- and efficiency-type objectives, conforming in bigger or lesser ways to standard business projects. Through embedding these performance measures in the CS Innovation initiatives, participants helped to maintain and perpetuate the profit-driven norms of the company. At the same time, as illustrated in the preceding sections, it is the alignment with commercial and profit-driven objectives that built the pragmatic, regulative and cognitive legitimacy for the CS Innovations, by illustrating how the social obligation of using corporate resources to improve lives could be met, while also making a profit.

4.3.2 Capital

Table 3

Forms of Capital

Material	Economic and physical resources
Social	Networks and connections to others.
Cultural	Ability to access and mobilise the institutions and cultural products of a social system, e.g., credentials and certifications.
Symbolic	Ability to use and manipulate symbolic resources such as language, writing and myth.

Note. Adapted from “Integrating emotions into the analysis of institutional work,” by M. Voronov and R. Vince, 2012, *Academy of Management Review*, 37(1), p. 58-81 (<https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2010.0247>). Copyright 2012 by the Academy of Management

Access to capital affords actors power in an institutional setting, enabling them to reach their goals, and one form of capital can be used to access another (Voronov & Vince, 2012).

4.3.2.1 *Material*

Material capital was essential to intrapreneurs – the funds and other resources needed to develop a CS Innovation project.

In the two cases that were in the earlier phases of organisational institutionalisation – Solar Branch and Bankable Farmer – intrapreneurs used formalised company channels to acquire the needed material capital. In the Nedbank case it was pitching the idea in the company digital forum and in the Thomson Reuters case it was (in part) applying to the Catalyst Fund. For the more institutionalised projects – Peri Farming and Mum & Baby – continued access to material resources was in part legitimised because of these projects now running “like a normal business unit” (Nando’s participant) and having “a real, actual feasible business case behind it” (Vodacom participant). Despite the material capital being made available through these formalised company structures, capital is by definition a scarce resource (Voronov & Vince, 2012) and access to the company’s limited material resources is competitive. Intrapreneurs described how they would use social, symbolic or cultural capital to unlock or ensure continued access to material capital; and how one form of capital would be converted into another to advance the project.

4.3.2.2 Social and cultural

Visible support from decisionmakers is an example of social capital that is essential to material capital access, as the Nando's participant explained:

I don't think you can DO a project like this in any company if you don't have the backing of the shareholders or the backing of the owners of the company and we do... the fact that we've got support from all the different parties, we are here to stay, and everyone knows it.

S. from Thomson Reuters demonstrated a consciousness of and intentionality about the value and use of social capital:

That speaks to... that social and political capital that I built up over time... Just because of internal networks and some of the other work we've done... we were able to turn what was initially just going to be a role focused on innovation into a lab also focused on innovation, with a team and all the rest of it... the network paid off as well... And that was in large part due to tenure. I think there is quite a lot to be said for individuals who have longstanding social and political capital inside of an organisation to be some of the more successful intrapreneurs, because they can call on that – they can say: 'Hey, you know me, I'm a bit of a known entity, you know I know this business, let's give it a whirl,' and sometimes that political capital and that social capital that has built up over the years is needed to make that happen.

Her team remarked on the example that she had set for them regarding the importance of relationship building and how S. had extended her personal networks to them in support of the project. Those networks and her social capital extended beyond the organisation:

There are also those allies and partners outside of the company – people that are sort of corporate intrapreneurs at peer companies that I'll sometimes bounce ideas off, of or, you know, share ideas with, or pick brains of, share best practices, ask for advice. So, I have a tribe both internally and externally for this work. And they're both, they're equally important”.

S.'s tenure and seniority in the company – e.g., her role on the Africa leadership team – is a form of cultural capital that complements the social capital and allowed her to further advocate for the Bankable Farmer project with colleagues and customers.

The Nedbank participants were conscious of the critical role of social capital for the success and acceptance of the Solar Branch in the rural community: “Obviously you don’t do anything in the community without the Chief’s blessing.”

They described leveraging cultural capital to build social capital: having the former Chief’s relative as their main contact person who introduced them to the community, having their local staff engage with the village elders, and adhering to customs such as the ritual slaughter of livestock for the branch launch event.

They also reported how the project’s investment of material resources and employment creation in the village translated into social capital for Nedbank. This held the potential for future commercial gains: “We are working with other influential community members that traditionally probably wouldn’t see us as a brand”; “Through what we’ve done here, we’ve got an inroad into the Xhosa king ... [opening up] the opportunity to at least possibly bank that entire tribal community.”

4.3.2.3 *Symbolic*

To secure support and resources for their projects, all participants mentioned the importance of symbolic capital: specifically, knowing how to use the right language and positioning. The ‘right’ language often meant corporate, commercially oriented justifications for the work inside the company, and more socially motivated language for external audiences.

Nedbank participants spoke about the importance of “winning others over,” showing how the project fits with “who we are as a brand,” “showing the strategic direction or the strategic initiatives that will be ticked off with this project,” and how it was necessary for them to report back on the return on investment in the project.

The Vodacom participant shared similar sentiments and added how the project’s social impact was being communicated in quantitative terms, akin to a commercial initiative.

The Thomson Reuters team explained how they would use props and items in the physical Lab space, such as large mind maps from previous workshops that were displayed on the wall, as conversation starters with visitors to explain their approach to innovation. They were intentional about their use of language with internal and external stakeholders: “With our co-creation partner, ATS, we have a narrative, we have a script, because it is very important for us to be speaking the same language and using words that are relatable as well.”

For the Mum & Baby project, symbolic capital was leveraged with external audiences by entering the project in the Apps Africa Awards in the Health Tech category, and by using social impact-focused language in a press release about the project:

These parents might not always be able to get to a clinic, due to it being too far away. In these instances, or those where information from their parents and community members does not satisfy their curious anxiety – they can turn to Vodacom’s Mum and Baby platform. Mum and Baby is here to help them complete their pregnancy in the healthiest way possible as well as aid them in ensuring the healthy upbringing of their little ones during their early years (“Vodacom’s Mum and Baby Platform Open to All SA Moms,” 2018).

The Nando’s project was unique in that it had itself become part of the symbolic fabric of the company, used extensively with internal and external audiences. The project is highlighted on company websites and in company videos; company representatives speak about it at conferences and events; it is used in the onboarding of new employees and in ongoing employee engagement through Farm to Flame. This symbolic entrenchment has become an asset for the project:

If you join Nando’s we have it as part of our starter kit: you get a little chilli plant, and from there they already get told about the chilli initiative... it is something that gets communicated through the system and it’s part of our core culture.”

In all cases, participants demonstrated an understanding and consciousness of the importance of access to various forms of capital and were intentional in wielding these to advance their work and build support for their projects.

4.3.3 *Antecedent factors to intrapreneurship*

The literature highlights factors that play a role in triggering actors' 'mental alarm,' conscious reflexivity and agency, and therefore their propensity to engage in institutional entrepreneurship (Voronov & Yorks, 2015). For this study, these factors are broadly grouped as cognitive disinvestment from the dominant institutional order, emotional disinvestment from the same (Voronov & Vince, 2012), and the influence of the actor's social position and history of social positions (Battilana, 2006; Cardinale, 2017).

4.3.3.1 *Cognitive disinvestment*

Cognitive disinvestment involves individuals re-assessing and questioning the legitimacy of certain aspects of the dominant institutional order (Tost, 2011; Voronov & Vince, 2012). It is often triggered by jolts or crises, which involve a dramatic violation of expectations, or by contradictions in institutional logics (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Tost, 2011). However, some individuals seem to be more predisposed to reflexivity, and may question social norms, assumptions and practices without these triggers (Tost, 2011).

No participant expressed experiencing a sudden external jolt that made them re-evaluate how to act. However, some did mention how the ongoing trend of business being under pressure to contribute positively to society has influenced their thinking and behaviour. This is an example of an acute, complex and multifaceted problem at the field level which may be an enabling condition for institutional work (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009).

The Nedbank participants all shared how smaller jolts sparked their reflexivity – experiences that were surprising or in sharp contrast to their everyday context. These included the remoteness of the village and the poor road infrastructure connecting it to the outside world; the contrast between the poor, rural way of life and their own high income urban lifestyle; how despite the lack of infrastructure and poverty in the community, there was a prevalence of late model smartphones; and how the school formed an economic anchor point for the community. They described how these experiences motivated them to be more committed to the project and inspired creative solutions for social impact:

I must be honest with you, sitting in the boardroom, talking about the project... it didn't quite hit home until I went there... It was an absolute culture shock. We take for granted what we have in the areas that we live in.

Contradictions in institutional arrangements were a salient part of the intrapreneurship experience. For the Nando's participant, this played out in the difficulty of balancing social impact, food quality, and financial imperatives, and she described it as: "One of those string jobs, where you have a lot of different people pulling from different angles."

S. from Thomson Reuters expressed a desire and an intentional effort to overcome these contradictions and to prove that the social and business objectives could coexist: "I love my work because of it, but I'm also often frustrated at work because of it."

The Vodacom participant described how his involvement in the Mum & Baby project and the fact that it had successfully proven the compatibility of commercial and social objectives had shifted his own thinking. He described how before, his work had exclusively involved objectives that were "hard core commercial, hard core technical, hard core strategy," but that he had now started integrating considerations of how his work would positively impact society.

4.3.3.2 *Emotional disinvestment*

Emotions play an important role in sparking reflexivity, inspiring and sustaining social innovation efforts (Alt & Geradts, 2019; van Wijk et al., 2019). In response to internal and external realities that may be frustrating or disturbing, organisations construct an idealised image of themselves in individuals' minds and a prescriptive idea of 'how we do things around here' (Voronov & Vince, 2010). These fantasmic frameworks protect individuals from negative emotions, such as shame or humiliation, and often serve to obscure the arbitrary nature of inequality (Voronov & Vince, 2012). A failure in the fantasmic framework, or a re-channelling of emotional energy towards an alternative fantasmic frame, object of attachment or the desire to belong to another social group, precipitates emotional disinvestment from the dominant institutional order. In addition to cognitive disinvestment, emotional disinvestment is an enabling factor for institutional work aimed at disrupting or creating institutions (Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Participants reported emotion-rich experiences as a motivating part of their work. The ability to create a positive social impact, directly through their work (rather than for example through a company volunteer day) was something that all participants described as a positive, satisfying and motivational emotional experience. As most corporate roles do not have social objectives, this was also a positive surprise and a new experience for participants, sparking reflexivity. The Thomson Reuters participants each described a personal emotional

connection to the social impact of their work, e.g., one described how she had family members who were “poor farmers” and who might be able to improve their livelihoods through better access to financial services while another described feeling “excited” and “privileged” to work on a project that had a social cause.

The intrapreneurship experience made some participants reconsider their career trajectories, e.g., as expressed by a Nedbank participant:

It's changed what I want to do. So, you know I've already spoken to our executive head and I've said to him – out of all of the years that I've worked within Nedbank, the Solar Branch is by far the most inspiring project that I've ever worked on. And it's definitely changed what I want to do, in terms of the role I play in financial services. And enabling communities.

The Vodacom participant had similar sentiments and reframed how he saw the role of his company and business in society:

What we've proven is that there is definitely a demand and a hunger for the product in the country, and for the service. And what it means is that we can do significantly more... it's one thing to provide education and knowledge... that's the start. But, what we should be doing is to work towards affordable healthcare and accessible healthcare.

Interactions with others from different institutional contexts and the emotions that accompany these interactions increase the likelihood that actors will notice contradictions in institutional logics (van Wijk et al., 2019). This was salient for the Nedbank participants in the positive interactions they had with the community members in the village: D. for example described how she had felt welcomed by the community, how she had been moved by the dedication of the school learners, studying at night by kerosene lamps, or how she had laughed with women who she picked up along the road to the village, despite not being able to communicate with them in English.

The Thomson Reuters participants described how they were motivated and energised by the work environment in the Lab, specifically the positive emotional interactions that they had with each other and their team leader. This appeared to drive significant emotional investment in the Lab as an emerging institution, and in the work that they were doing on the Bankable Farmer project.

In a for-profit company, the central commercial logic dictates goals that maximise wealth. This logic can be compatible with social welfare logic, but the two logics often dictate divergent actions. The contradictions created decision-making moments for participants. They had to weigh social and commercial objectives up against each other, and had to make sense of the contradictions on a personal level:

You need to be able to think business and not just emotional... if the project is not successful then there's NO farmers you're helping. So, do you want to help 2 700 farmers and then the project goes under, or do you want to help who you can and make sure that the project survives? (Nando's participant)

You MUST be careful, also, that you don't become precious about something that you shouldn't be. When you get to this point of making the decision... you do need to take a bit of an unemotional, cold stance on it. Because you can become too precious.
(Nedbank participant)

Emotions played an important role in the intrapreneurship process. Participants also reported a belief and an increased emotional investment in the idea that the simultaneous pursuit of social and business objectives through commercially viable initiatives was possible; and a decreased emotional investment in the idea that CS Investment and traditional CSR are the only appropriate ways for companies to improve social welfare.

4.3.3.3 Social positions

The informal and formal social positions that CS Intrapreneurs hold and their unique history of social positions held, play a role in how they engage in institutional work: it determines their access to various forms of capital and enables, orients and constrains their actions within a particular institutional setting (Cardinale, 2017). What their tenure is in that social position in the organisation and if they have high or low interorganisational mobility also plays a role (Battilana, 2006).

All participants said that their formal organisational positions enabled them to engage in intrapreneurial activities, allowing them to dedicate their time and efforts to the CS Innovation projects and enough seniority to make decisions for the project. The Nando's participant's role was dedicated to the Peri Farming project. The Vodacom participant's role revolved around Mum & Baby and projects like it, and his mandate was to expand on this offering by building on the existing ideas or to develop similar ones. The Bankable Farmer project was the anchor project for the Thomson Reuters Cape Town Lab team, with all team

members dedicating some or all their work hours to it. The Nedbank participants each found a strong fit for the Solar Branch project within the objectives of their formal organisational roles.

The data collected did not highlight specific points around informal positions, but for some participants the data did confirm the proposition put forward by Battilana (2006) that change is likely to be driven by individuals who are at intermediate duration of tenure in their formal organisational positions. The Vodacom participant, the Thomson Reuters team leader, and the Nedbank participants had all been with their respective organisations for more than 10 years but had not spent more than 3 years in the specific role that they currently occupied. In the time they had been employed by these companies, they had been able to build up significant social capital, industry- and organisational knowledge.

Where participants had shorter tenure, other factors influenced their reflexivity and intrapreneurship. The rest of the Thomson Reuters team had all been with the company for less than a year. They reported how their team leader's intentional creation of what they called a "learning environment", where they were guided by but not constrained by their formal organisational positions, had not only enabled them to take initiative, but also motivated them in their work. The Nando's participant had only been in the company for a year but had stepped into a role where she was expected to manage a well-institutionalised project, rather than be a driver of change.

The history of formal and informal positions that participants had occupied shaped how they approached the CS Innovation work. For the Nando's participant her background as the child of a commercial farmer and a business student made her feel excited and uniquely equipped to do the work on the Peri Farming project: "A unicorn job that was made for me exactly at the moment that I needed it."

The Thomson Reuters team members described how the emotional connection they felt to their work was driven by unique personal and professional experiences that they had each had in the past.

For D. from Nedbank and B. from Vodacom, their experiences with their respective companies' CS Investment and volunteering efforts shaped how they saw their CS Innovation projects and how they made sense of the differences between the two approaches.

Participants did not mention factors relating to interorganisational mobility.

4.4 Conclusion

This descriptive, institutional account of the context and process of CS Intrapreneurship in four South African companies is largely congruent with the existing literature on the subject, while opening interesting avenues for future inquiry. In the following chapter, I summarise these findings and introduce possible directions for future research.

5. Discussion and directions for future research

5.1 Summary of findings

For this qualitative study, I collected data on four cases of CS Intrapreneurship in for-profit companies in South Africa, through interviews and by examining publicly available documents: The Solar Branch project in Nedbank, the Bankable Farmer project in Thomson Reuters, the Mum & Baby project in Vodacom, and the Peri Farming project in Nando's. The data was analysed and described using a framework derived from literature on CS Innovation, CS Intrapreneurship and institutional theory. The first part of the findings are contextual descriptions of the CS Intrapreneurship projects and the companies housing them. The second part describes the experience and process of CS Intrapreneurship, as shared by the research participants, through an institutional lens in answer to the research questions:

- *What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations?*
- *How do Corporate Social Intrapreneurs wield different forms of capital in the process?*
- *What are the factors, at the field, organisational or individual level, that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs perceive as triggering their 'mental alarm', conscious reflexivity and agency?*

5.1.1 *The CS Intrapreneurship projects*

Nedbank is a JSE-listed South African bank operating locally and in some other African countries. Thomson Reuters is a Canada-headquartered multinational that provides news, information, and market intelligence tools and systems. At the time of data collection, it had established an innovation lab in Cape Town, alongside its South Africa and Africa division, which housed the Bankable Farmer project. Vodacom is a JSE-listed South African mobile telephony operator, majority-owned by global telecoms firm, Vodafone. Nando's is a privately owned chain of restaurants, rooted in South Africa but with significant international operations.

Nedbank's Solar Branch project uses a converted shipping container that is powered by solar electricity to establish a bank branch in a remote, unelectrified rural village, while also introducing the community to digital payment tools and establishing a community-owned mobile internet service. Thomson Reuters's Bankable Farmer project is also focused on

financial inclusion and uses data science to enable financial institutions to offer relevant financial services to small scale farmers. Vodacom's Mum & Baby project is a bundle of mostly free services within the telco's bottom of the pyramid product offering that gives women maternal and neonatal health information and education. Through the Peri Farming project, Nando's procures their signature ingredient, a proprietary variant of the African Bird's Eye chilli, from smallholder farmers, while also providing them with technical and financial support.

As per Herrera's (2015) framework for the institutionalisation of social innovation in a business, at the time of data collection, the Solar Branch project was at the development or prototyping stage, Bankable Farmer was in the design stage and both the Peri Farming and Mum & Baby projects had become institutionalised in their companies.

The literature (Alt & Craig, 2016; Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Herrera, 2016; Sonenshein, 2016) highlights organisational factors that are conducive to CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship.. Three of the factors – a high compatibility between social welfare and commercial logic, an integration of social purpose in the company purpose and top leadership support for social objectives – were evident from documents or reported by participants from Nedbank, Vodacom and Nando's. Though present to some extent in these three companies, there is relatively weaker evidence for the fourth factor – an integration of social objectives in management practices and incentives. The data collected did not show any of the factors to be present in Thomson Reuters

The social goals for the projects (Herrera, 2015) either relate to governance and society (Bankable Farmer, Solar Branch, Mum & Baby) or to value chain and the environment (Peri Farming). Both Bankable Farmer and Solar Branch are aimed at financial inclusion, helping to improve the socio-economic status of previously unserved consumers through providing access to financial services. The Mum & Baby project's social aims are to improve health outcomes for its users – who are not limited to Vodacom customers – by providing healthcare information and education. Peri Farming improves the social footprint of the Nando's value chain by more directly procuring from smallholder farmers and by giving them technical and financial support, ultimately improving their livelihoods.

All projects showed a clear fit with the company's commercial strategy and business context (Herrera, 2015):

- The Solar Branch project supports Nedbank's drive towards digitisation, reduces cash handling and transactional costs, enables market penetration in the lower income and rural market segments, and creates a favourable impression with stakeholders through its focus on financial inclusion.
- Bankable Farmer is a product innovation tailored towards Thomson Reuters' strategic clients and deepens the company's intelligence of the African market landscape, improving its service offering.
- Vodacom's Mum & Baby is an integral part of the company's BOP product offering, increasing acquisition and retention of low-income consumers, while being an important demonstration of social value creation for stakeholders in a highly contested market and regulatory context.
- The Peri Farming project delivers a safe, predictable supply of a core ingredient to Nando's, while also reinforcing the company's internal and external brand identity and narrative.

In all cases, intrapreneurs leveraged the institutional mechanisms of stakeholder engagement, organisational culture, and operational structures and processes (Herrera, 2015) to further their projects:

- Every project involved engagement with company stakeholders. The Nedbank case was notable in this regard through the extensive engagement with the rural community where the branch was being established. The projects were also used as a tool for the companies' broader stakeholder engagement efforts, e.g., in integrated reports as case studies of social and/or commercial value creation.
- Organisational culture sometimes supported and sometimes hindered CS Innovation efforts. Broad support of social objectives or of innovation created opportunities for social innovation initiatives to be realised. However, ingrained ideas that separate social impact and commercial goals, made it harder to legitimise CS Innovation with some people.
- All participants described working within and through existing company structures and processes to run their projects. The Vodacom and Nando's projects had become integrated into the core operations of their companies; the Thomson Reuters project was designed within the company's innovation support system; and the Nedbank project pulled together various elements from the company's business and retail banking division.

The intrapreneurs' knowledge of these processes and structures, and their relationships within their companies were critical to securing the implicit and explicit company support that the projects needed to start or continue operating: access to financial and human resources (Halme et al., 2012; Venn & Berg, 2013), the freedom to innovate (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012) and the freedom to collaborate outside the company (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Mirvis et al., 2016; van Wijk et al., 2019). This was particularly salient for the Bankable Farmer project, which exists in a broader organisational context that, while generally supportive of innovation, appears to be less favourable to CS Innovation specifically.

5.1.2 The CS Intrapreneurship process and institutional work

5.1.2.1 The institutional work of CS Intrapreneurs

Research question: What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations?

The intrapreneurs work to legitimate their projects as well as the broader principles of CS Innovation that undergird them. Their institutional work is their engagement with the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements of their organisations as institutions, aimed at maintaining, disrupting or creating institutional structures (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Regardless of the stage of institutionalisation of the various projects in the companies, all the intrapreneurs reported actions that could be classified as creative institutional work as per the Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) framework. There was a stronger emphasis on normative and cognitive institutional work than on political institutional work. Participants would often point out the strategic commercial importance of their work and position their projects in contrast to traditional CSR or CS Investment efforts.

When it comes to institutional work aimed at disruption or maintenance of institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) there appears to be a stronger correlation with the stage of institutionalisation of the project. The Bankable Farmer and Solar Branch participants (projects that were in the prototyping or design phases) gave concrete examples of disruptive institutional work, while the Mum & Baby and Peri Farming participants (the institutionalised projects) described instances of institutional maintenance. Descriptions of

disruptive institutional work were exclusively focused on the normative and cultural-cognitive institutional elements, with intrapreneurs opting to work through and around the regulative elements of their organisations rather than disrupting these altogether. The examples of maintenance that participants gave were about maintaining the underlying beliefs and norms of their projects that had become institutionalised in their companies. All intrapreneurs participated in maintaining institutional elements of their organisations, specifically by moulding the performance metrics of their projects to fit with customary company practice.

In all cases, intrapreneurs drew on the pragmatic, normative, regulative and cognitive dimensions of legitimacy (Binz et al., 2016) to legitimate their projects to their colleagues and decision-makers. Both the social and the commercial goals of the projects were important in this process, though the emphasis would shift depending on the audience and the context.

5.1.2.2 The wielding of different forms of capital by CS Intrapreneurs

Research question: How do Corporate Social Intrapreneurs wield different forms of capital in the process?

CS Innovation projects may involve novel, unproven ideas at the start, or, once established may not be optimised for efficiency, because of their dual social and commercial focus. As such, securing material capital requires a more skilful wielding of symbolic, social and cultural capital (Voronov & Vince, 2012). The intentional use and transformation of different forms of capital was described by all participants. The lead intrapreneur from Thomson Reuters was acutely conscious of the importance of social and political capital: “I think there is quite a lot to be said for individuals who have longstanding social and political capital inside of an organisation to be some of the more successful intrapreneurs, because they can call on that.”

The Nedbank participants described how material and cultural capital were transformed outside of the company structures to secure essential social capital in the community where the Solar Branch was being established.

5.1.2.3 The reflexivity and agency of the CS Intrapreneur

Research question: What are the factors, at the field, organisational or individual level, that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs perceive as triggering their ‘mental alarm’, conscious reflexivity and agency?

All participants gave examples of how their reflexivity was sparked at a cognitive and an emotional level, and how their unique social position and history of social positions influenced their approach to their CS Innovation work (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Cardinale, 2017; Tost, 2011; Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Cognitively, it was ongoing contradictions in institutional logics, or surprising first-hand experiences rather than major external jolts that led participants to question existing institutional elements. The Nedbank participants' exposure to and immersion in the rural community, and the unexpected experiences that came with this, were particularly important in sparking their reflexivity.

Emotionally, all participants described how the integration of social goals in their work was something that they found rewarding, motivating, and in some cases, surprising, which increased their reflexivity around what they wanted to achieve through their projects and their careers.

The formal social position that a participant occupied within the company was essential in enabling and orienting their CS Innovation work. Even if their roles were not fully dedicated to the project, participants described the fit with their responsibilities or with the strategic focus of their role. The informal social positions that participants occupied enabled their access to various forms of capital, and here having a relatively long tenure in the organisation and the attendant social capital appears to be an important enabler for CS Innovation.

5.1.3 Conclusion

These research findings use the extant literature as a framework to give a descriptive account of the context and process of four cases of CS Intrapreneurship in South Africa. The findings are consistent with the literature in relation to the organisational factors that are conducive to CS Innovation and CS intrapreneurship. However, the Thomson Reuters case demonstrates that CS Innovation may still emerge even if these factors are absent. Describing the experiences of the intrapreneurs through the lens of institutional work, legitimation and wielding of various forms of capital gives more insight into the CS Intrapreneurship process and helps to illuminate subtle, micro moments of institutional change. Examining intrapreneurs' reflexivity and agency highlights how social positions, cognitive- and emotional experiences orient, enable and constrain action. Of course, the qualitative nature of this study and the small number of cases limits the generalisability of the findings.

Nevertheless, the findings offer some meaningful, contextually bound insights, and ample inspiration for future research, which is explored in more detail below.

5.2 Future research directions

5.2.1 *The organisational context for CS Innovation*

Factors in the organisational context can enable or impede CS Innovation. In addition to those mentioned in the literature review, this study surfaced more factors to be explored in future research.

5.2.1.1 *Nature of products and services*

When a company's core product or service can be positioned as delivering some kind of inherent social value, this may create an opening for CS Intrapreneurs, especially when it comes to BOP innovations. For Nedbank or Vodacom, for example, it can easily be demonstrated how better access to connectivity or financial services could benefit excluded populations. The same could be said for companies providing health, hygiene or nutritional products.

Both Vodacom and Nedbank have integrated a social purpose in their company purpose through this kind of framing. The Nedbank participants used the company purpose to legitimate the Solar Branch project, and Vodacom used the Mum & Baby project in their company communications as an example of their social purpose in action. In a for-profit company, social value creation would still be constrained by commercial imperatives, however –products and services cannot be given away for free indefinitely to those who struggle to afford them. The CS Intrapreneurship challenge is the development of innovative, socially beneficial ideas that are also commercially viable. Future research could explore how CS Intrapreneurs balance conflicting objectives, or how the nature of a company's products enables or constrains CS Innovation.

5.2.1.2 *Company ownership*

Nando's is the only privately held company in this study, and the data suggests that the business approach and philosophy of the founders and main shareholders have played an important enabling role for CS Innovation. Sponsorship by a senior decisionmaker is important for intrapreneurship (Grayson et al., 2013) and this may be even more pronounced in a privately owned company where a handful of owners hold substantial power. Exploring the relationship between company ownership and CS Innovation could take many forms. Phenomena that could be the focus include: shareholder attitudes towards CS Innovation (especially in the case of privately owned companies); the communication of and reporting

on CS Innovation, e.g., comparing private vs publicly held companies, or comparing various publicly held firms; the nature of CS Innovation in family-owned businesses; or relationships between intrapreneurs and company owners.

5.2.1.3 General support systems for innovation

In the Thomson Reuters case, the organisational factors listed in the literature as enablers for CS Innovation appeared to be absent. However, there was evidence of company structures designed to enable commercial innovation, such as its global innovation labs network or its Catalyst Fund. The CS Intrapreneurs leveraged these structures to get a CS Innovation project off the ground. Similarly, the Nedbank intrapreneurs used the company's digital forum, established to enable and foster digitisation ideas, to get the needed start-up support for the Solar Branch. In Vodacom, it appears that treating the Mum & Baby offering as a commercial development meant it was able to attract sufficient resources and become institutionalised. Potential research questions include: How do CS Intrapreneurs integrate or communicate the social purpose of their initiatives when leveraging commercially oriented innovation systems and structures? How do the resource needs and success criteria for commercially oriented innovation and CS Innovation differ?

5.2.1.4 National context and company origins

In this study, all the companies but Thomson Reuters had South African roots. While this study covers too few cases to draw comparisons, interesting insights could emerge through comparing stakeholder attitudes and/or institutional contexts between different countries in relation to CS Innovation.

CS Innovation is still nascent in South Africa, where philanthropic approaches are not only dominant, but expected. In the Nedbank case, even the social entrepreneur who had approached the company with the Solar Turtle concept did so with the intent to secure philanthropic funding. It was the CS Intrapreneurs who transformed the idea into a potentially commercially viable offering. Future research could explore the influence of attitudes to corporate philanthropy and CS Investment on CS Innovation.

A third research area is how companies and CS Intrapreneurs communicate CS Innovation differently to different audiences. Both Nando's and Vodacom used the Peri Farming and Mum & Baby projects as examples of their social impact – but appeared to do more of this communication *outside* of South Africa than in the country. Nando's created marketing content with Canadian and UK celebrities (aimed at these consumer audiences) visiting the

Peri Farming project in southern Africa, but has not done anything similar for South African audiences. S. from Thomson Reuters shared how she had to downplay the social impact when garnering initial support and funding for the Bankable Farmer initiative. Factors to explore could include the national institutional context, company characteristics or even project maturity and commercial success.

5.2.2 *Balancing objectives in CS Innovation*

5.2.2.1 *Innovation as an enabler for social and business impact: inspiring examples*

In every project in this study, it is innovation, and the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the intrapreneurs, that enabled simultaneous social and commercial value creation. Future research highlighting similar examples could inspire social innovators and social intrapreneurs in practice:

Nedbank – Solar Branch:

Many rural communities remain unbanked, despite banks' desire to penetrate that market, because limited municipal infrastructure makes establishing a physical presence more costly, and because moving cash in and out of these areas is prohibitively expensive. Innovation addresses both these challenges. The Solar Turtle concept represents a solution that is affordable, secure and independent of typical municipal infrastructure. Encouraging community-wide uptake of digital payment solutions in lieu of cash, makes it more financially feasible for the bank to enter this market, while the community benefits from access to financial services and the affordability, ease and security of digital payments.

Thomson Reuters – Bankable Farmer:

Through the application of an emerging technology to a previously untapped market segment, Bankable Farmer creates inclusive business opportunities by allowing Thomson Reuters's customers to tap into the BOP of the agriculture sector. Participants expressed how the nature of CS Innovation was often difficult for others to grasp, because it was "not a project that companies usually get involved in."

The dual social and business impact of Bankable Farmer was enabled by the company structures that had been set up to foster commercial innovation, and driven by the initiative and personal motivation of the lead intrapreneur (S.), who emphasised that she recognised a massive business opportunity *and* a massive social impact opportunity from the initial research.

Vodacom – Mum & Baby:

This project and the Siyakha offering are exemplary of a BOP or inclusive business strategy. It is a profitable core business activity that creates opportunity and improves livelihoods for those at the base of the economic pyramid: In this case, through the modification of existing products and services to be affordable and serve the specific needs of the low-income market segment, and thereby improve their health and quality of life (Scholl, 2014).

The technological capability and the distribution network to serve this market segment already existed in Vodacom. Marketing drove the product and process innovation: identifying a specific customer segment; understanding their unmet needs; designing, packaging and pricing an offering that would meet these needs; and creating awareness of the offering. It could be argued that it is the philosophy of inclusive business itself that is the innovation – that profit-making and social impact can co-exist (Scholl, 2014).

Nando's – Peri Farming:

This project was set out with simultaneous social and commercial objectives from the start. Its institutionalisation in the company has been enabled through the innovative operational structures and processes, which frees it from having to deliver profit, but ensures more sustainable and substantial resources than a purely philanthropic initiative would have. The project's strong alignment with company strategy, values and brand has enabled its longevity: it's centred around the supply of a core, proprietary ingredient that differentiates Nando's from its competitors; its focus on the upliftment of farmers aligns with the company's strong focus on people's wellbeing; and its focus on peri-peri and southern Africa align with two of the focal points of the Nando's brand. It is a great example of how a CS Innovation can become a tangible and intangible asset for the company.

5.2.2.2 Navigating social and commercial tensions

While social welfare- and commercial logic may be compatible within a single initiative, there is always a point where the two diverge and trade-offs need to be made. How intrapreneurs navigate these tensions is an interesting path for future inquiry.

These tensions can play out differently depending on the stakeholder audience, as pointed out by Alt and Geradts (2019) – some stakeholders need convincing that the work has business intent, rather than just being a philanthropic exercise, while others need to be reassured that it isn't a case of impression management or so-called greenwashing.

Research could explore innovative framing strategies or language that intrapreneurs use, for example:

- The Vodacom participant would use the word “self-sustainable” or “commercially sustainable” to describe the fact that the project was able to sustain and fund its social impact through the commercial gains and profits it made.
- The Nedbank participants described how the Solar Branch project had enabled relationship building with the Xhosa traditional leaders, in a way that traditional sales strategies would not have accomplished. This could be seen as an alternative lens for evaluating return on investment.

What also warrants research attention is how some cases of apparent CS Innovation may well amount to impression management; how social impact may become diluted over time in service to commercial objectives; and how a shift towards CS Innovation may come at the expense of well-run, high-impact corporate philanthropy.

5.2.3 The CS Intrapreneurs and the CS Intrapreneurship process

5.2.3.1 Institutional work and legitimation

A salient point of the institutional work that CS Intrapreneurs engaged in was crafting their own professional and personal identities through their work. This was evident for the Thomson Reuters team in how they talked about themselves as ‘innovators’, and how they expressed their professional identity and purpose in their Lab space. The same applies to the Nando’s participant in describing herself as the ‘farmer’ in the company. *Personal identity crafting* as institutional work is something that may hold potential for future research.

While this research touched on the legitimation of CS Innovation, it is an area with potential for deeper exploration. Participants expressed a constant tension between normative and practical legitimacy – having to justify their projects to others either through social- or commercial impact. Aspects at field, organisational, interpersonal and even individual level may impact how CS Intrapreneurs would go about this.

A CS Intrapreneurship research angle that could be interesting is how it might be seen as a form of institutional work aimed at maintaining the corporate, profit-driven institution. In the face of institutional pressures for business to make a more significant social contribution, are companies responding with commercial initiatives masquerading as social impact ideas? Is the institutional work of CS Intrapreneurs – such as moulding their performance

measurements to standard commercial frameworks – simply a way to maintain the status quo? And is their shutting down of their “emotional thinking” in favour of rational, commercially driven decision-making a practical response or a form of self-preservation within the corporate institution?

5.2.3.2 *Creative wielding of different forms of capital*

These cases demonstrated how the use and transformation of social, material, cultural and symbolic capital (Voronov & Vince, 2012) are central to the CS Intrapreneurship process. Researchers could explore the cultural capital that well-recognised brand- and company names are imbued with, and how this may help or hinder CS Intrapreneurs in different contexts. Big brand names can open doors, but they can also create scepticism – the Nedbank participants expressed concern about how their presence in and approach to the Upper Mncwasa village *as Nedbank* could be perceived by its residents. How does this contrast with the work of independent social entrepreneurs trying to create a name for their organisations or innovations?

There are inherent gaps between underserved population groups and mainstream companies, products and services – gaps in distance, language, experience, understanding, data and more. One could examine the role of cultural “translators” – the people who can guide companies in effective engagement with underserved population groups – in the BOP product development process. The Nedbank participants described two people who played this role for them in engaging with the Upper Mncwasa community. The Nando’s participant spoke about the importance of their locally based partner organisations who facilitate the relationship between Nando’s and the small-scale farmers. Innovating the product development process itself, and integrating considerations of social and cultural capital into it, may be a crucial ingredient in the development of BOP offerings.

Participants described how they were motivated by the social impact of their work, and how this created excitement and engendered support from others. The narratives that CS Intrapreneurs construct around the social impact of their CS Innovations, and how this could be considered as a form of symbolic capital and a legitimation strategy could be another interesting research topic.

5.2.3.3 *The reflexivity and agency of the intrapreneur*

While the literature points to the importance of sudden external jolts as catalysts for reflexivity and agency (Battilana & D’Aunno, 2009; van Wijk et al., 2019), the experiences

reported by the intrapreneurs also point to reflexivity and agency as things that evolve over time. The contradictions between different objectives, the contrasts between different contexts, and their emotional connections and experiences all contributed to their conscious awareness of and an increased commitment to their work. Research could explore how the intrapreneurs' reflexivity and agency are influenced over time by more subtle events and experiences, emanating from the work itself rather than from a major exogenous event.

The Nedbank participants' exposure to the rural community was poignant in their motivation and emotional engagement in the project. They described their surprise and curiosity, and how they started seeing with new eyes the environment where they worked and lived and had taken for granted. How might the exposure to different cultural and socio-economic contexts be a catalyst for CS Intrapreneurship? What is needed for these experiences to result in a lasting commitment to CS Innovation rather than a fleeting spark of emotion?

5.3 Limitations

The small number of cases and the qualitative, context-specific nature of the research gives it limited generalisability (Miles et al., 2014). The strength of this kind of research lies in the richness of descriptions, especially if the subject matter is relatively unique or unexplored (Flyvberg, 2006; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). That said, this study could have been further strengthened through more cases, a wider array of participants and interviews within the companies and the projects, and from additional interview-driven data collection at other points in time.

However, as a qualitative, descriptive exploration of a phenomenon that has not been extensively studied, especially in South Africa, and not through this particular theoretical lens, this research opens an array of future directions for inquiry, with potential for academic and practical contributions.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Research summary

I embarked on this research with broad questions in mind: How might innovation help to create alternatives to the prevailing CSR practices in South Africa that increasingly seem to fall short of their potential? Could business genuinely be a force for good? How might ordinary employees of companies play a role in this?

I started with an extensive literature review that explores the evolution of CSR, and how its manifestation in South Africa has been shaped by the country's unique social and historical context. This led me to the contemporary idea of CS Innovation: a response to societal pressure on business and dissatisfaction with existing CSR practice; inspired by the work of social entrepreneurs and innovators; and an idea with the potential for harnessing business strengths and core capabilities to effect positive social change.

Innovations in business come in the form of new products and services; the repositioning or introduction of existing products and services in new contexts; new processes and systems; changes in philosophy and values; changes in business model; or entirely new paradigms (Adams et al., 2016; Preuss, 2011; Roome & Louche, 2016). For business, truly embracing the call to sustainable development requires business model innovation, or even a paradigm shift – a reconceptualization of company purpose and means of value creation, including an intentional awareness of the kind of value that it creates and destroys in the process (Roome & Louche, 2016). For CS Innovation to have the positive impact that its proponents envision, not just through isolated examples but through transforming entire organisations and even their fields, it needs to become institutionalised (Dionisio & de Vargas, 2020; Osburg & Schmidpeter, 2014). This kind of institutionalisation and the journey towards more sustainable business models unfolds incrementally over time, with an interplay of intra-organisational factors and the broader societal context of the company (Adams et al., 2016; Roome & Louche, 2016).

The theoretical lens of institutional theory, applied to the phenomenon of CS Intrapreneurship provided a framework for exploring how the actions of an individual or a group of individuals contain the potential for broader change; the earliest moments and micro-level origins of institutional change (Smets et al., 2012). Specifically, the idea of institutional work and the associated concepts of legitimation, forms of capital, reflexivity and agency, provided

useful means to describe and understand how intrapreneurs may go about creating change through their work: how the individual actions of CS Intrapreneurs can amplify to influence organisations and even reshape the social order and broader social systems (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; Gray et al., 2015).

The research questions narrowed in on the experiences of CS Intrapreneurs in corporate South Africa: What is the perceived institutional work of Corporate Social Intrapreneurs in South Africa in legitimating their social innovation initiatives within their organisations? How do Corporate Social Intrapreneurs wield different forms of capital in the process? What are the factors, at the field, organisational or individual level, that Corporate Social Intrapreneurs perceive as triggering their ‘mental alarm’, conscious reflexivity and agency?

I used a qualitative, descriptive research design to explore these questions for four cases of CS Intrapreneurship in South Africa. Data was collected through interviews and from documents and was analysed using a framework that was derived from various academic works on CS Innovation, CS Intrapreneurship and institutional theory.

The findings are a rich, descriptive account not only of the CS Intrapreneurship process as experienced by the intrapreneurs, but also of the nature of the CS Innovation initiatives and the organisational context of each project.

Social innovation, because of the nature of the problems that it aims to address, involves institutional disruption and creation (van Wijk et al., 2019). CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship introduce new ideas and disrupt existing ideas within organisations. This descriptive account gives a glimpse into the actions of individual, motivated change agents, and the intra-organisational dynamics of the broader journey towards more sustainable business models (Adams et al., 2016; Halme et al., 2012; Pellegrini et al., 2019; Roome & Louche, 2016).

6.2 Academic implications

This study does not purport to offer robust explanations for behaviour or phenomena, to provide empirical proof of theoretical concepts, or to draw generalisable conclusions from the data. Rather, as a qualitative inquiry into a relatively unexplored phenomenon, its academic implications lie predominantly in opening further questions and future research directions, as described in Chapter 5.

However, participants did describe experiences and situations that closely mirrored the concepts in the literature-derived framework that was used to describe the CS Intrapreneurship projects and process. They talked about the same kinds of factors in their organisations that enabled their CS Intrapreneurship. They described their actions and experiences in legitimating their projects and the underlying principles, or creatively securing resources and capital, in ways that were in line with the literature about institutional work. They demonstrated reflexivity and an awareness of their own agency, as they engaged with the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements of their institutional context. These observations show the usefulness of the theoretical frameworks that were applied to explore CS Innovation and CS Intrapreneurship in South Africa, and that deeper insight can be derived through further inquiry along the same paths.

6.3 Implications for practice

For practice, the aim of this research has been to deliver insights for two primary audiences – leaders who are interested in fostering CS Innovation in their businesses, and current and aspiring CS Intrapreneurs.

6.3.1 For business leaders

An overall intent to create better alignment and compatibility between social welfare and commercial logic in the company is important (Alt & Craig, 2016). Multiple logics are already present in organisations, and leaders can enhance compatibility by setting goals that are consistent with both logics, through hiring and socialisation practices that support both logics, and through fostering relationships and role-modelling the desired behaviour (Besharov & Smith, 2014). An organisational environment that is conducive to CS Innovation is one where social purpose is integrated in the company purpose, where leaders vocally support social objectives, and where social objectives are integrated in the extrinsic and intrinsic incentives and management practices of the company (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Herrera, 2016).

This research also points to the importance of systems and structures that allow employees to propose and secure the required resources to experiment with socially innovative ideas. It is not only a matter of ensuring funding, but also enabling employees to carve out the needed time to commit to their intrapreneurial initiatives. If the Thomson Reuters case is taken as an example, CS Innovation can emerge through the efforts of a socially minded intrapreneur who is able to leverage the general systems and structures that exist for commercial

innovation, despite an organisational context that is not necessarily aimed at fostering socially innovative ideas. However, while the intrapreneurial process is characterised by bricolage, access to resources, the freedom to innovate and experiment, and the freedom to collaborate with other individuals and organisations are all crucial enablers for CS Innovation (Geradts & Bocken, 2019; Grayson et al., 2013; Halme et al., 2012; van Wijk et al., 2019; Venn & Berg, 2013).

6.3.2 For CS Intrapreneurs

Conscious reflexivity and an awareness of their own agency, cognitive processes, emotions, history and social positions, helps to orient CS Intrapreneurs' actions. Intrapreneurs often express the value of connecting with other like-minded individuals and reflecting on their experiences together as a way to strengthen this reflexivity and sustain their motivation to continue in what can be difficult work (Grayson et al., 2014; van Wijk et al., 2019).

This study shows CS Intrapreneurs how they might view their organisations as a web of regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive institutional elements, and to recognise that their actions either maintain or disrupt these elements or contribute to creating new ones. By engaging in institutional work with this awareness, they can consciously draw on the pragmatic, regulative, normative or cognitive dimensions of legitimacy to convince their peers and superiors to support their CS Innovation initiatives (Binz et al., 2016; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Even if an intrapreneur doesn't have the power or authority to change the rules in their company, they still have an array of tools at their disposal in form of the different kinds of institutional work described in this research.

It is important that intrapreneurs understand how to navigate and leverage the systems and structures of their companies. This study's participants succeeded, at least in part, to further their projects because they were able to do this. This should not be limited to understanding formalised systems and structures – e.g. knowing how to pitch a project for funding to a particular committee: CS Intrapreneurs also benefit from building and creatively wielding social, cultural and symbolic capital (Voronov & Vince, 2012).

6.4 Conclusion

There is no one recipe for CS Innovation or CS Intrapreneurship that will change the paradigms of business tomorrow. However, this research encourages a recognition of the fact that the micro-institutional processes and the actions of individuals hold the seeds for

organisation-wide and even systems-wide change. By being more aware and intentional with those actions, individuals can work towards a world where the strengths and scale of business are applied to addressing our most pressing social and environmental issues.

7. References

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Appendix: Interview guide

- Please give me an overview of the project & its objectives?
 - Tell me more about the business objectives?
 - Tell me more about the social & environmental objectives?
- Can you describe how the project started and how it has evolved?
 - How did the idea for the project emerge?
 - Which department does this project fall under and who are the leaders / decisionmakers?
 - How did you go about getting resources for the project (time / money / people)?
 - Who did you involve?
 - How did you involve them?
 - How did you involve the people who you intended to benefit through this project?
- How is the performance of this work tracked and measured in the company? How does this compare to the KPIs for other work?
- Are there any factors in the external environment in general or in your industry that shaped this project? Either enabling it or constraining it?
 - Regulations? (e.g., BEE / Environmental)
 - Customer / consumer research & information?
 - Industry trends?
 - Common practices?
 - Mindset in your industry?
 - Were there any recent or emerging changes regarding the above?
- What are some of the conditions and thinking in your company around this kind of work, where there are both business and social aims?
 - Are there formal company policies around this type of work (sustainability / social responsibility / social innovation)?
 - What are some of the unwritten rules in the company regarding sustainability / social responsibility / social innovation?

- How would you describe the belief system and values of the company in this regard?
- Have there been any changes? Have you seen the thinking in the company evolve?
- How do you see the future of this work in your company?
- What were your personal aims for the project or your motivation to get involved?
- Tell me about the experiences in your life that shaped the way you think today.
- How would you describe your own thinking around this type of work? Has this changed at all? How?
- Has your role or the purpose of your job evolved at all throughout the course of this work?
- How do you describe the project / your work to others?
- Are there any common misconceptions? How do you address these?
- Did you use any analogies to describe your work? What about the project was similar to the work that was already happening?
- Were there particular people that you had to convince about the value of this work? Or people you had to convince to get more resources? How did you do this?
- Are there people who are supportive of this work and have the same kind of mindset? How do you work with them?
- What words or frameworks do you typically use in your company to describe a project and its objectives? How were these used in your project? How were they similar? How were they different?