UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Youth participation in the United Nations climate change negotiations: an ethnographic exploration

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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School of Earth and Environment

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is their own, except where work which has formed part of jointly authored publications has been included. The contribution of the candidate and the other authors to this work has been explicitly indicated below. The candidate confirms that appropriate credit has been given within the thesis where reference has been made to the work of others.

This thesis follows a publication-based (i.e. alternative) format consisting of an introductory chapter, three papers and a final chapter dedicated to discussion and the drawing of conclusions.

The second paper has appeared in publication as:

- THEW, H., MIDDLEMISS, L., & PAAVOLA, J. 2020. "Youth is not a political position": Exploring justice claims-making in the UN Climate Change Negotiations. *Global Environmental Change*, *61*, p.102036.

The third paper has received conditional acceptance from the journal *Environmental Politics*.

Harriet Christine Thew was the lead author of these publications and of this thesis in its entirety. Throughout six years of part-time study she identified the research topics, designed the methodology for data collection and analysis and developed the conceptual framing for each paper/chapter. She wrote the manuscripts and responded to comments from reviewers. The PhD supervisors (Dr Lucie Middlemiss and Prof. Jouni Paavola and, prior to completion, Prof. Suraje Dessai and Prof. Pia Christensen) provided guidance, feedback and emotional support.

Rationale for alternative format thesis:

This PhD is presented in alternative format for three key reasons:

1) This PhD responds to an empirical gap regarding the participation of youth in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In order to increase understanding of this under-researched constituency and to maximise the impact of this work it was important to publish findings whilst the PhD was in progress rather than disseminating findings after submission of a full manuscript.

2) Climate change policy and non-state actor (NSA) engagement with it is a dynamic and constantly changing field. Understanding how this develops over time requires regular analysis and dissemination of results.

3) This research is interdisciplinary in nature and therefore lends itself well to discreet areas of study, drawing upon different literatures and theories, being guided by and sharing findings with diverse academic audiences.

Thesis structure:

The thesis begins with an introductory chapter which establishes the empirical context of the research, the academic context in which this PhD is situated, and the methodological approach undertaken. Findings are presented in three substantive chapters, which are referred to throughout as papers one, two and three given that they are either in publication or currently going through peer review.

The first paper applies and adapts a model from the youth studies literature to broadly categorise youth participation in the context of the UNFCCC, identifying a variety of motivations for participation, a range of ways in which young people are positioned in the UNFCCC and how this shapes their participatory experiences, and various strategies they use to navigate power asymmetries. It also emphasises an overlooked aspect of youth participation: psychological factors, finding that emotions play an important role in shaping young people's participation in this context.

The second paper, guided by a recent call in environmental governance for empirical research into justice claims made by different groups in climate governance spaces, delves deeper into young people's perceptions and articulation of (in)justice, identifying a shift in their claims over time. Drawing upon key theories of justice and power this paper makes a significant theoretical contribution by shedding light on the relationship between ideological power and the framing and claiming of justice.

The third paper, responding to recent enthusiasm from academics and policy-makers about an enhanced role for NSAs in the current era of climate change governance, explores whether youth participants are able to use their attendance at UNFCCC

conferences to engage with new initiatives established to enhance non-state actor participation, studied through the conceptual lens of democratic legitimacy. It argues that, whilst UNFCCC conferences help to mobilise young participants, it should not be assumed that this equates to their engagement in orchestrated initiatives, proposing that more is done by orchestrators to increase inclusivity and democratic legitimacy.

The fifth chapter of the thesis discusses the implications of these three papers for theory and practice. Drawing upon findings from across the thesis it identifies five key rationales used to justify youth participation in the UNFCCC, determining the extent to which each one is currently being met. Finally, a series of recommendations are made for policy-makers and practitioners, areas for future research are highlighted and conclusions are drawn.

Acknowledgements:

First of all, I would like to thank my PhD supervisors: Dr Lucie Middlemiss, who has been involved since the early days and has been a constant source of encouragement, inspiration and emotional support, and Professor Jouni Paavola who joined the supervisory team later as a very welcome addition, bringing vast knowledge of a wide range of literatures and a calm, reassuring demeanour. I would also like to thank Professor Suraje Dessai for supporting the project until transfer and Professor Pia Christensen who was another very enthusiastic supervisor for a couple of years. I wish her the best of luck with her horticultural endeavours.

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Abstract:

Young people have been participating in United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conferences for over a decade, though their perspectives and participatory experiences have been largely overlooked by academics and policy-makers. This is beginning to change, catalysed by the Fridays for Future movement which has seen young people around the world take to the streets calling for rapid, ambitious climate action. Policy-makers are designing new initiatives to engage with young people and environmental governance scholars are increasingly turning their attention to this dynamic age group. Despite this enthusiasm, the details of youth participation in global climate change governance remain largely unknown, their implications unscrutinised.

This thesis critically interrogates young people's lived experiences of UNFCCC participation. Based on a longitudinal, ethnographic case study, it predates the Fridays for Future movement, offering key insights to guide this burgeoning research agenda. Drawing upon 32 interviews and over 900 hours of participant observation at six UNFCCC conferences between 2015 and 2018, it focuses on a UK-based youth organisation, the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC), which has been participating in UNFCCC conferences for several years. Through immersive engagement and trust built over time, coupled with the researcher's long-standing interaction with the UNFCCC's youth constituency, it sheds light on the complexities of young people's participatory experiences whilst considering the implications for theory and practice.

Applying concepts and frameworks from a range of literatures, this thesis takes steps to bridge the interdisciplinary divide between studies of non-state actor (NSA)

participation in global environmental governance and studies of youth participation, offering critical insights to both disciplines. First, testing and adapting a youth participation model, it offers a broad categorisation of the lived experiences of youth participants in this context, presenting several empirical and theoretical contributions including the identification of various purposes pursued by youth participants in the UNFCCC, multiple ways in which they are positioned and the impact of psychological factors on their participation. Second, applying key theories of justice and power, it expands and helps to mobilise justice theory beyond theoretical principles to enable a more sociological inquiry of how justice plays out in reality, finding that young people lack self and social recognition which hinders their ability to make justice claims. Third, applying the concepts of input and throughput legitimacy, it explores whether youth participation increases the democratic legitimacy of UNFCCC-orchestrated initiatives, finding that the UNFCCC offers an accessible entry point for young newcomers to climate governance, but this does not necessarily lead to increased engagement in orchestrated initiatives.

Finally, taking a step back to examine the implications of these three interlinked studies as a whole, it considers a range of normative rationales which underpin youth participation in this context. It argues that, at present, youth participation in the UNFCCC is not fully delivering against any of these rationales, offering a series of recommendations to ameliorate this. In particular, it emphasises a need for the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP Presidencies to play a more proactive role in supporting youth, along with other less powerful NSAs, to increase democratic legitimacy and establish a fairer, more inclusive global climate governance regime which works for all generations.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACE – Action for Climate Empowerment

BEIS – UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

BINGO – Business and Industry NGOs (UNFCCC constituency)

COP – Conference of the Parties (to the UNFCCC)

COY – Conference of Youth (annual youth-led conference on climate change)

CRC – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

DCJ! – Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice

ENGO – Environmental NGOs (UNFCCC constituency)

GCA – Global Climate Action (also referred to as the Marrakech Partnership)

IGOs – Intergovernmental Organisations

IPOs – Indigenous Peoples' Organisations (UNFCCC constituency)

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

LGMA – Local Government and Municipal Authorities (UNFCCC constituency)

LPAA – Lima-Paris Action Agenda

Marrakech Partnership – the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

NAZCA – Nonstate Actor Zone for Climate Action

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations

NSAs – Non-State actors

OIT model – Orchestrator-Intermediaries-Target model

Parties – Parties to the UNFCCC i.e. state actors

Pink Badge – Governmental accreditation within UNFCCC conferences

RINGO – Research and Independent NGOs (UNFCCC constituency)

Rio Declaration – Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992)

Rio Earth Summit – UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992)

SAs – State Actors

SB – Subsidiary Body (of the UNFCCC)

SSAs – Sub-State Actors e.g. cities, local authorities

The Secretariat – International Secretariat of the UNFCCC

TUNGO – Trade Union NGOs (UNFCCC constituency)

UK – United Kingdom

UKRI – UK Research and Innovation

UKYCC – UK Youth Climate Coalition

UN – United Nations

UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNICEF – United National International Children's Fund

US – United States of America

WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature

YOUNGO – Youth NGOs (UNFCCC constituency)

1. Introduction

1.1. Empirical context

Climate change is the most wide-ranging governance challenge faced by the world today. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is principally tasked with facilitating the global response to climate change from the top-down, by coordinating negotiations between State Actors (SAs) to enhance their domestic efforts. Alongside this, it also strives to foster public engagement and to mobilise private finance, encouraging bottom-up action to supplement the top-down approach. Established at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the UNFCCC has, since its inception, permitted Non-State Actors (NSAs) to participate in (or formally, to "observe") the intergovernmental climate change negotiations. NSA participation has been increasing ever since, along with increased participation from Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs). The number of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) admitted to the negotiations now reaches over 2,000 (Figure 1), with many new NGOs continuing to apply each year (Figure 2).

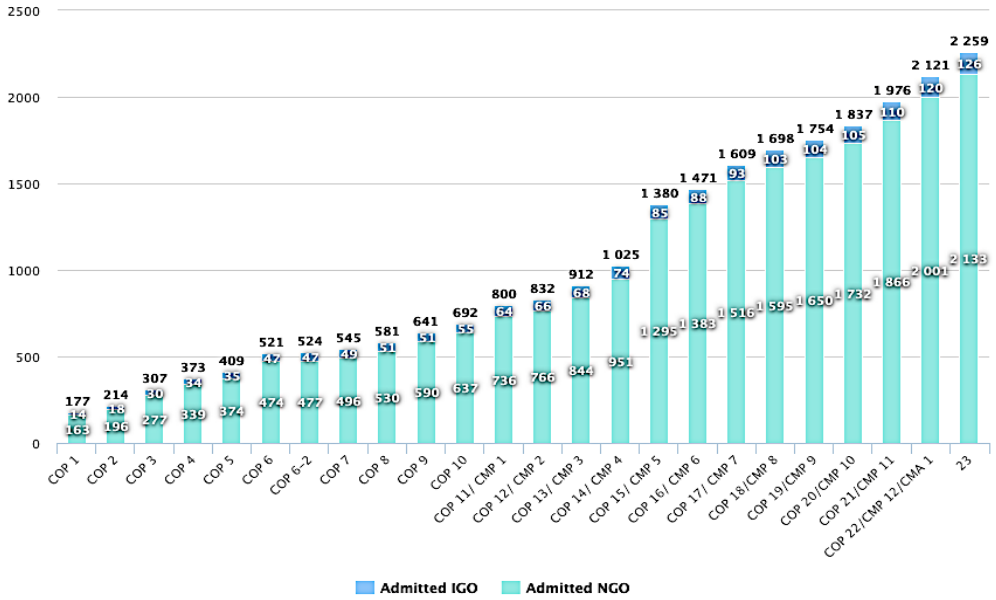

Figure 1. UNFCCC participation statistics – cumulative admission of observers (UNFCCC, 2020)

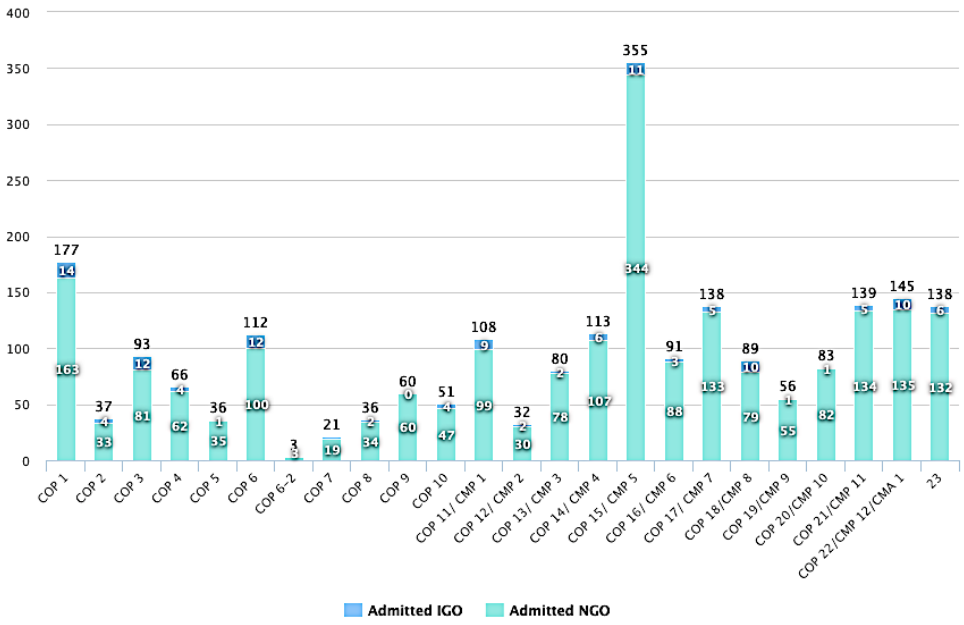

Figure 2. UNFCCC participation statistics – new observer admissions per COP (UNFCCC, 2020)

Despite arising from the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the "Rio Earth Summit", the UNFCCC did not directly follow the Major Group model of NSA participation which was outlined in Agenda

21, another outcome of the same conference (UNCED, 1992). As such, whilst Agenda 21 recognised nine groups of NSAs as relevant stakeholders: *Business and Industry*; *Children and Youth; Women; Indigenous Peoples' and their communities; NGOs; Local Authorities; Workers and Trade Unions; the Scientific and Technological Community;* and *Farmers,* the UNFCCC initially only recognised two: *Business and Industry NGOs* (BINGO) and *Environmental NGOs* (ENGO). This overlooked the important role of the seven other groups who therefore had to actively seek recognition from the UNFCCC, rather than automatically being given a seat at the table.

For youth, it took 19 years to gain formal recognition, achieving provisional status as a constituency in 2009 and eventually gaining official constituency status as Youth NGOs (YOUNGO) in 2011. This recognition bestows procedural privileges such as the ability to hold side-events and exhibits at UNFCCC conferences, make interventions and submissions, receive information from the UNFCCC Secretariat and be granted opportunities for high-level meetings with UNFCCC officials. Youth participation has been steadily increasing ever since 2011 (UNFCCC 2010; 2018), and according to the most recent data available, YOUNGO were the fourth largest constituency in terms of attendance at the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) 22 in 2017 (Figure 3).

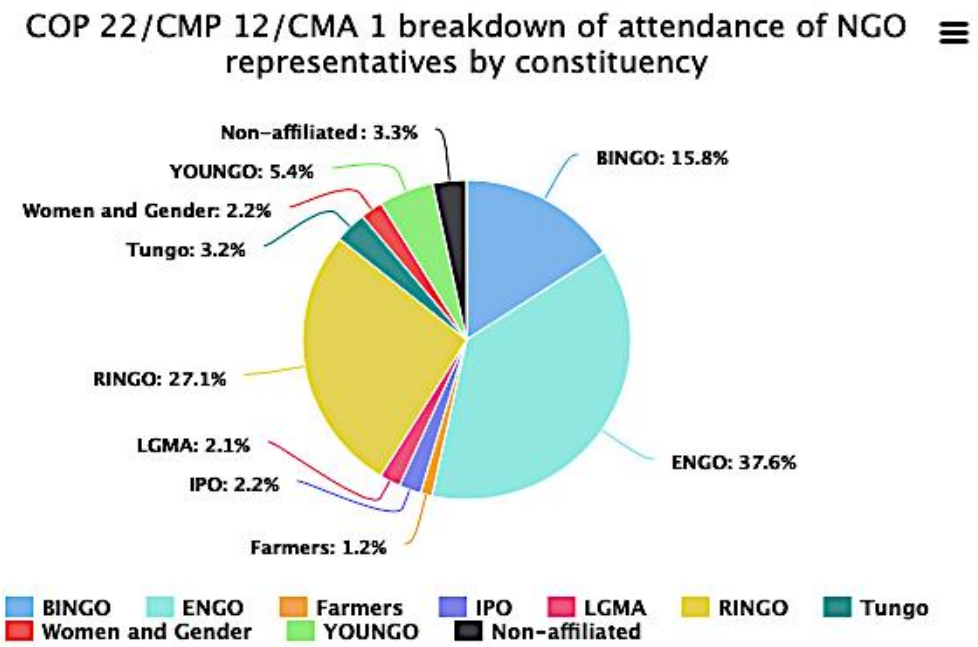

Figure 3. Breakdown of observers by constituency at COP22 – most recent data (UNFCCC, 2020)

Despite this substantial rise, however, there has been very limited research into young people's participation in UNFCCC conferences or the wider global climate governance regime. As a result, little is known about young people's participatory experiences in the UNFCCC and the broader implications this may have for climate change governance. This thesis explores this overlooked topic by focusing on a single, embedded case study (Yin, 2009), an organisation which is an active member of YOUNGO and whose members have participated in the UNFCCC for over a decade: the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC). In doing so, the thesis makes several original contributions to knowledge.

First, it contributes a range of new empirical findings to shed light on how UNFCCC conferences are experienced from an under-researched perspective. Second, it contributes to youth studies in testing and adapting an analytical framework and

offering a broad categorisation of the factors shaping youth participation in this context (paper one). Third, it contributes to political philosophy and the environmental governance literature in mobilising key theories of justice and power to add explanatory insights into the framing and claiming of (in)justice (paper two). Fourth, it offers a conceptual distinction to the orchestration literature to encourage and facilitate closer consideration of its democratic legitimacy (paper three). Fifth, in the discussion (chapter five), it takes a step back to reflect on the thesis as a whole, identifying five key rationales used to justify youth and NSA participation which could inform future work in both youth studies and environmental governance, assessing the extent to which youth participation in the UNFCCC is currently delivering against each rationale and making a series of practical recommendations for its amelioration.

1.1.1. Rationale for the thesis

As a "wicked problem" (Rittel and Webber, 1973), climate change requires collective action from a wide variety of stakeholders at multiple levels. Whilst the global climate change regime has expanded beyond the intergovernmental negotiations – becoming increasingly "polycentric" (e.g. Jordan et al., 2018) or "fragmented" (Zelli, 2011) depending on one's perspective – UNFCCC conferences remain a key site of interest to researchers. This is in no small part a result of their multi-actor attendance. For example, Lövbrand et al. (2017) describe UNFCCC conferences as:

> *"…messy political sites, where a multitude of actors come together to exchange ideas and knowledge, benchmark climate performance, build inter-personal relationships, organize resistance and propose policy alternatives in parallel to, and in view of, the interstate negotiations." (pp.581-582)*

NSAs play an important role in contributing to the design and implementation of climate governance, increasing efficiency and effectiveness (Abbott, 2017; Chan et al., 2015; Hale, 2016), and offering independent, critical perspectives to increase justice and democratic legitimacy (Bäckstrand et al., 2017; Derman, 2014; Lövbrand et al., 2017). Young people in particular have become a symbol of hope within climate governance, seen as "agents of change" who can tug at the heart strings of politicians and use their "pester power" to drive forward urgent, ambitious climate action (Satchwell, 2013; Walker, 2020). However, the literature on NSAs has primarily focused on more powerful groups such as businesses, cities and large environmental NGOs (e.g. Bulkeley, 2010; Bulkeley et al., 2013; Lund, 2013; Rietig, 2016; Vormedal, 2008) with young people remaining largely overlooked.

This thesis strives to rectify this through deep engagement with youth participants in the UNFCCC. Drawing upon rich empirical evidence to inductively build theory and contribute to a fuller understanding of their experiences, it assesses whether this vague hope in youth is justified and whether it is fair, identifying a series of recommendations to support young people to overcome barriers to their participation and increase their capacity to contribute to climate change governance in the ways they would like to.

1.1.2. Aim and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to increase understanding of the lived experiences of youth participants in the UNFCCC and to critically analyse the implications for theory and

practice. To achieve this overarching aim, the thesis responds to the following three research questions:

1. What are the key factors affecting youth participation in the UNFCCC and how do they interact to shape young people's lived experiences?

2. How do youth participants in the UNFCCC perceive and articulate justice and how is this shaped by their participatory experiences over time?

3. To what extent is youth participation in the UNFCCC fit for purpose and how can it be improved to better contribute towards a fairer and more inclusive global climate change governance regime?

1.2. Literature Review

This research is interdisciplinary in nature, drawing upon and speaking to three main bodies of literature: youth studies, environmental governance and political philosophy. These literatures collectively constitute the conceptual framework of the thesis which guides the research and the concepts utilised within it, as depicted in Figure 4. Each triangle represents a body of literature which is used to address the central empirical research gap of youth participation in the UNFCCC, listing the main conceptual lenses through which the case study is viewed.

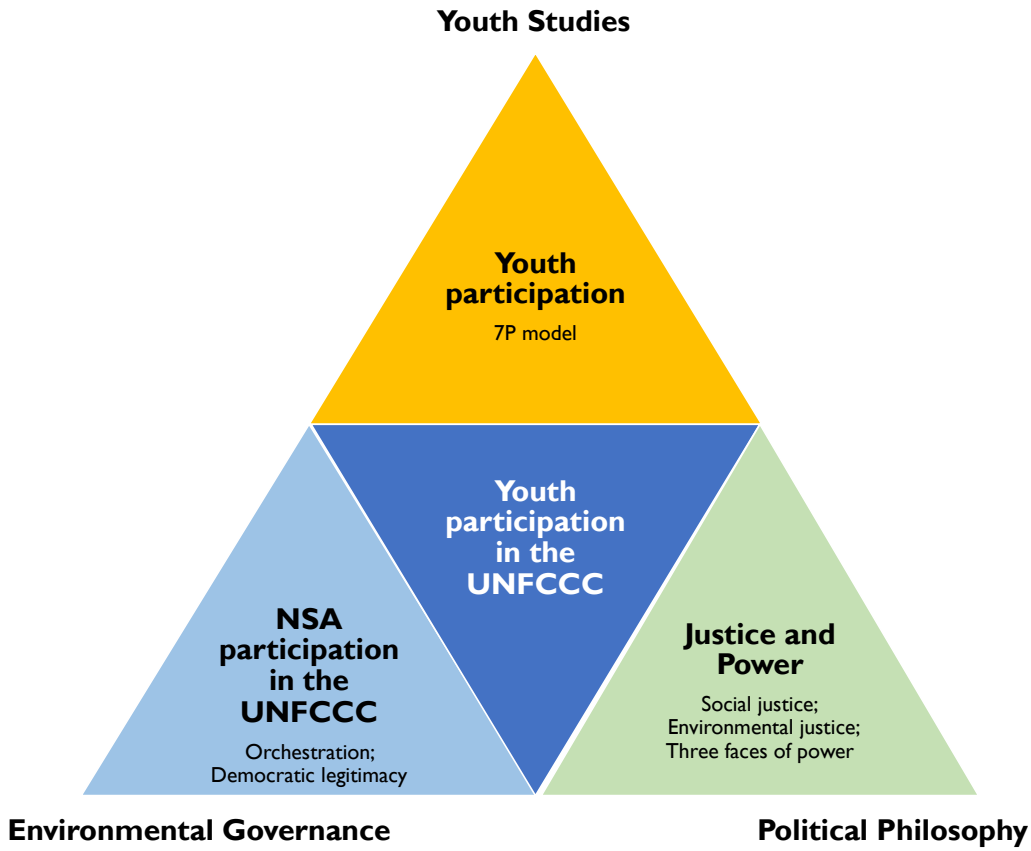

Figure 4. Conceptual framework of the thesis

This literature review discusses each "triangle" in turn. Section 1.2.1 pertains to the youth studies literature, with particular focus on the literature on youth participation and eventual selection of the "7P" model as the analytical framework which is applied in paper one. Section 1.2.2 situates the thesis within studies of NSA participation in the UNFCCC and outlines the concepts of orchestration and democratic legitimacy which inform the paper presented in paper three. Section 1.2.3 draws upon the political philosophy literature, identifying key theories of social justice, environmental justice and power which are applied in paper two. Section 1.2.4 then identifies and discusses the gaps across these literatures which are addressed in this thesis.

1.2.1. Youth studies and youth participation

Youth studies refers to the broad range of literature that focuses on young people, their position within society and their experiences of the world. As a social construct, the way in which "youth" are perceived by society has a profound impact upon the experiences of young citizens. Young people are often seen as "human becomings" rather than "human beings" (Qvortrup, 1994), viewed in terms of their potential to become economic actors or social delinquents of the future (Skelton, 2010; Tisdall, 2015). This is coupled with "adultism": i.e. *"the assumption that adults are better than young people and entitled to act upon them without their agreement because of their age"* (Checkoway, 2011, p342). However, despite the stereotypes, many young people are reflexive social actors who shape and are shaped by their socio-cultural experiences (Skelton, 2010; Tsekoura, 2016). This thesis takes this stance, regarding young people as highly reflexive social actors and perceiving their perspectives and experiences as having equal validity to adults'.

The youth participation literature, which sits within the youth studies literature, focuses on young people's engagement with decision-making processes at all levels, from households and schools all the way through to global governance processes. Perhaps as a consequence of adultism, utilising the "user perspectives" of youth participants to explore the processes they engage in is still something of an academic rarity (Borić and Mirosavljević, 2014). As such, youth scholar Brian Head's (2011) titular question regarding studies of youth participation: "Why not ask them?" remains rather methodologically novel. Thus, how young people perceive themselves and their participatory opportunities is often overlooked, and relatively little is known about whether opportunities for youth participation are facilitated in a way that is

valuable to both the participant and the process in question (Checkoway, 2011; Head, 2011). This thesis responds to this gap, focusing on the UNFCCC as a space where youth participation is increasing (as outlined in Section 1.1), in contrast to some other political processes as detailed below.

For example, participation in electoral politics is declining amongst all age groups but particularly amongst young people. Levine (2007) argues that low turnout of young voters is attributable to a lack of "internal efficacy" as young people have fewer opportunities to discuss their political views with others, reducing self-confidence in their own political opinions. Additionally, many young people perceive their "external efficacy" to be low, believing that their vote is unlikely to make a difference as political parties court older voters with higher records for voter turnout, with issues of concern for young people, of which the environment is highlighted as a key example, treated as lower priority (Levine, 2007; Henn et al., 2002, Soler-i-Marti, 2015). These findings are of relevance to this thesis as they suggest that so called "representative democracy" is not truly representative of youth views. As a result, young people are likely to seek other opportunities for political participation where the issues that matter to them are more prominent, in the hope that they may have a stronger voice, such as within climate change governance.

Indeed, youth participation scholars have challenged the dominant discourse that young people are politically apathetic, arguing that the reasons for low political participation are two-fold. First, they cite socio-economic barriers which prevent young people from participating (Henn and Foard, 2014; Vromen and Collin, 2010). Second, they argue that young people are engaging in new forms of participation

which aren't recognised by traditional metrics (Henn et al., 2005; Manning and Edwards 2014; Soler-i-Marti, 2015). This includes micropolitical acts at the individual level, where young people express their values through everyday choices (Harris et al., 2010). It also includes lifestyle choices such as vegetarianism and veganism, engagement in recycling, energy and water conservation (Manning, 2013), buying or boycotting certain products (Stolle et al., 2005), and expressing political opinions by signing petitions, engaging in protests or donating money to campaigns (Harris et al., 2010). However, many young people also seek opportunities to participate in collective action and there is substantial evidence that they are politically aware, active, and competent, leading several scholars to argue that young people deserve a seat at the table in decision-making processes (Hart, 1992; Henn and Foard; 2014; Skelton, 2010).

As such, youth studies scholars have long attempted to devise ways in which to analyse and assess young people's participation in different contexts. Perhaps the most well-known and most frequently applied youth participation model is Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation. In 1992, Hart amended Sherry Arnstein's (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation specifically for children and youth. Both Hart and Arnstein use the metaphor of a ladder with eight rungs representing different "levels" of participation. Hart's typology includes: *manipulation; decoration; tokenism; assigned but informed; consulted and informed; adult-initiated shared decisions with adults; child-initiated and directed;* and *children initiated shared decisions with adults,* presented in order from the bottom to the top of the ladder (Figure 5). Whilst there are various critiques of Hart's ladder (discussed in more detail below), it is presented here as the

conceptual baseline for youth participation scholarship, which scholars have critically responded to over the years and is a debate which this thesis contributes to.

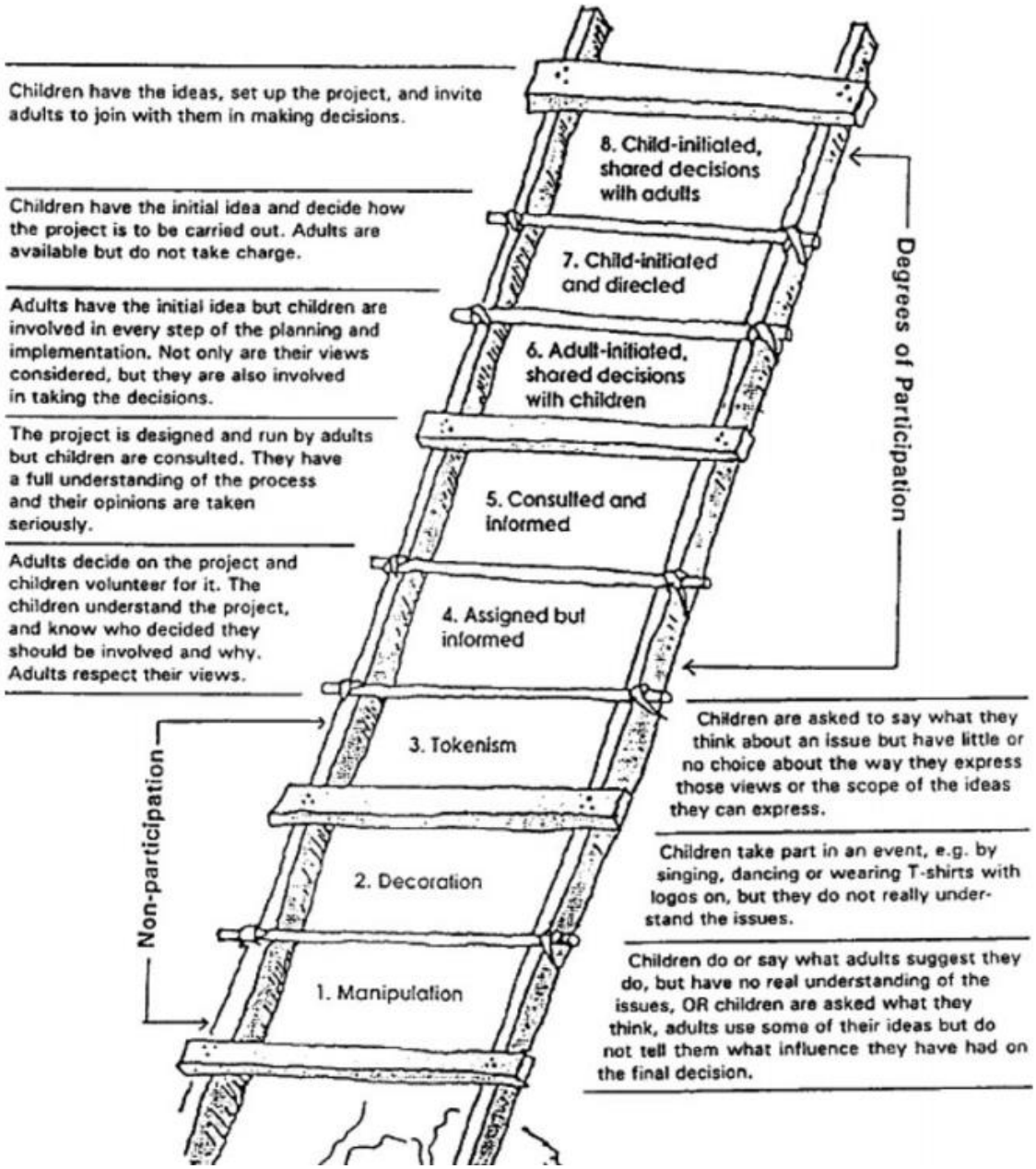

Figure 5. Hart's Ladder of Participation (1992), taken from Hart (1995)

Whilst it illustrates a range of potential options to anyone seeking to facilitate youth participation, Hart's ladder has been critiqued for being too hierarchical and for

normatively suggesting that higher levels on the ladder are always superior, regardless of context (Andersson, 2017; Cahill and Dadvand, 2018; Treseder, 1997). This overlooks other purposes of, and value arising from, youth participation. For example, Hart labels the lower rungs of his ladder as non-participation, claiming that participation depends upon the ability to influence decision-making (Hart, 1992), thus overlooking the benefits that young people can gain through participation, even when unable to shape decision-making outcomes (Andersson, 2017; Cahill and Dadvand, 2018; Malone and Hartung, 2010). Hart (2008) later acknowledged this as a limitation stating that although adults may "set the stage", youth participants develop their own strategies for engagement with their peers. As such, he called for future research to consider the ways in which social context shapes participation in political processes.

This has given rise to a number of other youth participation models including: *Shier's "Pathways to Participation" (2001); Wong et al.'s "Typology of Youth Participation and Empowerment (TYPE) Pyramid" (2010); Andersson's "3P-M model" (2017);* and *Cahill and Dadvand's "7P model" (2018).* These models are discussed in more detail in paper one, delineating their strengths and weaknesses and outlining why Cahill and Dadvand's "7P model" (2018) was ultimately selected as the analytical framework to guide the first paper of the thesis. This model is particularly comprehensive, providing seven lenses through which to view youth participation: *Purpose; Positioning; Perspectives; Power Relations; Protection; Place;* and *Process.* It offers significant potential to explore youth participation in the context of the UNFCCC, where relatively little is known thus far (see Section 1.2.2 for further discussion).

1.2.2. NSA participation in the UNFCCC

As established in Section 1.1, NSAs have been involved in the UNFCCC since its outset though only two civil society constituencies were initially recognised: BINGO and ENGO. In the following years, these were joined by four additional constituencies: *Local Government and Municipal Authorities (LGMA); Indigenous Peoples Organisations (IPO); Research and Independent NGOs (RINGO);* and *Trade Unions (TUNGO)* (UNFCCC, 2011). Since 2009, the number of accredited organisations has risen further and become increasingly diverse, leading to the establishment of three additional constituencies: *YOUNGO; Women and Gender;* and *Farmers*. Thus, there are now a total of nine civil society constituencies officially recognised by the UNFCCC. Additionally, several other NSA groups participate in the process, such as the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers (WIEGO, 2017), but have not gained constituency status[1] and the additional participatory opportunities this bestows, for example being able to hold side-events and exhibits in UNFCCC conferences, make interventions and submissions, and formally receive information from the UNFCCC Secretariat.

Despite this background context, much of the research on NSA participation treats these groups as homogenous, overlooking the historic evolution of the constituencies and the impact it has on their experiences of conference participation. Previous research has investigated NSA lobbying strategies (Hanegraaff et al., 2016; Keck and Sikkink, 1999), level of influence on the intergovernmental negotiations (Betsill and Corell, 2008; Vormedal, 2008), along with the wide range of issues they pursue (Cabré, 2011). Studies have also shed light upon internal dynamics such as how

[1] It is not known whether other groups of NSA participants have applied or intend to apply for constituency status or whether they choose not to for personal and/or political reasons.

UNFCCC constituencies are organised and whether member organisations within share common perspectives (Gulbrandsen and Andresen 2004; Vormedal 2008). However, as their focus has been fixed on more powerful and well-resourced groups such as environmental NGOs (Duwe, 2001; Rietig, 2016) and businesses (Lund, 2013; Vormedal, 2008), smaller and newer constituences have been largely overlooked.

As such, studies of youth participation in the UNFCCC are extremely limited. My MSc research (Thew, 2018) made a first step in addressing this gap by assessing young people's agency in the negotiations, drawing upon perceptions of both the youth participants themselves and the negotiators and IGO representatives they sought to influence. This paper argued that YOUNGO could be considered a "Transnational Advocacy Network" (Keck and Sikkink, 1999) and applied the concept of "Power Sources" (Nasiritousi et al., 2016), identifying the sources of power which youth participants draw upon, under which circumstances, and whether this leads to agency (conceptualised as the ability to influence decisions, rather than purely to observe them). Findings suggest that some young people have developed agency in the UNFCCC but this may be restricted to certain policy areas and is dependent upon youth participants employing strategies which are deemed acceptable by adults who hold more power.

Supporting these findings, Yona et al. (2020) argue that youth participants have limited power in the COP process, identifying a series of "Leverage Points" used by members of YOUNGO to expand their social power within COPs. Additionally, a study has recently been published on youth protests outside the UNFCCC though not their participation within it (Marquardt, 2020). It is therefore clear that interest in this

research topic is growing, though as an evidence base it remains small and further research is needed to address many unanswered questions: an empirical research gap which this thesis contributes to.

Theoretically, the thesis applies the concepts of orchestration and democratic legitimacy used in environmental governance studies (as depicted in Figure 4, though originally derived from political science) to address this research gap. Orchestration refers to a non-hierarchical mode of governance through which a governor i.e. "orchestrator" recruits like-minded actors i.e. "intermediaries", connecting and directing them in pursuit of shared goals to influence more powerful actors or "targets" (known as the O-I-T model). It is particularly popular in transnational settings where authority is limited (Abbott and Snidal, 2009; Abbott et al., 2015; Abbott, 2017) and is attractive to IGOs such as the UNFCCC who have limited authority over states and limited resources at their disposal, yet have access to a wide range of potential intermediaries to enlist (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017).

Some scholars have enthused that the current era of climate change governance offers a greater role for NSAs, through participation in orchestrated initiatives (e.g. Chan and Amling, 2019; Hale, 2016). However, studies have predominantly focused on whether NSAs are able to make climate change governance more efficient and effective (Chan et al., 2015; Michaelowa and Michaelowa, 2017), and on documenting the rise of "Transnational Climate Governance" initiatives as alternatives to the UNFCCC which have created a "polycentric" regime with multiple sites of authority (Ostrom 2010; 2012) to supplement the monocentric, intergovernmental process (e.g. Bulkeley et al., 2014; Newell et al., 2012). The normative goals of efficiency and

effectiveness have become dominant in climate change governance research and practice, particularly since the infamous 2009 Copenhagen COP which challenged many people's belief that multilateralism could be relied upon to formulate an effective response to climate change (Hale 2016; Moncel and Van Asselt, 2012). In contrast, other normative goals such as inclusivity and justice have received less academic attention in the literature, with the exception of studies focusing on equity which are valuable (e.g. Morgan and Waskow, 2014; Schroeder et al., 2012), though which focus on SAs and only really consider the "distributive" facet of justice (defined in Section 1.2.3).

With the UNFCCC back in the foreground following the successful negotiation of the 2015 Paris Agreement, faith in multilateralism has been restored (for now). As such, the time is ripe to consider the extent to which UNFCCC spaces are increasing the inclusivity of global climate governance (explored in paper three), and to pay closer attention to justice as perceived by and negotiated between different NSA groups (explored in paper two). These build upon the empirical and theoretical contributions made to the youth participation literature in paper one. The following section (1.2.3) discusses how theories of power and justice from political philosophy are applied in the thesis.

1.2.3. Power and justice theory

It is often normatively assumed that increased participation of NSAs in climate governance leads to its democratisation through enhanced pluralism. This assumption is common in environmental studies where the ideal of participation is often lauded

as a cure for environmental ills (Middlemiss, 2014). However, it is known from the participation literature that it is misguided to assume that increasing participation will make a process more inclusive, as powerful actors shape the participatory arena with their interests becoming dominant over time (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Cornwall and Gaventa, 2000; Gaventa, 2004). As such, prevailing power dynamics are a necessary consideration in the study of participation in governance processes.

Indeed, Nasiritousi et al. (2014) found that the preferred climate governance solutions of UNFCCC participants are not always the ones that they advocate in official UNFCCC spaces, indicating the possible presence of invisible power dynamics in the participatory arena. However, the authors do not problematise this as their focus is directed towards the similarities and differences in SA and NSA preferences, so the reasons for this remain unquestioned. Notably, the views of smaller NSA constituencies such as youth, women, farmers and indigenous peoples' representatives are categorised homogenously in their quantitative results as "other NGO", obscuring the nuances of their viewpoints. As a result, deeper engagement with these constituencies is needed to develop greater understanding.

Furthermore, Cabré (2011) finds that the policy issues most commonly represented in the UNFCCC most closely match those represented by the largest and most established constituencies: ENGO and BINGO. This suggests, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the issues concerning the most powerful groups dominate, though how these dynamics shape the participatory experiences of less powerful groups has not been empirically explored. As such, a deeper study of a marginalised NSA group such as

youth is a timely addition to the literature, identifying how they experience power dynamics within the UNFCCC.

This thesis provides this contribution, drawing upon the influential theory of the "Three Faces of Power" (Lukes, 2004), fully elaborated upon in paper two. In brief, Lukes (2004) theorises that power has three manifestations or "faces": *1) decision-making power; 2) non-decision-making power;* and *3) ideological power*. Identifying how these types of power shape the participatory experiences of young people requires a methodological approach which enables exploration of power dynamics over time, capturing dynamic processes and interactions as they unfold, rather than being limited to a single snapshot in time. This is enabled by the longitudinal ethnographic approach taken to the research (see Section 1.3 on research design).

Closely connected to issues of power are issues of (in)justice. Scholars have argued that to counteract the depoliticisation of climate governance which manifests in the dominant focus on efficiency and effectiveness, justice must be a fundamental consideration in the response to climate change (Bulkeley et al., 2013; Derman, 2014; Klinsky et al., 2017). According to Derman (2014), NSAs play a key role in ensuring that climate change governance is just. However, whilst a small body of research has explored justice in the UNFCCC from the perspective of a range of conference participants (Derman, 2014; Hurlbert, 2011) including more detailed studies on faith-based actors (Glaab, 2017) and farmers (Sova et al., 2013), justice claims from youth participants have been entirely overlooked in the literature. It is therefore not known how justice is conceptualised by young people, what types of justice claims they articulate in climate change governance spaces in what circumstances, and what this

can tell us about the relationships between justice claims and the power dynamics shaping their articulation. This thesis addresses this research gap, responding to recent calls for scholarship to go beyond theoretical justice principles to explore the ways in which justice is articulated in climate change governance spaces such as the UNFCCC (Bulkeley et al., 2013, Klinsky et al., 2017).

To do so, it draws upon environmental justice theory, primarily informed by David Schlosberg, and social justice theory, primarily informed by Nancy Fraser. Environmental justice theory has typically been structured around three tenets: distributive, recognition and participation justice (Schlosberg, 2004). In brief, distributive justice refers to the distribution of resources; recognition justice refers to who is included and excluded in decision-making processes; and participation justice refers to the formal structures of decision-making mechanisms and governing institutions (Schlosberg, 2004), the latter category sometimes referred to as "procedural justice". Social justice theorist Nancy Fraser argues that "representation justice" must also be taken account of, going beyond consideration of which groups can access a decision-making space to consider which groups can express personal "first-order" justice claims in that space (Fraser, 2010). Paper two delves further into these theoretical debates and integrates these perspectives in order to propose a novel understanding of justice and how it applies to youth in the UNFCCC.

1.2.4. Identifying gaps

As this thesis has outlined thus far, it is known that young people are participating in UNFCCC conferences in ever growing numbers (UNFCCC 2010; 2018). What is not

known is if their lived experiences of participation appropriately align with their personal goals and the goals of the UNFCCC; how they position themselves and are positioned by others and the impact this has on what they do and say; whether they have opportunities to share youth perspectives and whose perspectives this includes; the challenges and risks they face and whether/how they respond to them; and how power relations shape their experiences (Cahill and Dadvand; 2018; Checkoway, 2011). This range of exploratory questions are addressed in paper one.

Additionally, there is currently limited interaction between practitioners and scholars of civil society participation in climate governance and those specialising in youth participation. As such, the recent expansion and diversification of civil society participation in global climate governance has created an empirical and theoretical blind spot, where youth are being encouraged to participate under the auspices of the UN, welcomed as legitimising agents with little to no interrogation of what impact this has, either upon process or participant. There are consequently knowledge gaps surrounding how young participants experience power dynamics, whether participation through time shapes their preferences and which discourses they do and don't articulate in UNFCCC spaces and why (Bulkeley et al., 2017; Klinsky et al., 2017). These gaps are addressed in paper two. It is also unknown whether increased mobilisation of NSAs in the UNFCCC is inclusive of youth and whether youth participation in UNFCCC conferences contributes to the democratic legitimacy of the UNFCCC by increasing pluralism (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017). This question is addressed in paper three.

Beyond this, the lack of interaction between youth studies and environmental governance disciplines has created a lack of understanding of what it means to be a

youth participant in this context, what youth-friendly participatory spaces look like in this context, and why individuals in their mid-to-late twenties choose to adopt "youth" as their participatory identity in global climate governance processes. This has implications for advocates of climate change education; youth empowerment and intergenerational justice, as well as for the legitimacy of the UNFCCC process. These knowledge gaps collectively inform the research presented in this thesis.

1.3. Research design

1.3.1. Research philosophy

This thesis is situated within the critical realist paradigm. Emerging in the 1970s and 1980s as a post-positivist approach to social science, critical realism occupies the middle ground between positivist and constructivist research. Ontologically, it accepts that there is an objective reality which exists outside of our understanding, but that reality is experienced differently from different perspectives (Archer et al., 2016, Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Rutzou, 2016). Epistemologically, it asserts that knowledge about reality is shaped by social, cultural and historical context and as such, is dynamic and contingent i.e. a researcher's claims about reality can be justified whilst still being subject to change over time (Archer et al., 2016). Methodologically, the critical realist is wedded to neither qualitative nor quantitative approaches, instead recognising the need to select the most appropriate tool for the task at hand, whilst acknowledging that methodological choices represent trade-offs between breadth and depth (Archer et al., 2016; Healy and Perry, 2000; Krauss, 2005).

Guided by this paradigm, this thesis strives to interpret the social reality of youth participants in the UNFCCC, recognising that this is most easily achieved through direct interaction with individuals and groups in situ (Dobson, 2002; Krauss, 2000). As a result, I take an ethnographic approach to facilitate deep insights into participant experiences, which has been deemed particularly compatible with the critical realist paradigm (Archer et al., 2016).

Critical realist research is not value-free. It acknowledges that values shape social systems and interactions, as do the researchers that study them, asserting that "*real objects are subject to value laden observation*" (Dobson, 2002, p1). As such, this thesis sheds light on factors which shape people's interpretation of events and their subsequent actions (Krauss, 2005*),* being primarily concerned with meaning and the process of meaning-making. This is a subjective process by which individuals and groups make sense of their experiences, with meaning described by Krauss (2000) as: "*the underlying motivation behind thoughts, actions and even the interpretation and application of knowledge*" (p763).

Meanings are often individual as interpretation is shaped by personal values and experiences; however, meaning can also be collectively created in groups, as interaction is a process of social learning (Krauss, 2000). Noting this, I engage with multiple units of analysis in the thesis, my primary focus being individual youth participants in the UNFCCC whilst also paying attention to the groups they engage in and the collective meanings they create: for example, within the case study organisation UKYCC, and (whilst being careful not to generalise) within the UNFCCC's youth constituency, YOUNGO.

During data collection, critical realism encourages the researcher to remain open to whichever topics arise, developing research themes through close engagement and careful listening rather than pursuing a fixed hypothesis (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Krauss, 2000). It acknowledges that the researcher is part of the social reality being studied and can't be separated from it. In contrast to positivist research which strives for objectivity and detachment, the critical realist reflects carefully on the impact of their presence (Healy and Perry, 2000). This is a key tenet of ethnographic research, again highlighting the compatibility of this paradigm with the ethnographic approach taken. My positionality as a researcher is discussed in further detail in Section 1.3.7.

During data analysis, the realist researcher's primary purpose is to identify the factors which shape how an individual or group interprets a particular experience and to reflect upon and create knowledge about the response(s) this provokes (Krauss, 2000). As such, the researcher can be seen as a witness, an interpreter and a conduit for the voices of his/her participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2017), engaging in a learning process to gather knowledge of their experiences and weave them into stories to increase understanding (Rehman and Alharti, 2016). In this thesis, I engage in abductive reasoning, "zigzagging" between data and theory to generate research which is empirically grounded whilst guided by academic debates (Emmel, 2013).

1.3.2. Case study design

I use a case study approach which Yin (2009) emphasises is particularly useful when studying "*a contemporary phenomenon, set within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident*" (p18). Other

benefits offered by this approach include the ability to delve deeper into topics to explore how and why things happen in different social situations, particularly when the researcher has limited control over the topic being studied and is investigating in real-time rather than gathering evidence about a past event (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, case study research is helpful when a topic has not yet received a great deal of academic attention and when it is complex and involves multiple actors (which, as established in the literature review Section 1.2, is certainly the case here).

Guided by Yin's categorisations, this research is best described as a single, embedded, longitudinal case study given that it contains multiple units of analysis (i.e. individual members of UKYCC) but focuses on a single context (i.e. the UNFCCC). Units of analysis can be understood as "*the units on the basis of which the research material, once gathered or generated, is analysed and transformed into conclusions*" (Verschuren, 2003, p125). A single case study is an appropriate approach for this study as they are particularly useful in research projects which are: "revelatory" i.e. explore a relatively unknown topic; "representative" i.e. fairly typical of the situation being studied; and "longitudinal" i.e. engage with the subject matter over a substantial period of time, often seeking to explain complex causal relationships (Yin, 2009).

The literature on youth participation reviewed in Section 1.2.1 emphasises the importance of attentiveness to power dynamics, which, as identified in the literature on power in Section 1.2.3 requires an approach which looks beyond a single snapshot in time to capture dynamic processes and interactions as they unfold. As such, I use a longitudinal case study approach to address the three research questions i.e. in explaining the dynamic and interactive factors shaping youth participation in the UNFCCC (as facilitated through the 7P model); in identifying how young people's

perceptions and articulations of justice are shaped by their participatory experiences over time; and in considering the extent to which youth participation is fit for purpose and how it can be improved, whilst taking into account changes that have occurred over the course of the research project.

While case study research can be compatible with quantitative methods it is most commonly connected with qualitative methods and particularly with those used in this study: participant observation; in-depth interviews and document analysis (Verschuren, 2003; Yin, 2009). This type of research faces critique for being a difficult basis from which to make generalisations (Stoeker, 1991; Verschuren, 2003; Yin, 2009). However, these critiques are arguably reductivist remnants of positivist thinking which can be dismissive of qualitative research in its entirety and should be taken with a pinch of salt (Verschuren, 2003). The selected research questions require detailed qualitative research to address them, adding depth that could not be achieved through quantitative methods. Rigour is discussed further in Section 1.3.10.

1.3.3. Introducing my case study: The UK Youth Climate Coalition

When this research began I felt that, as a part-time student with five to seven years of study ahead of me, I had a rare opportunity to conduct a deep investigation over time to improve understanding of youth participation in the UNFCCC as an under-researched topic. I had just completed my MSc dissertation, using ego and alter (i.e. youth and non-youth) perspectives gathered through interviews and focus groups to explore young people's agency in the UNFCCC and it had proven fruitful ground for further study. This study has since been published (Thew, 2018). It engaged with

young people from a variety of organisations within YOUNGO, from a variety of geographical locations thus providing some breadth, but I was eager to delve deeper into the experiences of a smaller group of participants. I decided that an ethnographic approach was most appropriate and, as a result, a group based in the UK was a pragmatic choice, given I had substantial teaching commitments in Leeds alongside my part-time PhD research.

In selecting an appropriate case study organisation, I sought to identify a group which had substantial experience of engaging in the UN climate change negotiations; was youth-led as opposed adult directed (such as Friends of the Earth's Young Friends chapter), and which focused specifically on climate change, ruling out youth organisations with an interest in, but not a primary focus on the environment (e.g. the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, or Engineers without Borders). Only one organisation met these criteria at the time: UKYCC.[2]

Established in 2008, UKYCC is a voluntary organisation which is run entirely by young people. Their categorisation of youth as under-thirty years old is self-devised, in line with similar youth-led climate networks in other countries (UKYCC, 2015). In 2008, after returning from a World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) expedition to the Arctic, where they had been selected as youth participants, two students at the University of Warwick envisaged a UK youth network on climate change and set about establishing UKYCC. They aimed to create an advocacy and action-oriented network

[2] The Scotland-based 2050 Climate Group has subsequently increased their engagement with the UNFCCC and I intend to conduct research with them as part of my COP26 Fellowship commencing later this year.

of young volunteers, operating across the UK, which could work to engage and unite passionate young volunteers to support one another and create a platform for youth to raise their voices on climate change.

The two founding members recruited volunteers amongst fellow students and identified their first aim: to attend the UNFCCC's COP 14 in Poznan in 2008. They secured funding and accreditation from The Otesha Project and sent a delegation of fifteen young people to the Poznan conference. At that time there was no official youth constituency within the UNFCCC, but they collaborated with other international youth attendees to produce a "Youth Pledge" which was included in the conference's outcome document. The organisation began to grow, recruiting new members and establishing national and local teams to focus on climate related priorities at multiple levels. Their national level activities have included a campaign where young people contacted the switchboard at Number Ten Downing Street to share youth perspectives on climate change with, then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown; participation in direct action such as anti-fracking protests; and a petition to keep climate change in the formal education curriculum. Their local level activities have included sustainable transport and community energy projects (UKYCC, 2015).

UKYCC's local and national activities (at least prior to 2018 when data collection for this PhD ended) were largely ad-hoc, whereas their international efforts were more structured, focusing primarily on COP participation. The organisation sends a delegation to the UNFCCC intersessionals and COP negotiations each year, with potential new members recruited via an online application process, then shortlisted by existing members and invited to a full day interview process which includes team

activities and informal interviews. New recruits engage in team building, training and strategising in preparation for conference attendance via weekly Skype calls and team weekends in the UK. The organisation does have a steering group of "adult" trustees, but their role is solely advisory.

As the participation of UKYCC members is unfunded, these young people voluntarily invest significant amounts of their own time and money in travelling to, accommodating and sustaining themselves at training weekends and UNFCCC conferences. They therefore can be described as a self-selected, entirely youth-led, autonomous youth group with substantial experience of UNFCCC. As such, their perceptions and participatory experiences offer potential for deep insights into how young people experience UNFCCC conference participation.

1.3.4. Explaining key terms used in the thesis

As a social construct, there are several competing definitions for "youth" which are heavily context dependent (Furlong, 2012; Malone and Hartung, 2010). Rather than selecting an age range which has been externally dictated, this PhD follows the lead of its participants, who for the purposes of their participation in climate governance have self-selected youth as a collective identity in joining UKYCC. As defined by the organisation, membership is open to 18-29-year olds (though during the course of this study an exception was made for a 17-year-old so the noted age range in the papers is 17-29 years). While they are self-categorised as youth participants for the purposes of their participation in the UNFCCC, this thesis does not presume that in their day to day lives these individuals would identify as youth in every situation.

However, as the label they collectively ascribe to themselves for their participation in the activity under scrutiny it is most appropriate for use in this thesis.

This study focuses on an organisation which calls itself the "UK Youth Climate Coalition". Similar to the "youth" label, this adoption of "UK" identity is subjective. All participants are based in the UK though their nationalities differ, with several European and North American citizens participating in UKYCC during their studies in UK universities or whilst working in the UK. The organisational decision to adopt the identity of "UK" youth was historically determined by its young founders, whose initial aim was to create a youth-led group to participate in the UNFCCC alongside similar groups such as the Canadian, Australian and Indian youth climate coalitions/networks.

The thesis follows an earlier definition of young climate change participants as: "*People contextually considered youth who intentionally engage in actions connected to the political and collective aims of addressing the problems of contemporary anthropogenic climate change*" (Fisher, 2016, p3). This is particularly appropriate as it justifies participation on the basis of intention rather than efficacy. This ensures that young people who purposefully attempt to contribute to climate change governance are included, regardless of their agency or lack thereof. As a marginalised group whose mobilisation offers significant potential but who are often assumed to be apathetic (Checkoway, 2011; Edwards, 2009; Harris et al., 2010) this seems particularly appropriate. Fisher (2016), influenced by literature on social movements, uses the term "activist" to describe such individuals, though doesn't incorporate it into his definition. I find this label less appropriate. When asked in interviews how they would describe

themselves, the research participants emphasised that they choose to ascribe different labels to themselves at different times. This is often a strategic decision, guided by context, with participants reflecting and capitalising upon opportunities rather than committing to one particular identity. As such, my research subjects are referred to as "participants" rather than a more value laden term so as not to impose a label which they may be uncomfortable comfortable with.

1.3.5. Ethnography

Ethnography involves the researcher participating "*overtly or covertly in people's daily lives…watching…listening…and/or asking questions through formal and informal interviews…gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry*" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p1). Traditionally, it was used by anthropologists to create a holistic understanding of another culture, though it has since been used by sociologists, youth and education researchers (among others) to gain detailed insights into sub-groups within the researcher's own societies and spaces they are already familiar with (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2002; Madden, 2010). It is now used as a research approach across the social sciences, by those who believe that the best route to understanding of their participants is by "*walking a mile in their shoes*" (Madden, 2010, p1).

This was particularly appealing to me as it facilitates incorporation of participant experience into research design without it being onerous for the participant and, with reflexive application, enables reciprocity without compromising ethical concerns regarding participant-researcher power dynamics (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007;

Madden, 2010). It thus enabled me to experience climate governance spaces first-hand, alongside my participants, to gain a greater understanding of their lived experiences without taking time away from their voluntary activities. There are multiple types of ethnographic study, including: "classical" i.e. anthropological, long-term engagement with a group; "descriptive", which describes the culture of a group, often from an external perspective but engages less with processes and relational issues; and "critical", which this thesis most closely resembles, which emphasises researcher subjectivity, is attentive to power relations, and often focuses on and, to an extent, advocates for a group which can be considered marginalised in the context under study (Madison, 2011; Roberts, 2009).

1.3.6. Recruiting participants

I conducted a scoping study at a UNFCCC intersessional conference in Bonn, Germany in June 2015 to begin recruiting participants and to test my data collection methods. I discussed potential research questions with more experienced members of UKYCC and practiced observing participants as they engaged in the UNFCCC process. I determined that given my familiarity with these conferences, participant observation would be possible despite the hectic nature of UNFCCC spaces, though I would have to schedule certain times to observe each participant given their wide dispersal throughout conference venues. I also reflected deeply upon my positionality, revising my behaviour in the youth constituency and taking a step back from groups in which I had previously been more active, to ensure that I didn't portray myself as a leader whom my prospective participants should feel obliged to speak to.

As this study was undertaken in my native language (English), I did not expect to have to learn the language of my participants (Madden, 2010). However, UKYCC members use specific terminology and communicate via a series of hand signals which have also been adapted to digital form. Learning their ways of communicating took time but facilitated easier transition into their group and helped me to phrase my research questions appropriately and build rapport (Spradley, 1979).

I used purposive sampling, the most common approach in ethnographic research, determining a specific group to focus on and the particular context in which I was interested (Madden, 2010; Roberts, 2009) i.e. members of UKYCC who participated in UNFCCC conferences. I began by recruiting members of the UKYCC delegation who attended the UNFCCC intersessionals in June 2015. This made up the majority of participants and I gradually added members whom I met at subsequent team meetings as well as individuals who were recruited into UKYCC the following year in advance of COP 22. The final cohort consisted of 20 individual members of UKYCC who form the sub-units of analysis in my embedded case study (Yin, 2009). In order to gain consent to approach the members of UKYCC and to be permitted to name UKYCC in the research as my case study organisation, I met with a gatekeeper and, upon their request, sent an email explaining my research which was shared with the trustees and with all UKYCC members at the time. This was circulated before I approached potential participants so they already had some awareness of the research project and had been advised that their participation in it was entirely optional.

Guaranteeing anonymity was necessary to secure access and gain informed consent. As mentioned, I recruited the majority of my participants during the Bonn intersessionals in June 2015. Based on my previous experience of conducting research with YOUNGO I determined that requesting written consent in this context would have been too formal, jeopardising my positionality as an "insider". Instead, I secured initial and ongoing verbal consent from each participant, ensuring that they were aware that their engagement would be a part of a longer-term study for my PhD but that they were free to withdraw at any time. My participant information sheet is included in Appendix 1.

Treating consent as an ongoing process (Neale and Hanna, 2012), I often reminded participants of my research aims, checking whether they were comfortable with my presence during discussions and asking for feedback regarding my positionality. For example, I was asked in 2016 to deliver policy training for UKYCC's new recruits and discussed my positionality carefully to ensure that they did not feel it created an imbalance of power. After each meeting I thanked the group for allowing me to participate to reiterate that my attendance was not assumed, and the ability to observe their meetings was greatly appreciated. After each interview I informed participants that I would like to interview them again in the future, but their continued involvement was very much their decision.

A second, very similar, participation information sheet was provided to participants at a later date to recruit new members who had joined UKYCC after COP 21 and to request that existing participants remained engaged in this research while thanking them for their initial involvement and making it clear that there was no obligation to

remain engaged (Miller and Bell, 2002). All chose to remain involved, with the exception of those who had left UKYCC and were unavailable for further observation and interviews, for example individuals who had gone to study or work abroad. The majority of new recruits were eager to participate in my research.

1.3.7. Positionality

Ethnographic research balances insider and outsider (or "emic" and "etic") ways of understanding which requires ongoing reflexivity on the part of the researcher (Madden, 2010). This includes consideration of one's own impact upon the group under study. A small number of participants were already known to me prior to commencing the research as I had worked in some of the same spaces in the past.

Whilst we shared a nation state and some similar experiences there were several marked differences between myself and UKYCC members: I had attended UNFCCC conferences as a paid member of staff rather than as a volunteer; my student life (at that time) was some years behind me; I represented an international organisation and was guided by their strategy rather than my personal values; and I considered my role to be that of an advocacy project manager rather than a young campaigner or activist.

My participation was professionally rather than personally motivated, and I was intrigued and a little bewildered by those who spent their own time and money to engage in complex, exhausting multilateral processes. Nevertheless, I found that having previously crossed paths with a couple of longer-serving members of UKYCC enabled me to gain access to the current delegation, to whom I was introduced as a

trusted ally rather than a suspicious newcomer. As an organisation, UKYCC is rather wary of outsiders and newer recruits seemed inclined to trust me more readily than they potentially would have without that prior connection.

As a white, middle class, university-educated female from the UK, I had much in common with my participants who predominantly shared these characteristics. 75% of the research participants are white, while 25% are activists of colour, predominantly of South and South East Asian descent. 90% are female or gender non-binary, all are university educated and, while I did not ask specifically about class, I suspect the vast majority would consider themselves to be middle class. As a young(ish) researcher, my age did not set me apart in most circumstances, though my teaching experience did to a lesser extent and I was occasionally asked for advice on university admissions processes and dissertation topics.

Conducting research in spaces I had prior knowledge of i.e. UNFCCC conferences and the youth spaces within them, opened up communication channels, though assimilation into the group also required alignment with their cultural practices (Madden, 2010). I sought to mitigate the power dynamics associated with being a researcher (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) by engaging with group activities as much as possible whilst trying not to influence their discussions with my own perspectives. I slept on the floor in student houses, engaged in communal cooking and cleaning activities during team weekends, and participated in team building exercises, singing songs around bonfires, playing a terrifying game of hide and seek one Halloween, and once dressing up in an unflattering child's Spiderman costume for a roleplay activity (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Getting involved in group activities

The group came to regard me as an honorary member, at times either forgetting that was not technically "one of them" or choosing not to draw attention to it in the presence of others. This was often the case when they introduced me to other youth participants. Whilst I found it heartening as an indication that I had gained their trust and negotiated access to their inner workings, I was careful to mitigate any unintentional deception by always introducing myself as a researcher. I also took care not to express my opinion on strategic group decisions and continually reflected upon my potential influence, offering knowledge of the policy process when it was expressly requested whilst resisting the temptation to share personal opinions which could steer behaviours in a particular direction.

UKYCC is a very reflexive organisation and regularly conducts activities where they anonymously share perspectives on the role each participant plays in the group. This

was a helpful way to gain insights into how I was perceived without directly requesting feedback on this which would have taken the participant's time away from their voluntary activities. At a team weekend in March 2017, participants stuck a piece of paper to everyone's back and each person wrote anonymous feedback on it. A photograph of my feedback is shared below in Figure 7.

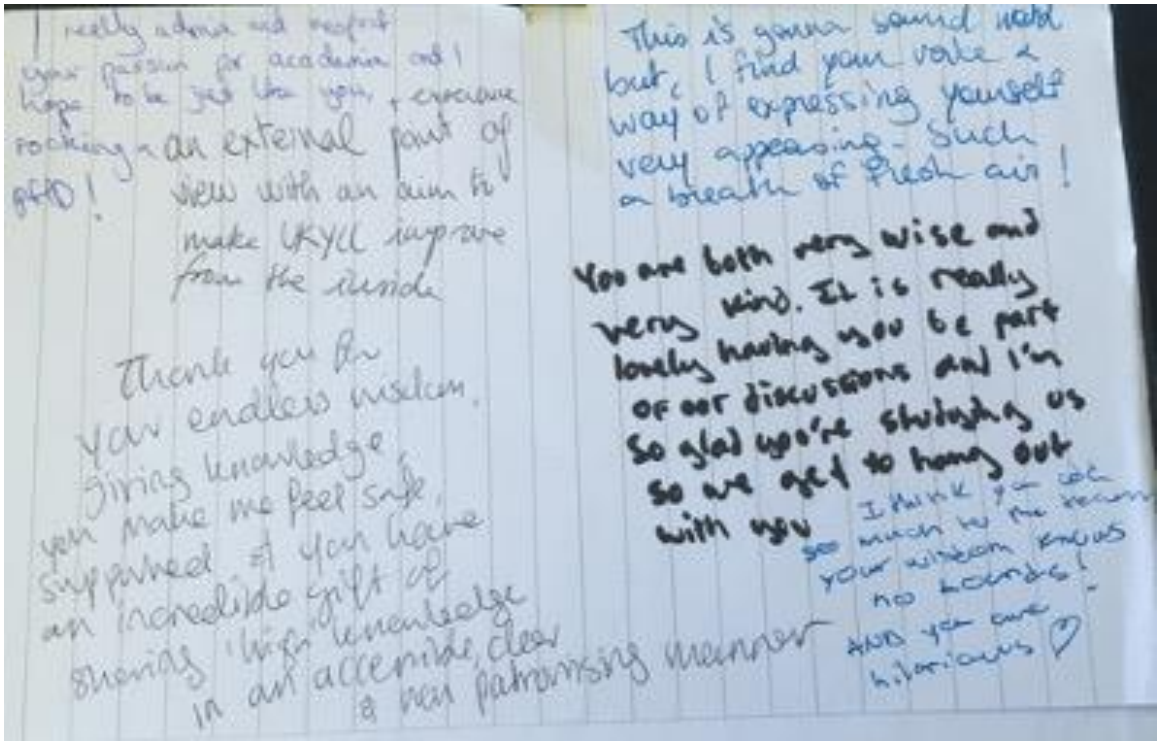

Figure 7. Notes from participants reflecting on the researcher's role in the group

While I appreciate that the situation likely precluded anyone from writing anything too negative, comments do provide some insights into the extent to which I managed to get the balance right between reciprocity and unequal power dynamics. Comments show high awareness of my presence as a researcher, references to wisdom suggest a potential power imbalance associated with this, though comments regarding "hanging out" and a "non-patronising" manner suggest I was able to mitigate this.

Continuous reflexivity is needed to acknowledge and incorporate inevitable subjectivity into the research process (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Miled, 2019). This is not unique to ethnographers as all researchers bring some subjectivity to their research design (Madden, 2010), though I see reflexivity as integral rather than as a secondary concern. To ensure that my reflexivity avoided naval gazing and that the ethnographic lens remained focussed on my participants (MacRea, 2007; Madden, 2010) I found it necessary, at times, to establish distance, as explained in Section 1.3.7.1. below.

1.3.7.1. Retaining mental space

> *"The ethnographer is a form of recording device that must always be 'on.'"*
>
> *(Madden, 2010, p75)*

In traditional ethnographic studies, the concept of "going native" was deemed the gold standard. However, Madden (2010) contests that an ethnographer should be close enough to understand a group but not so close that they can't extract themselves from it. This is necessary to ask difficult questions and to reflect upon observations. During COP 21, I found it difficult to gain sufficient distance from my participants to reflect upon observations and collate my thoughts. I stayed with them in a youth hostel dormitory, with only a curtain around my bunk bed for privacy. I decided to move to alternative accommodation for the final few days of my three week stay in Paris to have time to write up my notes and to privately manage the emotional impact of the materialisation of the long-awaited Paris Agreement. Subsequently, I arranged separate accommodation for extended periods of research.

My participants readily engaged in critical thinking which made studying them easier and, conversely, more difficult. They were happy to discuss my research and enjoyed reflecting upon their own behaviours and that of the group, which they often did without prompt from me. Often, they answered my interview questions before they were asked, readily anticipating what I would say next. Any attempt to pull the wool over their eyes would have been futile. For example, I deliberately posed a very open question around their ideal scenarios for COP 21 to see whether they would focus on personal or political outcomes. However, almost every one of them picked up on this, asking for clarification as to whether I was asking about the negotiations or personal goals and then sharing both with me, acknowledging the differences. One participant even said:

> Lucas: *"Ah, clever, I see what you've done there, you're not specifying whether it's about the UN or not!"*

Sometimes I felt as though they were the ones studying me, which made the maintenance of physical and mental distance all the more necessary.

1.3.8. Data collection

Table 1 below identifies the data used to address each research question, along with the data collection and data analysis methods used, and the location in the thesis where each question is addressed. In the remainder of this section, each data collection method is discussed in turn, including participant observation and field notes, semi-structures interviews, and document analysis. An additional section details my use of a reflexive diary which did not contribute data directly but was a useful tool in addressing potential influences shaping my interpretation of the data.

Table 1. Data collection and analysis methods relating to each research question

Research question	**Data used**	**Data collection methods**	**Data analysis methods**	**Addressed in Paper/ Chapter**
What are the key factors affecting youth participation in the UNFCCC and how do they interact to shape young people's lived experiences?	- Youth participants' motivations for participating in the UNFCCC - Youth participant's perceptions of their role in the UNFCCC - Youth participants' experiences in UNFCCC conferences & resultant behaviours / activities engaged in	- Participant observation (field notes) - Semi-structured interviews	- Inductive coding in Nvivo to identify broad range of factors - Abductive coding of factors shaping youth participation, guided by literature (7P model) - Purpose - Positioning - Perspectives - Power Relations - Protection - Place - Process	Paper 1
How do youth participants in the UNFCCC perceive and articulate justice and how is this shaped by their participatory experiences over time?	- Youth participants' perceptions of justice - Youth participant's articulation of justice claims - Longitudinal data on the above to identify any changes over time	- Participant observation (field notes) - Semi-structured interviews - Analysis of public documents	- Inductive coding in Nvivo identified justice as a key concern and noted a change over time in how participants perceived and articulated it, generating this research question. - Abductive coding guided by literature (social justice, environmental justice and 3 faces of power)	Paper 2
To what extent is youth participation in the UNFCCC fit for purpose and how can it be improved to make global climate chance governance fairer and more inclusive?	- Youth participants' activities during UNFCCC conferences - Youth participants' perceptions of the participatory opportunities available to them - Youth participant's perceptions of their role in the UNFCCC - Youth participants' reflections on ways their participation could be improved - Evidence in public documents of broader youth engagement in orchestrated activities	- Participant observation (field notes) - Semi-structured interviews - Analysis of public documents	- Inductive coding in Nvivo to identify what participants do and how they perceive different participatory opportunities - Abductive coding guided by literature (democratic legitimacy) - Identification of different rationales for youth participation and abductive coding of Papers 1-3 to identify the extent to which these are being met - Reflection on Papers 1-3 identification of recommendations	Papers 1- 3 Chapter 5

1.3.8.1. Participant observation and field notes

Building sufficient trust to gain full access to youth-led spaces is challenging, particularly for older researchers, A small number of studies have attempted this though the predominant methodologies have been Narrative Analysis or Participatory Action Research methods such as Photo Voice or Participatory Video (e.g. Coates and Howe, 2014; Haynes and Tanner, 2015). Without participant observation as part of the method it is more difficult to triangulate data as young participants carefully choose the narratives they share, or the situations they choose to film (Savin-Baden and Wimpenny, 2007; Emerson et al., 2001).

Thus, in line with my ethnographic approach I took field notes of my observations to enable ongoing comparison, reflection and analysis (Emerson et al., 2001). I collected verbatim quotations in situ, coding observations and quotes thematically when digitising my hand-written notes (see Section 1.3.9). I noted the date, situation, location and individuals present at the beginning of every recorded observation, documenting everything so as not to rely upon memory which can be subjective at best and absent at worst (Emerson et al., 2001). I also made notes regarding my mood which were helpful to monitor my own positionality and its impact upon particular observations (Madden, 2010).

Heeding Saldaña's (2003) advice to make my field notes cumulative, I referred back to my "jottings" (Bernard, 2011) of previous observations whilst in the field where possible, and documented any similarities and differences which occurred to me at the time, rather than merely recording each observation out of context. I turned these into "proper field notes" (Bernard, 2011) at the end of each day, though I found

it was also possible to do this during participant observation, as during UKYCC meetings it is common for members to take notes, so doing so did not set me apart. When this was not possible I followed the advice of Madden (2010), taking strategic "restroom breaks" to write things down. I also made use of a new addition to the 21st century ethnographer's tool belt: the mobile phone. Amongst a group of UK-based young people, temporarily withdrawing from conversation to type into your mobile phone is nothing out of the ordinary. As such, when I wished to make an explicit shift to ethnographic note-taker I took out my notepad, whereas, if I wanted to record an observation without drawing attention to the fact and risking participant "reactivity" (Madden, 2010), I typed it into my phone. For example, I would be more likely to openly record an unprompted discussion about motivations for a particular campaigning strategy than an observation regarding group dynamics as the former would be less likely to change as a result of the realisation that it was being observed.

In my field notes, I left the margins blank for coding and space between each note to add later insights, including reflections upon my positionality at the time of writing and details of how my thinking had shifted over time. For example, during the first week of COP 21, I made many observations regarding group dynamics as it seemed that tensions were emerging which I hadn't previously borne witness to. At the time I noted that this was an indication that my ethnographic method was proving successful, believing that I had infiltrated the group and discovered that, underneath the veneer of team-spirited unity presented to outsiders, frustrations abounded. However, it quickly became apparent that these frustrations did not run deep and were forgotten about as quickly as they had arisen. Reflecting back a week later upon field notes made during those first few days, my description of closed body language

and off-hand comments seemed trivial. The group may not see eye-to-eye at times, but I have come to regard their supportive culture as one of their key strengths.

I discussed this early observation with some of the participants several months later (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000; Madden, 2010) during interviews and they provided further insight that, as individuals who had spent very little time together before Paris, they were still getting to know one another in those early days. The united front against outsiders I had originally perceived was more likely to be the self-restraint of individuals getting to know one another. This is an example of how I triangulated my data sources to provide a more faithful account of youth participatory experiences.

1.3.8.2. Semi-structured interviews

I spent over a week getting to know my participants at the UNFCCC Intersessional in June 2015 and attended three of their team weekends before COP 21 to establish trust. I conducted interviews face-to-face when possible, though also used Skype to maximise participant convenience (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004). My participants used Skype as their primary means of communication and as such were very comfortable with it. I let them choose whether to have audio or video Skype calls and found that what I gained from being able to see them was fairly negligible as I knew them well and could pick up on their intonation. Telephone interviews are generally perceived to be less reliable than face-to-face interviews on account of the inability to observe body language and facial expressions when using this method, which can lead to misinterpretation or loss of nuance (Madison, 2011), though Rubin and Rubin (2011) suggest that telephone interviews can be used when trust has been established.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with open questions to promote "asymmetrical turn-taking" (Spradley, 1979) encouraging participants to lead the discussion but ensuring its flow in a productive direction (Madden, 2010). I formatted my research questions into a mind map (see Appendix 2), enabling me to facilitate semi-structured interviews without being constrained by the order of discussion.

Interviews closely resembled Spradley's (1979) twelve "speech events", beginning with a greeting and proving "ethnographic explanations" i.e. explaining the research, gaining permission to record the conversation etc., with the purpose of putting participants at ease. Subsequently, I asked a series of questions to draw out meaning, checking my understanding of participant's responses as the interview progressed (Spradley, 1979). Questions focussed primarily on feelings and opinions as I wanted to gain a sense of their perceptions rather than testing their knowledge, though I also used "Once-Upon-a-Time Descriptive Questions" (Madison, 2011, p33), particularly at the beginning of the interview as I found that initiating personal story-telling with a very open question at the beginning, usually *"tell me about how you first got involved in UKYCC"* relaxed the participant and encouraged them to lead the conversation from the outset. Interviews tended to run along expected lines of inquiry, indicating that the questions I had formulated were reflective of the interests and concerns of the group (Madison, 2011). Participants primarily led the discussion with occasional prompts from me, usually asking them to elaborate on points made. To build rapport I expressed interest and used the same terminology as my participants, repeated or refined questions when necessary and, used knowledge of upcoming events or situations to draw out participant's perceptions of their ongoing engagement (Spradley, 1979). At the end of each interview I asked participants if they had anything

else they wished to discuss, if they thought my questioning had missed anything important and if they had anything to ask me, before "friendly wrapping up" and discussing when our next interaction was likely to be (Spradley, 1979).

I continued conducting interviews until I felt I had reached data saturation i.e. I was no longer capturing new information which had not previously been shared (Madison, 2011). By conducting repeat interviews with participants I was able to identify changes in their experiences and perceptions over time, often asking them to reflect on these. Before repeat interviews I re-familiarised myself with their previous interview transcripts and noted the codes I had applied, identifying themes to look out for and to prompt for where appropriate. I used these repeat interviews, as well as informal conversations during UNFCCC conferences and UKYCC team meetings, to check my interpretation of previously collected data with participants. This process of "communicative validation" was important to me as a way to show respect for participant's knowledge (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000) and was helpful to incorporate ongoing reflexivity and rigour into my research design. Participants seemed to enjoy this process and offered alternative perspectives on several occasions which helped to shape my thinking. However, I did not ask participants to validate their interview transcripts, recognising the importance of research independence, the presence of participants' blind spots (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000), and wishing to avoid participants retrospectively changing their account as a result of new experiences which would compromise the longitudinal identification of changes over time.

Interviews and field notes were transcribed quickly and stored on the password protected M: drive at the University of Leeds for safe-keeping. This was an ongoing

process as data were collected over a substantial period of time at multiple events. Table 2 and Table 3 below provide details of the events where and when participant observation occurred and the periods when interviews took place over the course of part-time PhD study.

Table 2. Gantt chart of data collection

Gantt Chart of Data Collection

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2015												
2016												
2017												
2018												

(NB. Dark blue, light blue and orange blocks represent weeks spent with participants, yellow blocks represent weekends and green blocks represent weeks when interviews were conducted).

KEY

	Participant Observation at UNFCCC Conference (COP)
	Participant Observation at UNFCCC Conference (Intersessional)
	Participant Observation at UKYCC Team Weekend
	Periods when Skype interviews were conducted
	No face-to-face contact (though relationships were maintained through participation in UKYCC's weekly Skype calls and social media discussions).
	Initial contact made and access arranged with Gatekeeper

Table 3. Participant observation locations

When?	Where?	No. days
June, 2015	UNFCCC intersessionals Bonn, Germany	11
September, 2015	UKYCC team weekend, participant's house, Durham, UK	2
October, 2015	UKYCC team weekend, Avaaz offices, London, UK	2
November, 2015	UKYCC team weekend, youth hostel, Harrogate, UK	2
November – December 2015	UNFCCC COP21, Paris, France	22
January, 2016	UKYCC team weekend, Hamilton House, Bristol, UK	2
April, 2016	UKYCC team weekend, University College London, UK	2
May, 2016	UNFCCC intersessionals Bonn, Germany	6
June, 2016	UKYCC team weekend, RSPB offices, London, UK	2
September, 2016	UKYCC team weekend, University of Leeds, UK	2
October, 2016	UKYCC team weekend, Farm house, Ilkley, UK	2
November, 2016	UNFCCC COP22, Marrakesh, Morocco	10
January, 2017	UKYCC team weekend, University of Edinburgh, UK	2
March, 2017	UKYCC team weekend, Friends of the Earth offices, London, UK	2
May, 2017	UKYCC team weekend, University of Leeds, UK	2
May, 2017	UNFCCC intersessionals Bonn, Germany	6
October, 2017	UKYCC Virtual team day, online	1
November, 2017	UNFCCC COP23, Bonn, Germany	10
		Total = 88 days **(~10.5 hrs a day) = ~924 hrs of participant observation**

1.3.8.3. Document analysis

To supplement and triangulate findings from participant observations and interviews, I conducted thematic document analysis. I only included publicly available documents in my corpus despite having access to many insightful documents through YOUNGO's social media pages, mailing lists and google groups as, while I had sought permission from UKYCC to use their documents, I had not sought wider permission from YOUNGO. However, I decided to refer to these public sources of data to contextualise and reflect on the generalisability of my findings in response to reviewer comments on paper two and following the guidance of other researchers of NSAs in the UNFCCC (e.g. Glaab, 2017; Marion Suiseeya, 2015). I analysed the documents using codes developed through the zigzagging method, as detailed in Section 1.3.9.

1.3.8.4. Reflexive diary

I kept a reflexive diary throughout data collection to document my reactions to the data as the project went on. Whilst the diary contents were not used directly in the papers, this was an important tool to help me to identify ways in which my personal views and experience may be shaping the research (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000). For example, I was initially reluctant to write about climate justice despite it emerging as the most prominent topic in data collection. In my reflexive diary at COP 21 I wrote: *"climate justice…is so heated and it seems that white global north voices are not tolerated in that debate in any form so it would be asking for trouble".* However, justice emerged so strongly as a key issue for youth participants in my data that I couldn't ignore it, and spent a very long time writing and rewriting the justice paper (paper two) to best convey my participant's experiences whilst also striving to avoid criticism of the research participants or of myself. As a result, I emphasise in paper two that my focus

on young people is in no way a claim that they deserve more recognition than any other group, only that action should be taken to achieve participatory parity.

I still have reservations about sharing that paper in case activist groups deem it to be unacceptable, and I am keen to develop my understanding of justice, privilege and oppression further which I know involves making and being called out on ones' mistakes. However, this type of censorship of youth-focused justice considerations and claims is exactly the challenge I highlight in the paper and I urge readers to remember that age intersects with many other aspects of identity and disadvantage.

I also reflected in the diary on how my perceptions changed over time (Neale et al., 2012), considering the impact of sociocultural trends, politics and ongoing exposure to climate change governance processes and the participatory spaces which operate around them (Madden, 2010). At the beginning of the research process I was very optimistic about the role of youth participants, having had a positive professional experience myself and feeling inspired by the enthusiasm and energy of the research participants. As the research went on I became increasingly critical of the UNFCCC, noting that experiences I'd observed which had seemed positive in the early stages had not led to any notable changes over time. This is discussed in paper three, which highlights that young people were having the same conversations each year with the UNFCCC Secretariat without anything being done to enhance their participation. At one stage I felt particularly disheartened, though reflecting on diverse experiences held by participants, both positive and negative, and extending data collection to consider other perspectives within YOUNGO, through data analysis of public

documents (as discussed in Section 1.3.8.3) helped me to see, and report on, multiple sides of the story.

1.3.9. Data analysis

I used observations and analysis to inductively build theories from the bottom up, identifying themes in an ongoing balancing act between inductive and deductive theorising. This allowed for a reflexive, realist approach, "zigzagging" between data and theory to develop topics of inquiry rather than pursuing set hypotheses (Emmel, 2013). This enabled a more thorough consideration of context (Emmel, 2013), facilitating the fruitful discovery of new research questions and answers (Madden 2010).

Coding began with broad identification of themes, of which the most frequent by far was "climate justice". This included initial sub-themes of "youth perceptions of climate justice"; "youth articulate other groups' claims", and "youth censor their own claims" which, after zigzagging to the literature were then recoded as "first-order justice claims" and "solidarity claims", as well as being separated into "procedural justice" "distributive justice", "recognition justice" and "representation justice" (see Section 1.2.3). These formulated the argument articulated in paper two (see Figure 9 which depicts the zigzagging process).

Paper one followed a similar trajectory. Initially codes were generated from the data, including "motivations", "emotions" "perceptions on the role of youth" before recoding the data using the 7 P's guided by Cahill and Dadvand's (2018) model and

noting that "emotions" were not currently captured, leading to amendment of the model to include "psychological factors" (see Figure 8). For paper three, "legitimacy" was a common theme arising from my inductive coding which led to the framing of this paper around democratic legitimacy and orchestration, which were key debates identified when zigzagging back from the data to the academic literature (see Figure 10). These diagrams (Figures 8 – 10) are also useful in showing the main empirical and theoretical contributions of the thesis (the right-most boxes on the diagrams at the top being empirical and the right-most boxes at the bottom being theoretical).

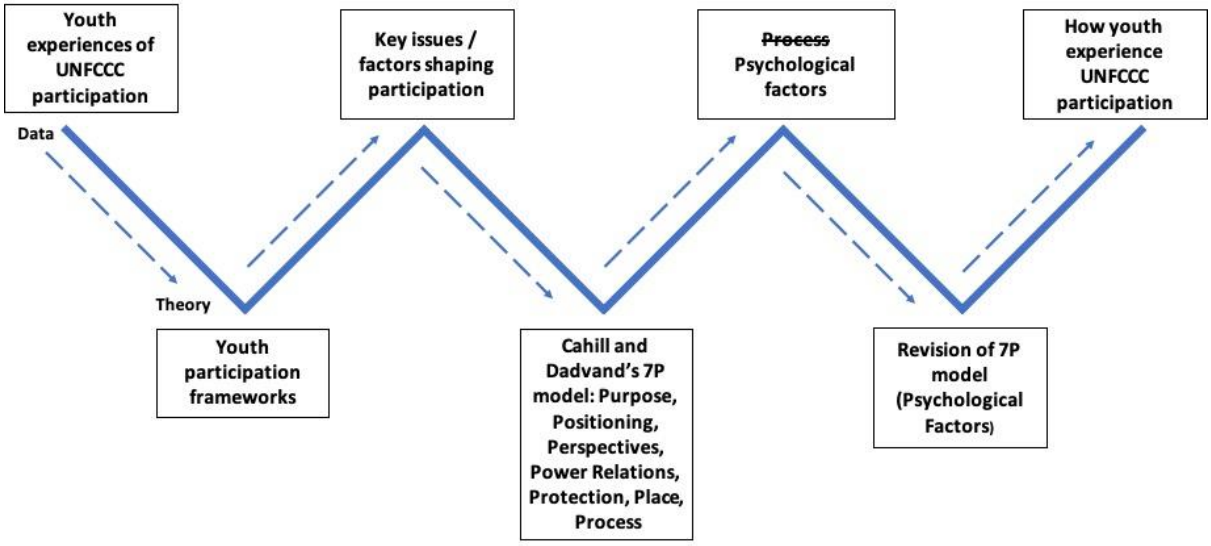

Figure 8. Zigzagging process for Paper 1

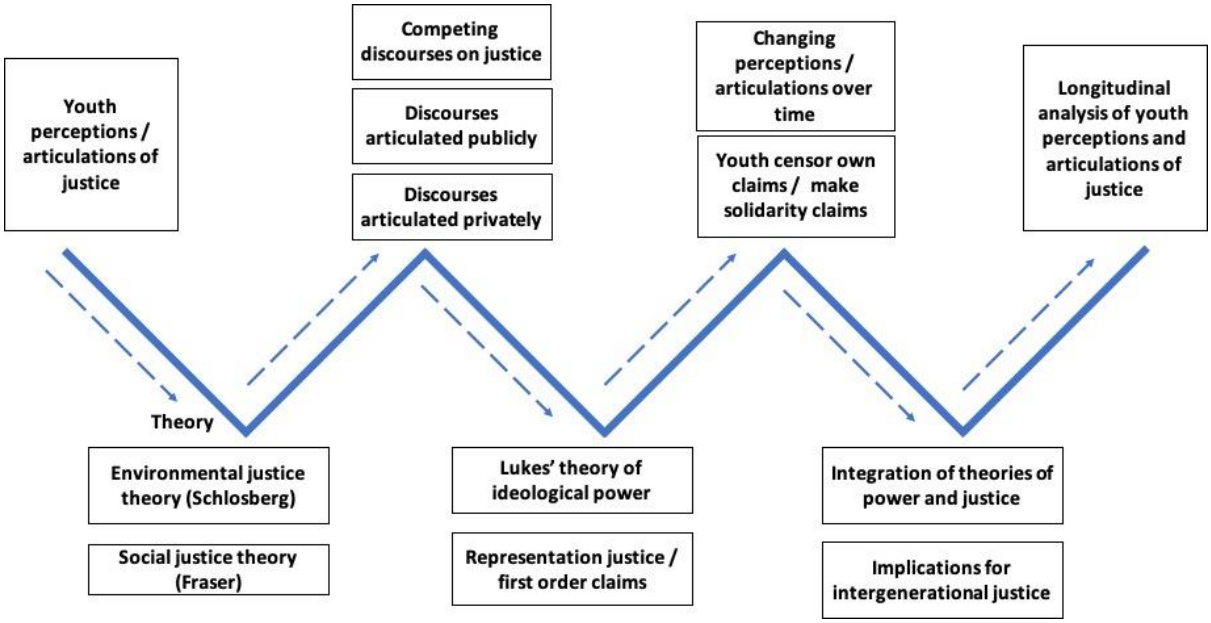

Figure 9. Zigzagging process for Paper 2

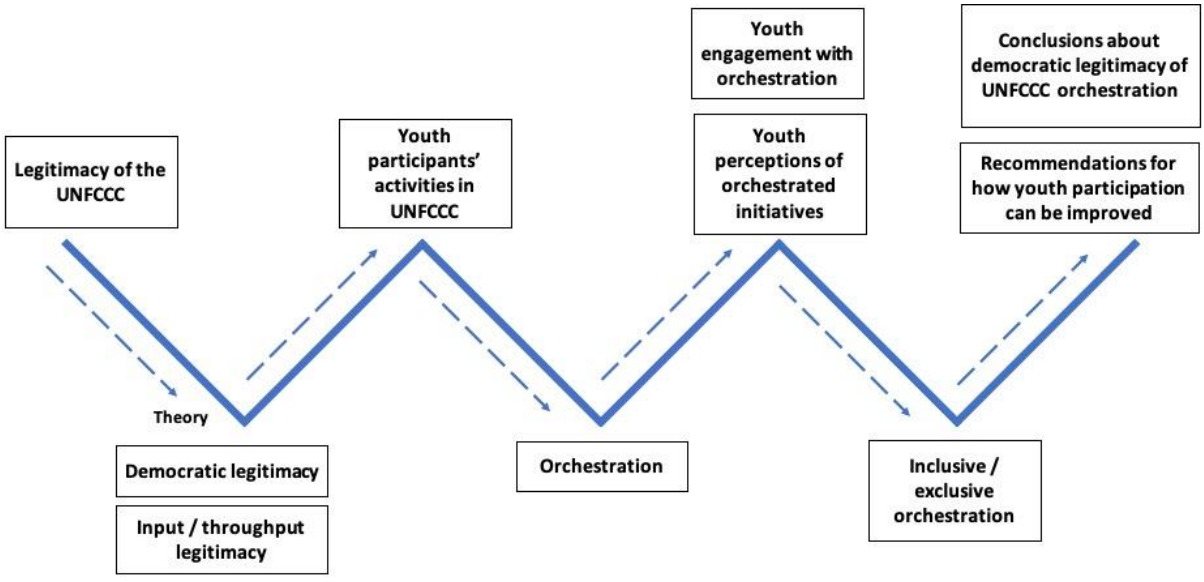

Figure 10. Zigzagging process for Paper 3

1.3.10. Rigour

Gaskell and Bauer (2000) emphasise the importance of quality management to increase public accountability, establishing six criteria for determining rigour in qualitative research. These fall into two categories: "confidence" and "relevance", though with some overlap between the two as shown in Table 4 below which lists each indicator, notes whether it relates to confidence, relevance or both, describes each indicator and how it is achieved in the thesis, then identifies the sections where each criterion is addressed.

Table 4. Criteria for establishing rigour in qualitative research, based on Gaskell and Bauer (2000, p344)

Indicators	Description	Section in thesis
Triangulation & reflexivity ***(confidence)***	Use of multiple data sources; awareness of different perspectives and changes in perspectives over the course of the research (i.e. it's longitudinal nature); attention to positionality and use of a reflexive diary to facilitate *"the decentering of one's own position"* (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000, p345).	1.3.1; 1.3.3; 1.3. 1.3.9; 2.3; 3.3; 4.3
Transparency & procedural clarity ***(confidence)***	Research questions are clearly stated; clarity is provided regarding units of analysis; interview topic guide is shared; coding process is transparent.	1.1.2. 1.3.1; 1.3.3; 1.3.6; 1.3.8; 1.3.9; 2.3.3; 3.2; 4.1
Corpus construction ***(confidence & relevance)***	Clarity regarding how participants were chosen; sample size doesn't matter but there should be evidence of reaching data saturation; maximising diversity of participants (where appropriate).	1.3.6; 1.3.8.
Thick description ***(confidence & relevance)***	Use of verbatim quotes so readers can interpret results for themselves.	2.4; 3.4; 4.4
Surprise value ***(relevance)***	Openness to topics as they emerge in data collection; clarity regarding whether researcher's expectations were met or challenged; clear identification of contributions to knowledge.	1.3.1; 1.3.5; 1.3.8; 2.5; 3.5; 4.5; 5.
Communicative validation ***(relevance)***	Seeking feedback from participants to validate researcher's interpretations, allowing them to contest emerging theories.	1.3.8.

1.3.11. Ethics

Ethical clearance was obtained from the ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee at the University of Leeds for the initial research design and approval of the Participant Information sheet (included in Appendix 1). I submitted a detailed amendment to the ethical review form after the 2015 terror attacks in Paris where heightened security measures under the French State of Emergency meant that participant observation during public demonstrations could lead to awareness of illegal activity. Both submissions were approved with favourable comments from the ethics committee. Further detail on research ethics is provided within the papers.

1.3.12. Limitations

1.3.12.1. Methodological limitations

My methodological approach presented limitations regarding generalisability. Findings cannot necessarily be considered applicable to all members of YOUNGO. For example, youth from Global South countries may experience participation differently. However, as it is known that global environmental governance processes are heavily dominated by participants from the Global North, across all NSA constituencies (Newell et al., 2012), I do not believe this limitation to be too problematic to gaining a better understanding of how many youth participants experience UNFCCC conferences. It is common for ethnographic case studies to focus on "typical" sub-groups within a larger population (Madden, 2010), which is the case here.

1.2.12.2. Limitations of case study

The thesis focuses on a single case study organisation, UKYCC, which has had a long engagement with the UNFCCC process and therefore has experience of the process. This provides a strong knowledge base from which new individuals can engage, meaning that the barriers they face cannot be dismissed as inexperience. This is often the case in studies of newcomers within global environmental governance studies (Clark et al., 1998) and especially necessary given societal perceptions that young people's challenges are attributable to their deficits as "human becomings", as discussed in the youth studies literature (Qvortrup, 1994).

As a UK-based group, the participants in this study enjoy relative privilege in comparison to some other organisations within YOUNGO. However, the constituency is dominated by similarly middle-class, Global North based youth organisations so further research may discover similarities with other YOUNGO members. It is necessary when seeking to understand participation in a particular context to gain access to the groups who engage in that space. In the case of UNFCCC youth participation, this means a focus on groups who can overcome the financial, social and cultural barriers to gaining access to the UN.

As unpaid volunteers in an entirely youth-led organisation, UKYCC members cannot be considered to be particularly well-resourced, although their relative privilege is implicit in their ability to self-fund their participation. If we consider UKYCC to be one of the slightly better resourced groups within YOUNGO, gaining an understanding of how they experience participation enables us to infer that the experiences of less well-resourced, less privileged youth groups within that same constituency are unlikely to be more positive.

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Chapter 2 (Paper 1). *"You need a month's holiday just to get over it!"* Exploring young people's experiences of UN climate change negotiations using the "7P" model of youth participation

Abstract

Despite youth organisations having participated as a recognised constituency (YOUNGO) in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for over a decade, few studies have explored their participatory experiences, and none engage directly with youth studies debates. Drawing upon deep ethnographic engagement with a member organisation of YOUNGO conducted between 2015 and 2018, this paper tests, for the first time, the "7P" model which analyses youth participation through seven lenses: *Purpose, Positioning, Perspectives, Power Relations, Protection, Place* and *Process*. This yields many insights, enabling us to share a broad range of novel empirical findings of how youth participants experience this complex global governance process. For example, we present a typology of purposes pursued by youth participants; identify several ways in which they are positioned and the conflicting pressures this places upon them; and shed light on the strategies young people use to navigate power relations in UN climate change conferences. In addition, we amend the model, replacing "*Process"* which we argue is more of a methodological than an analytical concern with "*Psychological Factors"* which our findings show to be a key factor in shaping youth participation in climate change governance.

Keywords

Youth participation; climate change; global conferences; governance; political participation

2.1. Introduction

The United Nations (UN) champions the inclusion of youth participants in global governance processes and has taken significant steps to demonstrate their commitment to this agenda. These include strategies for youth empowerment in UN bodies, a dedicated Envoy on Youth, global youth conferences on a variety of topics and youth participation in a range of governance processes. Speaking in 2017, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres argued that to address the world's most pressing challenges:

> *"The best hope […] is with the new generations, we need to make sure that we are able to strongly invest in those new generations." (UN, 2017)*

Tackling climate change is one such global challenge, where calls for youth engagement are particularly strong. As former UN Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Alhendawi, emphasises:

> *"We must empower youth as leaders of climate action today, because by the time they become the leaders of tomorrow it will be too late for their generation to prevent dangerous climate change." (UN, 2016)*

In 2009 the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) recognised Youth NGOs (YOUNGO) as one of nine civil society constituencies in the global climate negotiations, and in 2013 appointed a dedicated staff member to oversee and support youth participation. One might expect youth participation to be flourishing

given this high-level institutional support. However, research in this area is distinctly lacking. This is in part because much of the academic literature on the UNFCCC stems from International Relations, a discipline primarily concerned with governments or "State Actors" (SAs). Although environmental governance scholars have more recently turned their attention to "Non-State Actors" (NSAs), there has been a tendency to homogenise their experiences or focus on more powerful, better-resourced NSAs such as businesses and environmental NGOs. Notable exceptions include Marion Suiseeya (2015) and Hemmati and Rohr (2009)'s studies of indigenous peoples and women. A small number of studies have turned their attention to YOUNGO (Thew, 2018; Thew et al., 2020). However, these speak to environmental governance debates, rather than to youth studies.

This paper represents a first attempt to apply a youth studies lens to the UNFCCC. Specifically, we draw upon a recently established model of youth participation: Cahill and Dadvand's "7P" model (2018). This facilitates exploration of youth participation from a range of angles encapsulated in seven "Ps": *Purpose, Positioning, Perspectives, Power Relations, Protection, Place* and *Process*, with Cahill and Dadvand providing a series of prompting questions to direct critical evaluation of youth participation. We test the model using ethnographic data on youth participation in the UNFCCC, focusing on a well-established case-study organisation within YOUNGO: the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC). In doing so, we critically examine youth participation in the UNFCCC, offering empirical insights into each "P" as well as shedding light on how their interactions shape youth participation in this global context. We propose that a new P - Psychological Factors – is added to the model, replacing Process which we suggest is better addressed in research methodology than in the analytical

framework. In addition, we propose six further prompts to guide future research, consolidating all prompts into a single table (Table 5) to enhance the model's usability.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2.2 situates our study by reviewing relevant literature on youth political participation and youth participation in climate governance and establishes our research questions. Section 2.3 explains our methodology and Section 2.4 presents our results, structured around the seven Ps. Section 2.5 reflects on our application of the model and the insights it offers into youth participation in global climate governance and Section 2.6 draws conclusions.

2.2. Literature Review

2.2.1 Youth political participation

We follow Andersson's (2017) definition of youth political participation as "*democratic participation and influence on processes and situations in the battle for how society is organised"* (p1346). The way in which young people are perceived in society has a profound impact upon their experience. Often seen in terms of their potential to become economic contributors or social delinquents of the future, youth political participation is typically viewed through the lens of developmental psychology (Andersson, 2017): a linear perspective which sees youth as citizens in the making, portraying them as deficient, denying them recognition and overlooking the contributions they can make in the present (Tanner, 2010). Youth participation has been shown to benefit both individuals and the projects they engage in (Trajber, 2019; Walker, 2017). As Skelton (2010) asserts:

> *"[There is] significant evidence that young people are politically active, show competence in understanding political processes and take political action […] young people are political actors now; they are not political subjects 'in-waiting'." (p147)*

However, the facilitation of participatory opportunities is necessary to ensure that young people's perspectives are given due weight in political processes (Haynes and Tanner, 2015). It is important to recognise that participatory experiences are shaped by young people's everyday lives, life trajectories and the societies in which they are embedded (Furlong, 2016). Thus, a tailored approach is needed to understand the nuances and complexities of youth political participation, rather than assuming direct comparability with other participants. Specifically, an approach is needed which recognises youth as reflexive social actors who shape and are shaped by their socio-cultural experiences (Tsekoura, 2016). Studies should take account of social and cultural context such as the interactions between politics, culture and transitions to adulthood (Woodman et al., 2020); explore how youth participants experience and respond to power dynamics in the processes in which they operate (Tsekoura, 2016); and how they strategise and make decisions amongst themselves (Kwon, 2019).

2.2.2. Youth participation models

The following section briefly reviews prominent youth participation models and their critiques, leading to our rationale for selecting the 7P model (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018) as the framework for addressing social and cultural context and power.

Several well-known youth participation models have been critiqued for being hierarchical and normatively suggesting that greater levels of youth control over a

project are always superior, regardless of context (e.g. Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Wong et al., 2010). In addition, they focus on structures of participation, overlooking the broader context shaping young people's interactions and experiences (e.g. Hart, 1992; Treseder, 1997). These models appraise youth participation according to the extent to which adults distribute power to young people, insinuating that participation depends solely upon ability to influence decision-making. This overlooks the benefits youth gain through political engagement, even when unable to shape decision-making outcomes (Andersson, 2017). Rather than perceiving power as a zero-sum commodity (e.g. Hart, 1992) more recent work acknowledges that although adults may "set the stage", youth develop unique strategies and goals with their peers (e.g. Hart, 2008).

Another critique of earlier models is their lack of acknowledgement of mutuality. For example, Hart (1992), Shier (2001) and Treseder (1997) frame youth participants as dependent upon adults for their development, failing to acknowledge ways in which youth can contribute to a process. Wong et al.'s (2010) Typology of Youth Participation and Empowerment Pyramid overcomes this to an extent by conceptualising the degree of adult and youth control in participatory processes. Again however, the model is hierarchical, suggesting that autonomous decisions made by youth are superior to decision-making alongside adults.

Andersson (2017) seeks to address these critiques, presenting the "3P-M": *pedagogical, political* and *participation* model. This overcomes many issues around linearity, mutuality and power, though has been critiqued for still presenting types of participation as a spectrum from adult to youth control, with Cahill and Dadvand

(2018) suggesting that Andersson may see youth control as the ideal, assuming that youth participation is always "good". Whilst our reading suggests this is not Andersson's intention, the 3P-M focuses on formal participatory opportunities with limited acknowledgement of youth agency and how their daily lives intersect with young people's participatory experiences.

Cahill and Dadvand (2018) draw upon critical theory, feminist literature and youth studies to present the 7P model. Their machine-like depiction of seven dynamic and interactive elements: *Purpose, Positioning, Perspectives, Power Relations, Protection, Place* and *Process* (shown in Figure 11) can be used to "think through" youth participation from a variety of angles. In addition, they discuss each "P" in turn, propose prompting questions and provide illustrative examples, creating a model which moves youth participation theory forward in its consideration of structure, agency and power. We thus deem the 7P model to be the best able to account for socio-cultural context and power dynamics in our study. It has not been tested beyond its initial publication, so its application has the added benefit of testing its suitability to another context.

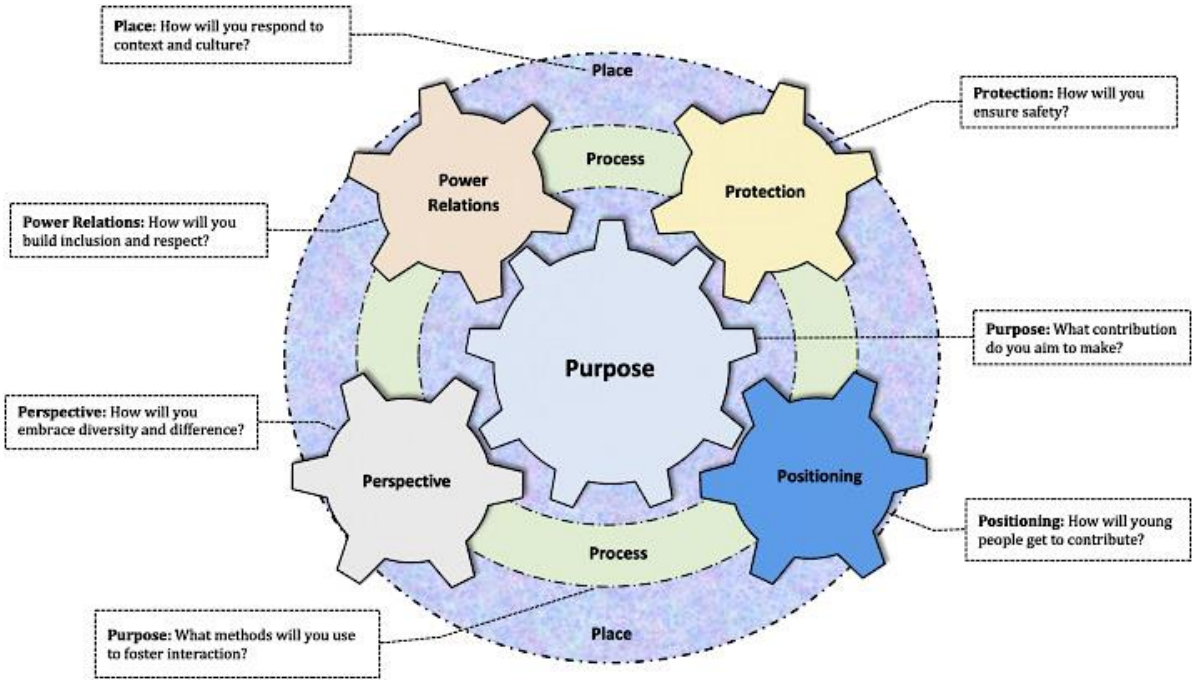

Figure 11. The 7P Model: A thinking tool for visioning, planning, enacting and evaluating youth participation (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018, p248)

2.2.3. Youth participation in climate change governance

As government has given way to governance, youth participation has moved from engagement in electoral politics and membership of political parties or institutions to "cause-oriented civic action" with climate change being of particularly interest (Soler-i-Marti, 2015). Youth participation has been proposed as a solution to wicked problems such as climate change given young people's energy and interest in environmental issues (Riemer et al., 2014) and, despite their vulnerability to climate impacts, young people can be valuable contributors to environmental action and disaster-risk-reduction (Trajber et al., 2017; Tanner, 2010; Walker, 2017). However, their contributions and needs are often overlooked as a result of "adultism" (Flasher, 1978) which socially positions youth as unequal to adults, entitling adults to make decisions for youth without their consent. This excludes young people's unique

perspectives on and solutions to climate change (Haynes and Tanner, 2015; Tanner, 2010).

As a result, there are few formal opportunities for youth participation in climate governance, particularly at global level, with one of the more established and arguably more prestigious being UNFCCC participation. However, studies on youth participation in this context are few (Thew, 2018; Thew et al., 2020) and although these papers make various contributions, e.g. exploring youth agency and articulation of justice claims they engage with environmental governance debates rather than contributing to the development of youth participation models. Recent studies on youth participation in other UN spaces indicate that power dynamics, participatory structures and cultures maintain hierarchies between generations (Kwon, 2019; Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia, 2019), further supporting the suitability of the 7P model to exploring youth participation in global governance, given its consideration of context and power.

We apply the 7P framework to the experiences of UKYCC members' participation in the UNFCCC, contributing to the academic toolbox of youth participation models to assist future scholars and practitioners in the design and evaluation of youth participation whilst also providing novel empirical evidence on the participatory experiences of youth in this largely overlooked context. Specifically, we address the following research questions:

- To what extent is the 7P model able to facilitate holistically "thinking through" youth participation in the UNFCCC? Are there ways in which it could be amended to better achieve this objective?
- What insights does application of this model provide to improve our understanding of youth participation in the UNFCCC?

2.3. Methodology

This paper draws upon a broader ethnographic research project with UKYCC: a UK-based, youth-led organisation which has sent delegations to the UNFCCC's Conference of the Parties (COPs) since 2008, making them one of the more established organisations within YOUNGO. UKYCC consists of volunteers aged 17 to 29 years old, reflecting YOUNGO's age range. They engage in climate action at local, national and global levels though the UNFCCC is the only formal participatory opportunity which is consistently available to them, year after year. Mirroring YOUNGO's demographic, members of UKYCC are predominantly middle-class university students and graduates. At the time of data collection, 90% of members were female or gender non-binary and 25% were activists of colour.

Data were collected between 2015 and 2018, including 32 semi-structured interviews and over 900 hours of participant observation at six UNFCCC conferences: three COPs (COP 21, 22 and 23) and three "intersessional" negotiations, and team meetings in the UK. This time-intensive, in-depth methodology enables rich insights into the lived experiences of youth participants (Hammersley, 2007), shedding light on how they experience the power-laden arena of the UNFCCC and the strategies they use to navigate it (Witter et al., 2015; Marion Suiseeya, 2015). Studying a group

based in the same country as the research team was necessary to facilitate deep, prolonged engagement over time. Our lead researcher also engaged with YOUNGO's listservs, Google and Facebook groups to keep up-to-date with discussions within the constituency.

By selecting a methodology which enabled our lead researcher to experience UNFCCC spaces first-hand alongside our research participants, *"walking a mile in their shoes"* (Madden, 2010, p1), observing closely and taking many fieldnotes, we sought to incorporate participant experience into our research design without it being onerous for participants given their limited time and resources. Ethnography includes ongoing reflexivity on power dynamics within the research process, and focuses on developing trust, understanding, respect and reciprocity between researcher and participants. As a former member of YOUNGO who has engaged with the constituency since 2012, attending eleven UNFCCC conferences to date, our lead researcher was well-placed to undertake this complex and sensitive task. In preparation meetings for, and during conferences she spent the vast majority of her time with youth participants, attending their meetings and accompanying them to side events and negotiations, always introducing herself as a researcher of youth participation.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face or over Skype, audio-recorded and transcribed, usually taking place shortly after conferences had ended when participants had more time and were reflecting on their participatory experience alongside their re-immersion into their daily routines. Data were coded using Nvivo, using the critical realist method of "zigzagging" between literature and data to develop

themes which speak to existing debates or frameworks without the limitations of a fixed hypothesis (Emmel, 2013). Participants are referred to with pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

2.4. Results

As outlined in Section 2.2, we apply Cahill and Dadvand's (2018) 7P model to our data, testing its utility for the study of youth participation in the UNFCCC. Here we analyse our data through the lens of each P, guided by Cahill and Dadvand's prompts. Given space limitations we are unable to respond to each one, instead selecting those which are more crucial in establishing context or in contributing novel empirical findings. Prompts suggested by Cahill and Dadvand are labelled "prompt" whilst those proposed by this paper are labelled "additional prompt".

2.4.1. Purpose

Prompt: What does the program aim to achieve?

The UNFCCC's overarching objective is to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations to prevent dangerous climate change (UNFCCC, 1992). The drive to involve young people can be traced to a commitment to:

> *"encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organizations [and] promote and facilitate […] public participation in addressing climate change and its effects" (UNFCCC, 1992)*

By widening participation, the UNFCCC aims to increase effectiveness by inviting contributions from NSAs to supplement government action, in line with neoliberal governance norms and the framing of climate change as a collective action problem.

Additional prompt: What do youth participants aim to achieve and to what extent does this align with the aims of program facilitators?

We find that youth participants in the UNFCCC also pursue goals beyond supporting SAs. This includes making connections with peers around the world and building a global youth movement. They also strive to increase transparency by reporting on conference proceedings to maximise public scrutiny and increase pressure on negotiators. For example, several participants have been involved in a campaign claiming a "conflict of interest" inherent in fossil fuel industry representatives attending and sponsoring the climate negotiations. This conflicts with the UNFCCC's purpose of encouraging the widest participation possible as young people call for restrictions on attendance.

We also find that youth participants pursue individual goals, seeking to enhance their employability and ease their life trajectories by building professional networks and developing skills such as blogging, vlogging, tweeting, organising events and writing press releases. These goals are easier to achieve as they do not challenge existing power dynamics. As a strategy to reduce negative psychological impacts (discussed in Section 2.4.7), more experienced youth participants often encourage newer recruits to pursue personal development goals, carefully managing expectations regarding their influence in the UNFCCC. They also strive to improve the cultures of

participation in spaces they control e.g. UKYCC and YOUNGO. This includes attempts to improve inclusion and diversity and to ensure the physical and emotional wellbeing of their peers as discussed in Sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4.

2.4.2. Positioning

Prompt: How are young people positioned within the program itself, and how do they in turn position others?

Section 2.2 highlighted how cultural discourses position young people as apprentices rather than as agents of change. Some youth participants use this to strengthen individual career trajectories, whilst others recognise its limitations:

> *Jenny: "I've heard, 'you're gonna grow up to be Heads of State one day'. [Other young people] have said, I want to be there one day so this is a step on the ladder. But that doesn't really empower them to think they have power now to do stuff."*

Government and UN representatives often emphasise that youth remind negotiators of the real-world *"keep[ing] diplomats and delegates on track"* (UNFCCC, 2018). This positions young people as crucial to contextualising decisions, a role they are keen to accept:

> *Grace: "We give something that helps bring it back to real people. It's about people's lives […] It is very easy to dehumanise things and forget the magnitude of what all of these particles per million numbers actually mean."*

However, their ability to do this may be hindered the social construct of an "ideal global youth citizen" (Kwon, 2017) which emphasises shared challenges and "universal" rather than local knowledge. Furthermore, this positioning creates a perceived moral responsibility for young people to provide a counterweight to neoliberal capitalist rhetoric perpetuated by more powerful actors, with youth (and some other NSAs) calling for policy-makers to focus on "people not profit".

> *Noor: "It's our own voices that we bring. We are not representing a country or an organisation or a company, we're just representing what we believe is right and I think that's quite rare in the talks."*

Our observations suggest that many young people see their participation in climate governance as a moral responsibility to vulnerable groups in the present and to future generations as well as being necessary to avoid individual and social risks in their own futures. The positioning of youth as apprentices means they are expected to "*develop their human capital as self-governing and responsible citizens*" *(*Kwon, 2019, p931) i.e. it suggests they have a responsibility to society to learn to be citizens in line with adult norms and values. However, adult expectations vary widely with some expecting young people to get angry and demand change whilst others expect young people to listen, learn and, when asked, offer creative incremental suggestions to improve policies. This causes confusion and tension over young people's role in climate governance, leading to negative psychological impacts as further discussed in Section 2.4.7.

2.4.3. Perspectives

Prompt: What methods are used to invite diverse perspectives?

UNFCCC negotiations are an intergovernmental process privileging SA perspectives and restricting NSA access to certain spaces. Environmental governance studies have emphasised that powerful states dominate and that among NSAs, those who wield authority in similar ways to states (businesses and large environmental NGOs) are privileged. This can make it difficult for youth to be heard. Their diversity is limited as lack financial support limits participation to those who can self-finance, who are usually middle-class and from the Global North.

Our participants are acutely aware that lack of diversity in UKYCC and YOUNGO reproduces inequality and strive to broaden inclusion with recruitment strategies targeting new members beyond their social media bubbles, reaching out through faith-based organisations etc. Acknowledging a gender imbalance (the organisation was predominantly female), UKYCC have actively addressed this in recruitment processes, e.g. through name-blind applications. However other barriers are more difficult to overcome. As UKYCC's online meetings are usually held in the evenings, and in-person meetings often span whole weekends as participants gather from across the UK, young people studying or working outside of a 9-5 schedule struggle to engage. Participants also reflect on and modify their choice of meeting location as a potential barrier to inclusion of youth from different faiths and cultural backgrounds, as socialising often occurs in venues serving alcohol and accommodation is often mixed-gender. This is especially difficult during COPs when accommodation is scarce and expensive.

Prompt: Who remains marginalised or is rendered 'voiceless' in the process?

Despite the efforts of UKYCC to increase diversity and inclusion, these structural barriers mean that many UK youth are excluded from UNFCCC participation. In particular, the voices of youth in communities which are vulnerable to climate change impacts or mitigation projects both in the UK and overseas are marginalised as communities are often deemed vulnerable based on their geographical location without closer investigation of the differentiated vulnerabilities of social groups within those communities. As a result, YOUNGO struggles to gain recognition for having unique expertise and local knowledge and the voices of youth in communities experiencing climate change impacts are not often heard in the negotiations despite their positioning as a group which can contextualise decision-making.

Additional prompt: What could be done to improve inclusion and diversity among youth participants?

UKYCC seek to promote anti-oppression principles within their own organisation and in YOUNGO, running training on acknowledging privilege and challenging patterns of domination. However, as young volunteers with limited time and capacity, there is a need for adult institutions to lend support. For example, funding could be provided and structures put in place to build the capacity of youth participants to engage with or secure attendance of their marginalised peers in their own countries and overseas. Platforms with mechanisms for representation and accountability at local to national levels could also be devised and regional meetings could be held,

where youth participants could foreground their local identities, knowledge and experiences.

2.4.4. Power Relations

Prompt: How are roles and responsibilities assigned, adopted and enacted in the program?

Within UNFCCC conferences, there are formalised opportunities for NSA input (as outlined by Thew, 2018). Protest is tolerated but censored, with restrictions regarding noise and disruption levels. This is tightly controlled by UN security who can "de-badge" attendees, removing them and preventing future conference access. However, youth also demonstrate their agency in assigning roles and responsibilities with many youth organisations, including UKYCCC, adopting non-hierarchical structures and practicing consensus-based decision making.

Prompt: How are relationships managed to ensure equity and respect is enacted between all parties?

YOUNGO also operates on consensus and is non-hierarchical. YOUNGO's meetings are conducted in English with translation provided only if someone volunteers, which is usually in European languages. To mitigate this, YOUNGO promotes a culture of respect and each youth organisation must nominate one spokesperson per meeting. Speakers are asked to state their first language when addressing the group as a reminder of the difficulties for non-English natives and hand signals are used which include an opportunity for participants to request clarification at any point. UKYCC

internally seek to ensure equity and respect by following anti-oppression principles and delivering training derived from anti-racism activism called "tools for white guys".

Additional prompt: In what ways do power relations shape participation and how can this be addressed?

Despite these efforts, power relations undoubtedly shape participatory experiences:

> *Noor: "I think the way the UNFCCC is structured definitely pushes people to instrumentalise others. I personally felt it as being youth, but I could see that everyone was just using everyone else […] I mean it's negotiations, if I can use you, if I can win something off you, I'll give you something else. Maybe the fact that we're literally doing negotiations affects the way we interact as human beings."*

Enabling frank discussions of power and privilege and facilitating deliberative discussions between all stakeholders could help to address these issues, as could increasing formal opportunities for NSA constituencies to work together to identify shared concerns and challenges, combining their resources rather than operating in siloes and competing for SAs' attention.

2.4.5. Protection

Prompt: What is the balance between practices used to promote protection and those used to enhance participation?

In UNFCCC policies, there are several references to youth vulnerability and calls for their protection. However, there is a lack of balance between what UNFCCC policy

advocates and how it facilitates young people's conference participation. UNFCCC conferences have tight security with metal detectors and scanners on entry, digital monitoring of participants entering and leaving and security personnel overseeing a range of activities inside. As such the material safety of attendees is addressed, though without differential treatment for youth. However, youth experience material risks stemming from the lack of financial support for their attendance, as unpaid volunteers. Many struggle to sustain themselves properly as conference food is overpriced and often runs out during the long days. Conferences end late each evening, governments book nearby accommodation in advance and many youth struggle to find affordable accommodation, often travelling long distances at unsociable hours and may compromise their safety by "couch-surfing" or sharing with strangers.

Prompt: How can young people themselves play an active role in ensuring the safety of their peers and those affected by their programs?

There have been several reports of sexual harassment from security guards and other COP participants. The UNFCCC Secretariat has instigated a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment, though the onus is placed on victims to report it. YOUNGO has taken steps to nominate "safety officers" and create a harassment and assault reporting protocol with input from the Women and Gender constituency. UKYCC and other youth organisations operate buddy systems, encouraging travel in pairs and regular check-ins on each other's safety and wellbeing, demonstrating their agency. However, their capacity could be better spent ensuring their voices are heard and we suggest that formalised institutional measures are needed to create safer environments with input from safeguarding experts.

2.4.6. Place

Prompt: How does place or context affect what is possible or desirable in relation to participation?

UNFCCC conferences take place in a variety of locations with COPs rotating annually between regions. This has significant impacts on young people's safety, shaping their participatory strategies. For example, COP21 was held in Paris following a terror attack and the French government's declaration of a State of Emergency which removed the right to assemble, preventing planned protests. As a result, our participants largely abandoned plans to engage in direct action in the city due to fear of police response:

> *Jess: "I was totally devastated when I'd heard they'd cancelled the mobilisations because of the attacks in Paris…I couldn't think of anything more depressing than COP21 failing, and then I realised what is more depressing is COP 21 failing and civil society not even being able to shout about it….I feel very angry and frustrated that the one thing I thought we could do as ordinary people not in government, not in big businesses or big corporate NGOs has been taken away from us….People keep asking me what I'm doing, I'm like, I wanted to be doing [direct action] but I don't want to get f*cking shot!"*

Ahead of COP22 in Marrakech, UKYCC ran training on cultural sensitivity and safety, discussing a need for women to dress modestly and learning basic Arabic phrases. Again, they favoured "insider" strategies within UN-secured zones over "outsider" strategies such as street protests and non-violent direct action, despite many

participants favouring these activities and pursuing them in COP23 in Bonn, Germany, which was deemed a safer place for activism.

However, a benefit for some youth participants is a barrier to others. Visa processes regularly limit Global South representation. For example, several young Nigerian delegates were not granted visas for COP23. This problem is not unique to youth but is exacerbated by their status as unfunded volunteers and compounded by difficulties in funding accommodation and subsistence in expensive cities.

Prompt: What strategies might be needed to create reach and access to the spaces of participation?

Enhancing digital access and providing deliberative online spaces could help to address access challenges. Some conference sessions can be observed through webcasts and digital opportunities are facilitated by the UNFCCC Secretariat and partners specifically for youth, such as video and music competitions where approximately two winners annually gain COP accreditation and funding. However, these activities are conducted in silos with little engagement from non-youth and no clear input into decision-making. We propose that facilitation of regional meetings could increase reach and reduce funding and visa restrictions along with funding support and provision of time-limited visas on entry for all accredited participants to increase youth representation at COPs.

2.4.7. Replacing "Process" with "Psychological Factors"

Cahill and Dadvand's final 'P' considers the relationship between "intent and methods" (p251) discussing the benefits of Participatory Action Research methods such as Photovoice. We suggest that this is a methodological consideration rather than a lens through which to evaluate youth participation and although relevant for their study it does not lend itself to other methodological approaches. However, we do find that another key aspect of young people's participatory experience is missing. Our study identified that psychological factors play a key role in motivating, shaping and sustaining youth engagement in the UNFCCC. The psychological drivers for and impacts of participation interlink closely with the other "P's". shaping young people's *purpose* for participating, how they *position* themselves and the *perspectives* they share. We therefore replace *process* with *psychological factors* and add three prompts which we explore below.

Additional prompt: What are the psychological factors which motivate youth to participate?

Fears for the future prompt young people to engage in the UNFCCC to mitigate future individual and social risks:

> *Alexis: "I was in my final year of university […] It was getting to the end of the year and I realised, oh God I'm going to go out into the great big world and it's really scary out there."*

> *Liv: "I got to that point, because I'm 21 now and […] I've wasted a lot of time doing nothing to further what I want to do in the future."*

Many of our participants are motivated by guilt, feeling morally compelled to address climate change as citizens of a developed country with greater responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions. This is further compounded by anticipated future guilt with many reporting that they want to look back and tell their children that they tried. This motivates their continued engagement even when faced with frustratingly unequal power dynamics and risks to their personal safety.

Additional prompt: What psychological impacts do youth experience as a result of their participation?

Youth have come to expect strong emotional impacts as part of their participation:

> *Elena: "I'm worried about people, especially who haven't been to COP before. I don't think they realise how emotionally draining it is […] you need a month's holiday just to get over it!"*

Almost all participants report feelings of frustration, sadness and distress, though some unpack these feelings in more detail than others:

> *Alexis: "I couldn't really afford to be in Paris […] I just didn't have the emotional capacity to be there or to feel the emotions that I knew I'd feel if I stayed […] I just can't deal with any more hopelessness […] I think my biggest barrier has been burning out. It's a sustained thing, a build-up of being stressed out but not realising because you're doing something that you love and are really passionate about […] You end up in quite extreme situations like COPs where you're surrounded by people and sharing rooms […] and end up getting physically ill because you're not eating and sleeping properly and I got to a kind of snapping point and just descended in the total opposite direction of what I've been doing and lost all motivation, energy, passion, I couldn't see the positives […] culminated [sic] with the nature of doing stuff voluntarily means you don't*

have any money and are worried about where you are living, all of those normal life concerns."

This demonstrates that participation takes an emotional and even a physical toll, again highlighting the links between psychological factors and protection.

Additional prompt: How can psychological impacts on youth participants be managed to reduce harm and encourage ongoing engagement?

Negative psychological impacts experienced by youth participants in the UNFCCC could be reduced if process facilitators took proactive steps to address the challenges raised in the other six Ps. For example, we find that young people experience fear for the future, a sense of powerlessness and frustration when positioned as simultaneously responsible for creating social change whilst respectfully "learning the ropes" and developing employability skills. Greater reflexivity from more powerful actors regarding their positioning of youth could help to reduce confusion and frustration.

Ojala (2012) identifies three coping strategies employed by children, adolescents and young adults in response to climate change. Our participants pursue all three to some extent: 1) "problem-focused coping" i.e. tackling climate change head on to reduce ones' worry is attempted, though difficult given aforementioned structural and cultural barriers; 2) "meaning-focused coping" which involves breaking down complex problems into more manageable actions is also difficult, given unequal power dynamics between SAs and NSAs, adults and youth and the blurring of responsibility within neoliberal governance. As a result, our participants primarily engage in 3)

"emotion-focused coping". This includes "hyperactivation", i.e. blaming ones' self and expressing anger, pessimism and fatalism which can become overwhelming and can stifle ongoing engagement (Ojala, 2012). It also includes discussing problems with peers to generate social support which can be cathartic but also time consuming, diverting time and resources away from directly addressing climate change.

Furthermore, youth participants are impeded by the more immediate need to address challenges within the participatory process. This includes safety concerns highlighted in Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.6 as well as inclusion issues raised in Sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4. The UNFCCC Secretariat and host governments of COPs could address some of these issues, enabling youth participants to direct their limited time and resources towards problem-focused and meaning-focused coping, reducing their worries and fostering hope.

2.5. Discussion

2.5.1. Reflections on the model

In response to our first research question, we find the 7P model very useful in identifying factors shaping youth participation. It fosters a holistic approach, taking into account the interactions between structures and cultures of participation and power which previous frameworks have struggled with. Particularly beneficial is its attention to context (e.g. in *Place* and *Process*) and power (explicitly explored in *Power Relations*) which interact with structures and cultures of participation (discussed in *Purpose*, *Positioning*, *Perspectives* and *Protection*).

However, we find one aspect to be less relevant than the others. Cahill and Dadvand's 7th P, *process* is more of a methodological consideration than an analytical lens. Whilst applicable to their Participatory Action Research approach, the inclusion of this P does not acknowledge that many researchers have limited or no control over the initiatives they evaluate. As such, it may limit the breadth of studies for which the model is applicable and we propose that, although methodologies should be carefully selected, another analytical lens may better complement the model. We propose the addition of *psychological factors* which our ethnographic study identifies as playing a key role in shaping young people's participatory experiences, in dynamic interaction with the other Ps. We suggest that future studies take this into account, guided by psychological studies on young people, emotions and climate change (e.g. Ojala, 2012; Threadgold, 2012).

We find Cahill and Dadvand's prompting questions to be instructive, though felt some important questions were missing, leading us to suggest six additional prompts for consideration in future research. To enhance usability of the model, we compile all prompts into a single table (Table 5).

Table 5. Table of consolidated prompts for the 7P model (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018) with additional Ps and prompts proposed by this paper in italics.

	Prompts			
Purpose	What does the program aim to achieve?	What opportunities can be constructed to enable young people to play an active role in shaping or evolving program objectives?	*What do youth participants aim to achieve and to what extent does this align with the aims of program facilitators?*	
Positioning	How are young people positioned within wider cultural discourses, and how might this limit what is initially imagined to be possible?	How are young people positioned within the program itself, and how do they in turn position others?	What processes might work to interrupt limiting assumptions about the capacity of young people?	
Perspectives	Whose perspectives and voices are included, excluded or privileged in the program?	What methods are used to invite diverse perspectives?	Who remains marginalised or is rendered 'voiceless' in the process?	*What could be done to improve inclusion and diversity among youth participants?*
Power relations	How are roles and responsibilities assigned, adopted and enacted in the program?	How are relationships managed to ensure equity and respect is enacted between all parties?	*In what ways do power relations shape participation and how can this be addressed?*	
Protection	What is the balance between practices used to promote protection and those used to enhance participation?	What measures are needed to protect young people's political, social and material access and safety?	How can young people themselves play an active role in ensuring the safety of their peers and those affected by their programs?	
Place	What are the social, physical and virtual spaces in which participation can take place?	How does place or context affect what is possible or desirable in relation to participation?	What mediates access to particular spaces and places?	What strategies might be needed to create reach and access to the spaces of participation?
Psychological Factors	*What are the psychological factors which motivate youth to participate?*	*What psychological impacts do youth experience as a result of their participation?*	*How can psychological impacts on youth participants be managed to reduce harm and encourage ongoing engagement?*	

Considering each P in turn has enabled us to explore a range of factors shaping young people's participatory experiences in the UNFCCC. This is useful given the limited number of studies on this topic. However, it makes for a lengthy paper, even without addressing each prompt, preventing detailed analysis of each P given the word-limit constraints of academic publication. Thus, far from providing all the answers, we identify a series of research questions requiring deeper exploration. We propose that when applied in full, the 7P model may be better suited to book projects and practitioner evaluations where space is less constrained than in journal articles. However, it offers a holistic overview which is well-suited to outlining new research agendas for youth participation in understudied contexts as we have done here for youth participation in climate governance.

2.5.2 Insights into youth participation in climate governance

In response to our second research question we find that applying the 7P model enables us to make several empirical contributions, increasing understanding of youth participation in the UNFCCC. In Section 2.4.1 we identify a range of *purposes* driving youth participation in a global context. Similarly to Kwon (2019) and Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia (2019), we find this includes connecting with peers worldwide and building a global youth movement. These studies also highlight that youth participants are eager to develop individual skills such as blogging. We add that they also seek to gain experience of vlogging, tweeting, organising events and writing press releases. Furthermore, they pursue collective goals, including striving for transparency to increase pressure on decision-makers. These examples demonstrate young people's agency and their strategies to navigate structural and cultural barriers within global

governance conferences. We also identify the connection between *psychological factors* and the pursuit of individual goals, highlighting how this is encouraged by more experienced participants as a strategy to reduce negative psychological impacts. We broadly categorise these *purposes* in Figure 12:

1. Positive contributions to the governance challenge
2. Demanding that more powerful actors address the governance challenge
3. Personal development to support individual life trajectories
4. Addressing perceived challenges within the participatory process

Figure 12. Typology of youth participants' purposes in global climate change governance

Future research could develop this and test it in other contexts, drawing upon related typologies within youth studies and environmental governance (e.g. Checkoway and Aldana, 2013; O'Brien et al., 2018). We suggest that only the first category aligns closely with the UNFCCC's purpose of mobilising NSA contributions to government-led action and only the first two directly address the governance challenge at hand (i.e. climate change). The third category reflects the relationship between young people's everyday lives, life trajectories and participatory experiences which is often overlooked in youth participation models. Indeed, many youth scholars advocate that young people's participatory experiences are shaped by their daily lives, socio-cultural context and transitions to adulthood (e.g. Tsekoura, 2016; Woodman et al., 2020) yet we believe the 7P model is the first to effectively capture this. Furthermore, this is notably absent as a consideration within environmental governance studies of NSA

participation but is a necessary part of the picture, again demonstrating the benefits of this model as well as the need for interdisciplinary learning.

The fourth category in our typology demonstrates that young people are reflexive political actors as emphasised by previous studies (e.g. Skelton, 2010; Tsekoura, 2016), demonstrating their competence and agency in identifying and addressing challenges within participatory processes. This includes attentiveness to power, inclusion and diversity which young people strive to improve, in contrast to the depoliticised collective action framing of climate governance favoured by process facilitators. Whilst this builds upon previous studies (e.g. Trajber, 2019; Thew et al., 2020) in demonstrating young people's awareness of the interconnection between climate change and social justice, we question whether this responsibility should be left to youth participants, particularly as it reduces their capacity to share their unique perspectives on and experiences of climate change impacts and potential solutions (as identified in community level studies e.g. Haynes and Tanner, 2015; Tanner, 2010) at the global level.

In Section 2.4.2 we shed light on the consequences of societal and institutional *positioning* of young people as apprentices who are expected to learn from adults alongside being positioned as agents of change who are expected to challenge adults. This shapes young people's *purposes* for participation (i.e. moving from type 1 in our typology to types 2, 3 and 4). It can also have negative consequences on young people's physical and mental health as they struggle to live up to these conflicting expectations. Ultimately this can lead to burnout, inhibiting further engagement in

climate governance. In Figure 13, we depict multiple ways in which young people are positioned within the UNFCCC and the conflicting pressures this places upon them:

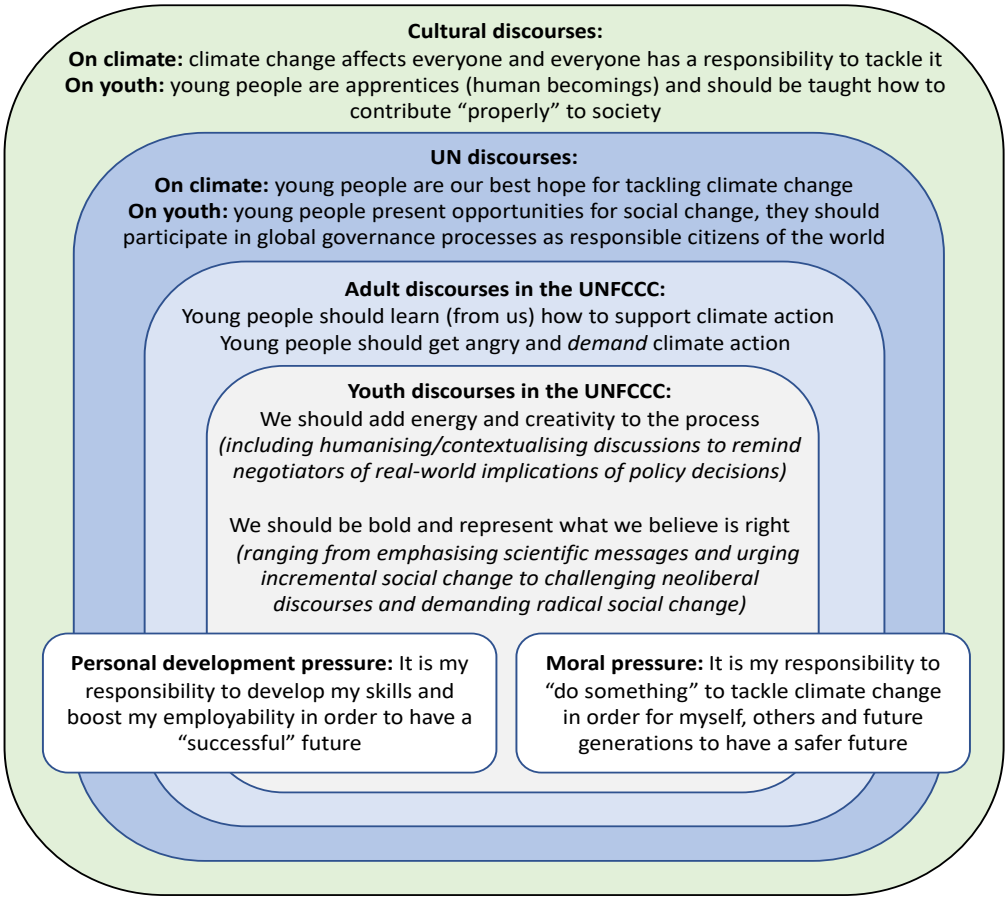

Figure 13. Positioning of youth participants aims in global climate change governance

In Sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.4 we emphasise our participant's awareness of challenges relating to inclusion, privilege and power in UNFCCC youth spaces. We identify several strategies they use to address these issues, highlighting remaining challenges. We suggest that mechanisms for representation and accountability could be established at local to national levels and regional meetings could be facilitated, encouraging youth participants to foreground their local knowledge and experiences. Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia (2019) demonstrate that youth participants are already doing

this in online platforms despite being guided by the UN to present themselves as global citizens, demonstrating an appetite for this type of intervention. Furthermore, when young people are able to share their lived experiences, it helps policy-makers to contextualise discussions, better understanding their implications (Tanner, 2010; Perry-Hazan, 2016). Further research should explore the ways in which power is exercised in the UNFCCC and how this shapes whose perspectives are shared and the implications of this for decision-making outcomes. Thew et al. (2020) take a first step in exploring justice claims articulated by youth in the UNFCCC, using social theories of power and justice which youth studies could build upon.

In Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.6 we identify risks relating to young people's protection in the UNFCCC. These risks demonstrate a greater need to consider protection and place simultaneously. Whilst safety risks are not entirely specific to youth, they are exacerbated by lack of funding given that unlike the majority of NSAs, youth participants are often volunteers. We also identify ways in which young people have sought to mitigate certain risks, such as the establishment of a harassment protocol. Whilst this demonstrates their agency, it further illustrates why more experienced youth participants feel it necessary to pursue the fourth purpose in our typology, addressing risks which are overlooked by process facilitators, placing yet another responsibility on them. Future research should explore further how this exacerbates the psychological burden placed on youth participants, in climate governance and other contexts.

In Section 2.4.7 we question the applicability of Cahill and Dadvand's seventh prompt: *process* to all research methods and propose its replacement with *psychological factors*.

The latter helps to illuminate the intersections between young people's participatory experiences in formal processes and their daily lives as encouraged by Furlong (2016). We find that youth engagement in the UNFCCC is in part motivated by "leisure precarity" (Batchelor et al., 2020), as evidenced in Liv's quote which attributes her participation to fear of unproductive leisure time and perceptions of future precarity. We find, as others have (Ojala, 2012; Threadgold, 2012) that in relation to climate change, young people worry more about others than about themselves and engage in coping strategies to manage this worry. However, they also worry about themselves and their peers' protection within the participatory process. We suggest negative psychological impacts could be reduced if the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP hosts could address some of the more logistical and procedural challenges identified in our analysis. Guided by Ojala (2012) we suggest that this would free up young people's limited capacity to engage in "problem-focused coping", contributing to collective action by directly tackling climate change whilst also reducing worry and promoting hope, which would likely sustain youth engagement.

2.6. Conclusion

This paper is the first to test the 7P model since its publication, applying it to an ethnographic study of youth participants in the UN climate change negotiations from 2015-2018. We find that the model offers many benefits, enabling consideration of how youth participants navigate formal institutional structures, informal cultures of participation and power dynamics in a global governance context.

Building upon Cahill and Dadvand's paper, we add six prompts to guide future applications of the 7P model, encouraging critical analysis of youth participation from a variety of angles, consolidating all prompts into a single table to enhance usability. We also propose the replacement of their 7th P: *Process,* which we feel is a consideration for research design rather than an analytical lens, with *Psychological Factors,* which we find plays a key role in shaping youth people's participatory experiences, interacting substantially with the other elements of the model, particularly in the emotive context of climate governance.

In addition, we offer novel empirical and theoretical contributions on the participatory experiences of youth in the UNFCCC, which have been long neglected within both youth studies and environmental governance literatures. These include: a typology of *purposes* pursued by youth participants, depiction of various ways that young people are *positioned* in the UNFCCC and the confusing and conflicting pressures this places upon them and identification of strategies used by youth participants to navigate asymmetrical *power relations*.

The recent rise to prominence of youth climate activists such as Greta Thunberg has given hope to scholars and practitioners suggesting that children and youth will "save the world". This is attracting new research into and enthusiasm for the role of younger generations in climate governance. While we encourage greater attention to and support for youth participants, our study finds that young people face many challenges when engaging in global climate governance. We therefore propose that further research must remain attentive to "social continuity" as well as to social change (Woodman et al., 2020) urging caution around the hyperbolic framing of youth

as our long-awaited saviours and encouraging greater consideration of the psychological burden this places on young shoulders.

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Chapter 3 (Paper 2). "Youth is not a political position": Recognition and representation justice in the UN Climate Change Negotiations

Abstract

Youth articulations of climate change injustice are experiencing an unprecedented moment in the spotlight as, inspired by Greta Thunberg, young people around the world take to the streets demanding justice for their generation in the face of climate emergency. Formal opportunities for youth voices to be heard in environmental governance are slim, although the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) offers a rare opportunity for youth to share their perspectives as one of nine civil society constituencies: YOUNGO. Recent research in Global Environmental Change has called for empirical exploration of justice claims-making by different stakeholders to develop understanding of how justice is conceptualised and negotiated in climate change governance spaces. To date, climate justice claims from youth have not been explored in the academic literature. This paper draws upon rich, ethnographic, longitudinal data on the evolution of justice claims made by a group of youth participants in the UNFCCC to contribute to this empirical gap. In our research, a UK-based case study organisation and long-established member of YOUNGO was studied between 2015 and 2018, including observation of their participation at the 21st, 22nd and 23rd Conferences of the Parties. We find that youth participants first articulated injustices based on perceived future risks to their generation but, over time, switched to solidarity claims about injustices experienced

by other groups in the present. Whilst laudable, this impedes their mandate as representatives of younger generations. We also make three theoretical contributions to environmental justice theory. First, we expand participation justice theory to both the visible structures of participation (procedural justice) and the informal rules and discourses shaping participation (representation justice). Second, we demonstrate the importance of both external and self-recognition for the articulation of justice claims. Third, we clarify the relationship between power and justice claim-making, proposing that we must look beneath what is articulated to shed light on the exercise of ideological power that shapes the framing and claiming of justice in environmental governance spaces.

Keywords

Youth; Climate Change; Participation; Recognition; Environmental Justice; Power

3.1. Introduction

Greta Thunberg, and other teenage climate activists, have inspired millions of young people around the world to engage in school strikes, drawing attention to the climate emergency and demanding rapid political action in the Fridays for Future movement. Fridays for Future is active in over 150 countries (as of 2019) having garnered widespread public and media attention, with young strikers receiving encouragement from academics, teachers and politicians (Taylor, 2019). This has reinvigorated the discourse of intergenerational justice in climate change activism and catalysed public debate on what society owes to the young.

In the climate change governance literature, attention to youth is long overdue. Studies of non-state actor (NSA) participation have paid scant attention to younger generations although Youth NGOs "YOUNGO" was formally recognised as one of nine civil society constituencies in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2009 (YOUNGO, 2017) and grew to become the fourth largest constituency at COP 22 (UNFCCC, 2017). As justice is pluralistic, studying the variety of groups making justice claims can help to develop theory (Schlosberg and Collins, 2014). NSAs play a key role in ensuring that climate change governance is just (Derman, 2014): yet scholarship has paid little attention to NSA claimants, their claims and the consequences for inclusive outcomes.

Recent scholarship has called for research to go beyond theoretical justice principles to explore the ways in which justice is articulated in climate change governance spaces (Bulkeley et al., 2013; Klinsky et al., 2017). Whilst a small body of research has explored justice in the UNFCCC from the perspective of some NSA groups (Derman, 2014; Glaab, 2017), youth justice claims have not yet been examined. We therefore do not know how justice is conceptualised by young people, what types of justice claims they articulate in climate change governance spaces in what circumstances, and what this can tell us about the relationships between justice claims and the power dynamics shaping their articulation.

This paper addresses both the empirical gap on youth justice claims in the UNFCCC and the theoretical gap regarding what this tells us about the relationships between power and justice claims-making. To explore these complex dynamics as they unfold requires a methodology enabling deep enquiry into participatory experiences over

time. We draw on a longitudinal ethnographic study of youth participation in the UNFCCC from 2015 and 2018 in a case study of a UK-based youth organisation, the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC). We seek to use this rich empirical data to enrich theory. Guided by Bulkeley et al. (2013) and Klinsky et al. (2017) we ask three research questions: What type of justice claims are youth making in UNFCCC conferences? How and why do youth participants articulate (in)justice in particular instances and (how) is this shaped by their interactions with other social groups over time? What does this tell us about the relationship between power and justice claims-making?

Our ethnographic approach provides insights into how youth articulate (in)justice in private spaces (i.e. youth-only meetings and conferences) and how this contrasts with their public articulations amongst more powerful social groups. Our longitudinal approach captures changes in youth perceptions and articulations of justice over time. We find that after interactions with other groups, youth justice claims shifted from emphasising their own future vulnerability (i.e. first-order justice claims) to amplifying the present vulnerability articulated by other stakeholders (i.e. solidarity claims). We argue that, although solidarity is important and warranted, this shift at the same erodes youth's ability to represent their generation. We argue that, contrary to the statement made by a youth participant in our title, youth *is* a political position, and that despite formal recognition of YOUNGO as a relevant stakeholder group, youth participants and hindered by the exercise of power by other stakeholders which shapes the informal rules of participation and accepted discourses in the UNFCCC. Over time, this erodes their belief (self-recognition) that youth have a unique stance from which to interpret the negotiations, believing themselves to be unworthy

claimants of climate injustice. These findings have several implications for environmental justice theory.

In addition to its empirical contribution, our paper makes three theoretical contributions: 1) we recast relevant justice theory by incorporating Fraser's (2010) work on representation justice into David Schlosberg's (2004) tripartite environmental justice framework, thereby expanding participation justice theory to consider both the visible structures of participation (procedural justice) and the informal rules and discourses shaping participation (representation justice); 2) We also highlight the importance of both internal (psychological) and external (structural) aspects of recognition in shaping justice claims, overcoming Fraser and Honneth's long-standing debate on this issue, and; 3) We explore the hidden relationship between power and justice claims-making, using Lukes' theory of ideological power (2004).

In what follows, Section 3.2 reviews the key academic literature on distribution, recognition, procedural and representation justice, before discussing the relevance of Lukes' theory of power for mobilising justice theory beyond theoretical principles to enable a more sociological inquiry of how justice plays out in reality. To situate our study, we also outline existing studies of NSA perceptions and articulation of justice in the UNFCCC. Section 3.3 explains the ethnographic, longitudinal methodology followed in the research. Section 3.4 presents our results and Section 3.5 discusses their theoretical and practical implications. Section 3.6 draws conclusions.

3.2. Literature Review

3.2.1. Justice claiming and framing, participation and power

When investigating the *type* of justice claims youth are making in the UNFCCC, it is necessary to differentiate between facets of justice. We begin by discussing the most common facets of environmental justice: "distributive", "recognition" and "participation" (Schlosberg, 2004) before proposing the addition of "representation" from the social justice literature (Fraser, 2010).

Early justice theory focused on the distribution of resources across time and space, with intergenerational justice focusing on temporal distribution of resources and responsibilities between generations and intragenerational justice focused on spatial distribution of goods and impacts between locations and social groups (Norton, 2002; Rawls, 1971). These two aspects of distributive justice must be considered when studying justice claims-making (see Table 6). Whilst youth participation in climate change governance relates to intergenerational justice due to the unequal temporal distribution of costs and benefits across age groups (Hausfather, 2019), intergenerational justice theory focuses primarily on what we owe to hypothetical unborn generations without considering what we owe to existing younger generations (Norton, 2002). Intragenerational distributive justice theory has in turn followed the "Westphalian" approach for which nation states are the only units of analysis, overlooking the diverse experiences of different social groups within those nation states (Fraser, 2010).

Arguing that distributive justice was too narrow a framing, Nancy Fraser argued for attention to recognition justice, following calls for recognition of different social groups as a precursor to maldistribution (Honneth, 1996, Taylor, 1994, Young, 1990). Whilst Iris Young proposes that justice theory move beyond distribution, Fraser (1995) argues that recognition should be considered alongside distribution, exploring who is included and excluded in decision-making processes. She claims that distribution takes place in the economic sphere and recognition in the social sphere and despite interlinkages they require analytical distinction.

Fraser emphasised the structural aspects of recognition, arguing that what matters for justice is a group's ability to achieve participatory parity i.e. to be "*full partners in social interaction"* (2000, p111) Axel Honneth in turn has emphasised psychological aspects, arguing that individuals must develop self-recognition as a precursor to agency, perceiving impact on psychological wellbeing as injustice (Fraser and Honneth, 2003). Fraser's emphasis on structural aspects of recognition has sought to avoid overshadowing distribution amidst the rise of identity-politics which she feels focuses on cultural difference without sufficiently acknowledging links to economic injustice (Fraser, 2000).

Fraser and Honneth's arguments are not as far apart as they might seem. David Schlosberg (2009) argues that Fraser oversimplifies Honneth's argument in suggesting he overlooks the role of structure, but Honneth explores how individuals develop self-esteem when they receive recognition from the state and society as well as from individuals, claiming that self-recognition diminishes when an individual is excluded

from certain rights and subjected to damaging cultural norms, which subsequently damages their agency. We suggest that self-recognition should be considered a factor in a group's ability to achieve participatory parity and that doing so would complement Fraser's emphasis on structural impediments. Arguing that the two factors are complementary, not mutually exclusive: we depict them as dual aspects of recognition justice in Table 6.

Fraser also identifies invisible rules and discourses as barriers to participatory parity, drawing upon examples of gendered cultural practices to argue that some groups are framed as deficient and treated differently in society even if they appear to have participatory parity in terms of visible structures (Fraser, 2014). Following Kompridis (2007), we suggest it is difficult to identify these invisible structures without engaging with the subjective experiences of individuals facing these barriers. Regarding youth, the importance of informal rules and discourses in shaping participatory parity between different age groups has been emphasised in the youth participation literature. Several studies claim that youth participants in social and environmental policymaking are overlooked on account of *"their legal and social positioning"* (Trajber et al., 2019, p89). Youth are often underestimated (Tanner, 2010), regarded as "human becomings" rather than human beings" (Qvortrup, 1994; Tisdall, 2015) and welcomed as passive learners rather than active contributors (Tanner, 2010). Their participatory parity is marred by the discursive framing of youth as apathetic, deficient, under-developed and incapable, in need of support or discipline rather than of recognition (Checkoway, 2011; Edwards, 2009; Harris et al., 2010). A method enabling deeper investigation into these invisible barriers is therefore necessary for our study.

A third facet, participation justice, was added to environmental justice theory alongside distribution and recognition by David Schlosberg (2004). Schlosberg emphasises the importance of just participatory mechanisms, governing institutions and democratic rights, calling for greater attention to the formal structures shaping "procedural justice" in the political sphere. Based on studies of social movements, he identifies links between recognition in the social sphere and participation in the political sphere, emphasising that self and social recognition of diverse identities, knowledges, rights and cultures is a necessary first step to gaining access to decision-making processes.

Schlosberg (2004) emphasises that it is difficult to distinguish between social movements' calls for participation and recognition as they are so closely interlinked. Citing Borrows (1997) he suggests that increasing diversity in participation will increase recognition of diverse knowledge types. This has happened in the UNFCCC where NSA participation has become increasingly large and diverse (Neeff, 2013). However, Schlosberg also notes calls from indigenous groups for meaningful participation *in addition* to formal recognition of their diverse identities, cultures, knowledges and rights, which suggests another level of justice at play within participatory processes which is linked to recognition but goes beyond having a seat at the table (2004). We turn again to Fraser for guidance. After publication of Schlosberg's framework, which incorporates her work on recognition, Fraser added her own third facet of justice analysis: representation, which, as with Schlosberg's third facet: participation, pertains to the political sphere. There is substantial overlap between their work, though Schlosberg's (2004) framework prompted a divergence

in literatures with his portrayal of participation justice shaping environmental justice literature thereafter whilst Fraser's representation justice has been mostly utilised in social justice studies.

Representation justice goes beyond studying which groups can access a decision-making space to consider which groups can express personal "first-order" justice claims in that space. It is also concerned with the meta-framing of justice i.e. the way in which justice questions are constructed and how this shapes who "counts" as a legitimate subject of justice analysis (Fraser, 2010). It analyses a group's *"inclusion in, or exclusion from, the community of those entitled to make justice claims on one another"* (Fraser, 2010, p286). In contrast to Borrows (1997), Fraser suggests that it is not access to the space which counts, but the perception of the community therein that you are a worthy justice claimant, again emphasising the importance of informal customs and discourses as well as formal structures. She warns that there may be *"ideological minorities…rendered voiceless"* even in processes where their social difference is formally recognised (Nash and Bell, 2007, p76). Fraser calls upon the political theorist to *"describe a new grammar of political-claims making, in which what is at issue are not only first-order questions of justice but also meta-questions about how first-order questions ought to be framed"* (Nash and Bell, 2007, p74). We argue that what is needed is not only a political theorist but also an ethnographer who can build trust with less powerful groups exploring whether their perceptions match their articulations of justice, gaining a deeper understanding of justice claims making as a power-laden process.

Like Schlosberg (2004), Fraser (2010) highlights the importance of visible structures of participation in the political sphere which she calls the "ordinary-political" dimension of representation justice. Mirroring her work on recognition justice in the social sphere she also notes a "meta-political" dimension of representation justice, concerning invisible rules and discourses in the political sphere. Schlosberg also acknowledges discourse but in less depth. Our first theoretical contribution is thus to propose analytical separation of procedural justice (focusing on visible structures) following Schlosberg and representation justice (focusing on invisible rules and discourse) following Fraser as dual aspects of participation justice as depicted in Table 6.

Table 6. Environmental and social justice theory showing sphere of activity, facet of justice and dual aspects of concern for justice claims-making

Sphere	**Facets of justice**	**Concerned with**
Social	Recognition justice	Social recognition (structural inclusion)
		Self-recognition (psychological inclusion)
Political	Participation justice	Procedural justice (participatory mechanisms, governing institutions and democratic rights)
		Representation justice (first-order justice claims and engagement in the meta-framing of justice)
Economic	Distributive justice	Temporal distribution of resources (intergenerational justice)
		Spatial distribution of resources (intragenerational justice)

Fraser also emphasises the importance of power in shaping justice, as illustrated by the gendered experiences of men and women in society (Fraser, 2014). Regarding participation justice she argues that: *"The capacity to influence public debate and*

authoritative decision-making depends not only on formal decision rules but also on power relations rooted in the economic structure and the status order" (Fraser, 2007, p31). In other words, the social and economic spheres of recognition and distributive justice also shape participation in the political sphere as decision-making does not happen in siloes but is shaped by pervasive power dynamics which underpin interactions between social groups with varying degrees of economic power and social status. Investigating how and why youth participants articulate (in)justice in particular instances and whether this is shaped by interactions with other social groups over time therefore requires attention to power.

In response to Bulkeley et al.'s (2013) and Klinsky et al.'s (2017) calls for social inquiry into justice-claims making, we propose that a key theory on power from Steven Lukes can help to mobilise Fraser and Scholsberg's more static, philosophical justice theory for empirical inquiry into how justice claims-making plays out in reality as a dynamic process. Lukes (2004) argues that power has three faces. 1) *Decision-making power* is exercised when a group shapes a decision-making process so that its preferences are realised in the outcomes of decision-making processes. 2) *Non-decision-making power* is exercised in agenda-setting to ensure that certain issues are included or excluded, identifiable in whose preferences shape the parameters of decision-making regardless of final outcomes. 3) *Ideological power* is exercised in shaping how other participants perceive and articulate problems and solutions, identifiable when a group is unable or unwilling to express their "true preferences" as they conflict with the ideology of a more powerful group. This invisible form or power is particularly difficult to detect and can manifest in "latent" conflict as the powerless adopt the preferences of the powerful, even when they go against their own interests. We suggest Lukes' theory

offers a more detailed explanation of Fraser's assertion that justice is negotiated in power-laden interactions between different groups (2014).

Ideological power may explain why justice claims are made (or not) in different instances, potentially increasing understanding of the claiming and framing of justice as a power-laden process. Empirical application of Lukes' theory confirms that perceptions and articulations of fairness are shaped by power-laden interactions between social groups (Gaventa, 1982). In an historic case study of white pastoralists in the rural Appalachian region of the United States of America who experienced domination when white, predominantly British, capitalists plundered the region for coal, Gaventa found that the exercise of ideological power manifested as "quiescence" (i.e. latent conflict) when the Appalachians' resistance was stifled by feelings of powerlessness. This created a false illusion of consensus despite what could be described as distributive, recognition and participation injustice (Fraser, 2010; Schlosberg, 2004). The Appalachians did not claim injustice for many years because their preferences were shaped by the capitalists' exercising of ideological power which blamed the Appalachians for not developing "a strong sense of civic responsibility" (Gaventa, 1982, p36) labelling them as "apathetic" and "deficient" (p41). The parallels in the language used to undermine youth as identified in the youth participation literature are striking (Edwards, 2009; Harris et al., 2010). This re-enforces our belief that ideological power is an integral consideration in studying justice claims and may be of particular relevance to youth.

Even the discursive exclusion of youth as human becomings (Qvortrup, 1994) or tomorrow's leaders/citizens (Tisdall, 2015) mirrors the discursive exclusion of the

Appalachians as "yesterday's people" (Gaventa, 1982, p41). It suggests that in addition to Fraser's assertion that the "grammar" of justice matters (Fraser, 2007), "tense" also matters as framing a group as irrelevant in the present (whether proposing they are the people of yesterday or tomorrow) can result in that group's grievances going "unexpressed" (Gaventa 1982, p41). Less powerful groups may be subjected to "myths" about their deficiencies and come to deny and reject their former grievances as they are "socialised" or "moulded" to accept and replicate the status quo (Gaventa, 1982, p68). Identifying injustice must therefore go deeper than a surface-level exploration of whether and how a group publicly articulates (in)justice, to determine whether their justice claims differ in private and whether their perceptions and articulations of justice are shaped by interactions with more powerful groups over time.

Gaventa emphasises the importance of studying how power relations develop over time as latent discontent may be re-activated following a shift in power dynamics. When the British mining company began to struggle financially, the Appalachians began expressing their grievances which he takes as evidence that their former expressions of support were a result of powerlessness rather than of consensus. Identifying ideological power therefore requires a methodology which facilitates trust and reciprocity as well as requiring sufficient time and resources to conduct longitudinal work investigating how these complex dynamics unfold over time. Our ethnographic, longitudinal approach is well-suited to this task. In order to contextualise our empirical contribution we now turn to justice claims made by other NSAs in the UNFCCC.

3.2.2. NSA participation and justice claims in the UNFCCC

Justice studies focusing on the UNFCCC have focused on distributive justice claims made by states in relation to other states (Morgan and Waskow, 2014; Okereke, 2010) highlighting unequal participation of state actors (SAs) and the implications for procedural justice and legitimacy. NSAs do not have the same access to formal mechanisms of participation: they can't directly participate in the negotiations, and don't experience participatory parity with state actors. However, they can play a role in shaping invisible rules and discourse by engaging with formal participatory mechanisms facilitated by the UNFCCC for the nine recognised NSA constituencies. Therefore, although the UNFCCC is an intergovernmental process, it has been described as a "uniquely relevant site" for NSAs to contribute to justice debates in climate change governance (Derman, 2014). Derman attributes this to the increasing levels and diversity of NSA attendance though we have established that attendance does not necessarily equate to representation justice which requires closer attention.

The formal structures facilitated for YOUNGO have been explored by Thew (2018), finding that although youth have the same access to them as all other NSA constituencies (e.g. they can attend and host side events and exhibits, deliver actions and plenary interventions and meet with high-level representatives) they do not experience participatory parity with other NSAs. This is partly due to lack of finances which prevents youth from capitalising upon available opportunities e.g. as volunteers self-funding their participation, youth struggle to apply for and prepare side events and exhibits in advance. This also restricts their ability to develop relationships with more powerful actors over time as self-financing repeat attendance often isn't

possible. Youth attribute their participatory challenges to lack of recognition from other stakeholders despite being officially recognised as a constituency (Thew, 2018). This further supports the theory that informal, invisible rules act as a barrier to participatory parity even when formal structures appear fair, whilst confirming that youth are a suitable case study to investigate this further.

The state-centric framing of justice has been challenged by increased awareness of transboundary environmental and economic impacts in a globalising world, with calls for empirical research of how justice is understood by different groups (Bulkeley et al., 2014). Whilst a small body of work has explored the participatory experiences and justice perspectives of a variety of NSA groups such as environmental NGOs (Chatterton et al., 2013; Derman, 2014), faith-based actors (Glaab, 2017) and farmers (Sova et al., 2015), they do not engage deeply with justice theory. Furthermore, although these studies suggest the presence of unequal power dynamics, this is only explored by Sova et al. (2015) who review a wide range of literature on power, selecting Lukes' theory as fruitful for the study of NSAs in the UNFCCC. They suggest that ideological power shapes the preferences of smallholder farmers in the agricultural adaptation regime, though due to a lack of smallholder farmers in the UNFCCC they test this hypothesis by interviewing SAs. Thus, further work is needed to explore justice claims made in the UNFCCC.

Several studies on NSA participation include articulations of justice made by youth in the UNFCCC without acknowledging that youth are of unique interest. Hurlbert (2011) assumes that a claim made by young NSAs from the Seychelles indicates the perspective of the Seychelles government; Derman (2014) refers to a public letter

from a Canadian youth delegation as an example of general NSA perspectives; and in their study of indigenous participants Belfer et al. (2017) share perceptions of tokenism as articulated by a young indigenous person, highlighting the need to explore the intersection of age and indigeneity though their focus remains firmly on the indigenous constituency. This demonstrates that youth are articulating justice claims in the UNFCCC, though whether they share their true preferences or are adapting their claims as a result of power dynamics within the negotiations remains unknown.

Our refinement of the concept of representation justice offers a way to increase understanding of how justice claims-making and meta-framing shapes participation justice, which has implications for procedural legitimacy and for ensuring no one is left behind (Klinsky et al., 2017). This will shine light on the aforementioned research gaps regarding how justice is conceptualised by youth participants, what types of justice claims they articulate in the UNFCCC and what this tells us about how power shapes justice claims-making.

3.3. Methods

This research employs a longitudinal, ethnographic approach to explore the claims youth are making in the UNFCCC, how they articulate (in)justice and how this is shaped by their interactions with other social groups over time. This approach facilitates detailed investigation of lived experiences of youth participation over time by establishing trust and openness, enabling deeper exploration of the psychological factors shaping youth experiences of recognition and participation justice in this context. Our ethnography focuses on 20 young participants, a standard number of

participants for research of this kind and depth. All are members of a voluntary youth organisation, the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC) aged between 17 and 29 years old, reflecting the age range of YOUNGO though the constituency lacks formal lower and upper age limits.

UKYCC was selected as a case study as one of the longest established member organisations of the UNFCCC's youth constituency, YOUNGO. Although they are privileged in comparison to delegations from some countries, they are quite representative of YOUNGO which is dominated by similar Global North based voluntary groups. Studying a group based in the same country as the researchers was necessary to facilitate ethnographic engagement over a long time period. It also enabled a clearer focus on age as the root of injustice, enabling some analytical separation from other identity-based barriers to their participatory parity. This is not withstanding that 25% of the research participants are activists of colour and 90% are female or gender non-binary and may therefore experience barriers relating to racism and sexism intersecting with ageism.

In order to situate our findings within the broader context of youth participation in the UNFCCC and reflect on relevance for youth experience in other countries, we also analysed public documents produced by youth participants, including reports from two Conferences of Youth (COYs) in which thousands of youth gathered ahead of the COPs, as well as blogs written by and citing YOUNGO representatives and the lead researcher's observations of the constituency. The lead researcher has personal experience of YOUNGO as an active member between 2012-2018, participating in six COPs and five intersessionals and staying informed through

subscription to YOUNGO's mailing lists. Whilst our research explores the justice claims of some youth participants, we do not presume to speak about all youth participants. Youth are not homogenous and neither are their experiences. We hope this study paves the way for further engagement with the diverse range of youth organisations from around the world. However, we emphasise the necessity of ethnographic approaches conducted by younger researchers, as the ability to see below the surface of how youth present themselves to outsiders was a key factor in obtaining data we know to be robust.

Though not a member of UKYCC, attending as a representative of an international youth organisation at some of these conferences, our lead researcher gained in-depth insights into UKYCC'S participation by engaging in over 900 hours of participant observation conducted over a three-year period at COPs 21, 22 23 and intersessionals, plus UKYCC team meetings in the UK. She also conducted 32 semi-structured interviews with UKYCC members between June 2015 and March 2018 in person and over Skype. This period of study captured youth experiences of the UNFCCC leading up and immediately following adoption of the Paris Agreement. Interviews were between 27 minutes and 104 minutes long, with an average time of 49 minutes.

Changing perceptions and articulations of justice were explored in interviews if the researcher identified a change from a previous discussion. For several participants, it was possible to conduct repeat interviews over time, asking similar questions. Interviews with the same participants were analysed independently to open code for themes, then compared to identify longitudinal changes. Close relationships

established with participants and ongoing reflexivity by the lead researcher enabled delicate questioning and, in some instances, the researcher was able to prompt further reflection from the participant as to why their perceptions/articulations had changed offering deeper insights.

In line with ethnographic practice, coding was inductive, slowly building themes from the data, utilising Nvivo to make sense of a rich, complex data set (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Ethnography uses observations and analysis to inductively build theories from the bottom up, in an ongoing balancing act between inductive and deductive theorising. This allows for a reflexive, realist approach "zigzagging" between data and theory to develop topics of inquiry rather than set hypotheses, bringing realism to an otherwise "flat" ontology, allowing a more thorough consideration of context (Emmel, 2013) which can lead to the discovery of new questions and answers (Madden, 2010). Coding began with a broad "youth perceptions of climate justice" developing into e.g. "youth justice claims", "youth articulate other groups' claims", "youth censor their own claims" before zigzagging to the literature to differentiate between different facets of justice e.g. "procedural" and "recognition".

Participants have selected pseudonyms which do not necessarily correlate with their genders. Data have been anonymised and identifying details removed, though it may be possible for individuals to recognise themselves and their peers in their testimonies.

3.4. Results: What type of justice claims are youth making in the UNFCCC, how do they articulate justice in particular instances and (how) does this change over time?

Here we explore UKYCC's preparations for and participation in the UNFCCC chronologically, showing how their justice claims changed over time from early 2015 to early 2018. This is further illustrated by the lead researcher's observations of YOUNGO and analysis of public documents produced by the constituency to illustrate the broader trends in youth participation during this period.

COP 21, 2015

Throughout 2015, the lead researcher attended UKYCC's preparatory meetings for COP21 where the youth participants predominantly articulated justice as first-order distributive claims, expressing concerns that climate change would affect their futures:

> *Lily: "We're going to inherit this situation, when it gets really bad we'll be in our 40s."*

> *Zara: "I am worried that I won't be able to put food on the table in 30 years."*

One of UKYCC's campaigning slogans at this time was *"How old will you be in 2050?"* referring to the medium-term focus of many climate policies and projections and claiming that delays and inaction will disproportionately impact their generation. This was printed on a banner and used at several events including the UK's 2015 People's Climate March. They acknowledged the vulnerability of other social groups but believed that youth would be more vulnerable to climate change impacts over the

course of their lifetimes, and on this basis felt worthy of claiming distributive justice in the UNFCCC:

> *Euan: "We will be more affected so that gives us a powerful voice in the negotiations."*

UKYCC members attended the 11th annual Conference of Youth (COY11) in Paris before COP21, with the lead researcher in tow. In addition to the event in Paris, 3,000 youth attended local COYs across Africa, Asia and North and South America. The young organisers live-streamed events and ran an online consultation, creating a manifesto to present to the French presidency of COP21, welcoming contributions from anyone under 30 years old. The manifesto identified eight themes such as energy, conservation and adaptation, acknowledging vulnerability of other social groups such as "poor persons" and "minorities" (with which individuals may have also identified as other aspects of their identities) alongside asserting repeatedly that youth are the future and framing themselves as representatives of future generations. A key theme was "youth inclusion", a demand for recognition emphasising that:

> *"the resounding position of youth from around the globe is that any decisions that affect the current reality and the future of youth must be made in consultation with youth. The youth will inherit the Earth from older generations and we are therefore more motivated to make decisions that are better for our future. Youth must be at the heart of all decision-making and have a seat at every table. The youth have unique perspectives and motives and, as they make up 1.2 billion of the world population must be seen for what they are – an essential asset to any country!" (COY11, 2016, p20)*

The COY11 manifesto also calls for intergenerational equity which was one of YOUNGO's key advocacy goals at COP21. Several of the research participants belonged to a YOUNGO working group lobbying for text on intergenerational equity "Inteq" in the Paris Agreement. They aligned with other NSAs in a cross-constituency working group of NSAs which sought to frame justice around human rights, emphasising the rights of vulnerable groups including indigenous peoples and women, to which they added future generations. Despite claiming procedural injustice on account of access restrictions placed on all NSAs during COP21, in working alongside these other stakeholders, youth experienced some success in shaping the meta-framing of justice and intergenerational equity was included into the Preamble of the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015). However, the relegation of this text to the non-legally binding Preamble is firstly indicative of the non-decision-making power stemming from the lack of procedural justice for NSAs in the UNFCCC and secondly indicative of a shift in the discursive framing of distributive justice in the UNFCCC as compared to the three references to future generations in the original UNFCCC Convention (UNFCCC, 1992). The Paris Agreement contains no direct references to future generations (UNFCCC, 2015). Without youth advocacy, any reference to intergenerational equity may have been entirely lost.

COP 22, 2016

Over the next year, the Inteq working group disbanded despite having had plans to further pursue its operationalisation in the Paris Agreement and YOUNGO's calls for intergenerational injustice became less frequent. Members of UKYCCC continued to articulate intergenerational injustice in private research interviews and in public blogs:

Khloe: "I feel like it's our role to say we are youth, we are the ones who are gonna inherit the future that you're building for us, or rather destroying for us, and we're not gonna let you do that… It's about justice. It's about saying you can't keep on destroying the world, that you will not be there to see the consequences of…that's really unfair and unjust".

"Young people are the most affected by climate change. Yet our voices are ignored in decision-making processes, our presence is excluded in certain negotiation sessions, and our potential to be part of solutions is constantly downplayed." UKYCC member cited in blog (Hope, 2016)

However, they felt less able to articulate this amongst other stakeholders in the UNFCCC, claiming that lack of social recognition was a barrier to their participatory parity:

Maria: "Being a youth means you're not considered seriously…but we try to bring a strong voice to the negotiations"

Nadia: "I think that there's a hierarchy, so the Parties are the important ones and then there's the observers and then there's the youth observers".

YOUNGO representatives also claimed recognition injustice. One action involved youth from all around the world calling for financial resources to "unlock their potential". In side events and blogs YOUNGO representatives emphasised youth voices and actions but questioned their social recognition:

"The youth are talking but are also doing. Are you listening?" (IISD, 2016)
"We have been reduced to a photo opp…That's not youth representation." (Lockwood, 2017)

> *"Yes, youth at COP22 are reduced to a photo opportunity. We can only hope that amplifying our voices will help us eventually enact real change." (Lockwood, 2017)*

The lead researcher repeatedly observed youth participants struggling to be heard, often due to a perception that youth are there to learn rather than to contribute. As a relatively young researcher she experienced a marked difference in how people responded to her in the UNFCCC when they realised she was a researcher amidst youth participants rather than a youth participant herself. Perhaps to counteract this recognition injustice, many members of YOUNGO began dressing more professionally to assimilate with non-youth, favouring suits and dark colours over their previous attire of jeans and slogan T-shirts. They also sought collaboration with non-youth NSAs though this often led to them promoting the advocacy messages of other constituencies without opportunity for substantial input. For example, youth regularly contribute hours (or even days) of work preparing the "Fossil of the Day" action in which ENGOs publicly shame governments who are stalling the negotiations. However, youth are not permitted to nominate governments themselves nor to shape what is said during the action, only to prepare props and promote it online.

COP 23, 2017

Over the next year UKYCC's justice claims shifted, with first-order intergenerational justice claims becoming supplemented with and replaced by articulations of present injustices experienced by other constituencies (i.e. solidarity claims). This shift followed interactions with other NSAs, particularly the "Demand Justice Now!" (DCJ!) coalition who emphasise present and historic injustices to counteract

depoliticised discourses from powerful governments who seek to position climate change as a future project rather than a result of historic maldistribution to avoid discussions of responsibility.

UKYCC once again recruited and trained new members, this time highlighting the distributive injustices perpetuated by racism, sexism and capitalism in global climate change governance and emphasising the need to express solidarity with developing states and vulnerable social groups, particularly women and indigenous people but not youth. The lead researcher inquired about this during an interview with a participant leading the training. When asked if they had raised any issues of youth vulnerability, she reflected on this:

> *Gabriella: "Not specifically for young people, more about people in the global south or people who have not caused climate change and are being affected. Which obviously young people [are] but we didn't talk about it, we talked about funding for countries that are going to be really badly affected… When we have been talking about climate justice I think we've spent a lot of time thinking about the ways in which we are privileged and haven't really spent any time thinking about the ways we will also be negatively affected… I think it's probably something we should think about more…because age also intersects with the other things [e.g. she previously mentioned intersectionality of age, race and gender]. Not talking just specifically about us but youth in the global south are gonna be more affected than youth here, but also are more affected than adults in the global south, things like that."*

Articulations of youth vulnerability became increasingly rare and this one may have only occurred due to the researcher's prompt. It didn't lead to any changes in the training and the team continued to focus on expressing solidarity with non-youth groups rather than considering youth-specific injustices. Participants began to

question whether youth were worthy justice claimants and stopped articulating first-order claims. Another participant (unprompted by the researcher) reflected on the difficulty in raising youth-specific concerns:

> *Mona: "Whenever you talk about climate justice I find it really hard to talk about anyone from the global north, and so even youth from the global north is still global north, people…look down on you or something…and, I'm really struggling with this. There's so much tension and this isn't helping going forward…There's this horrible debate around what is most urgent…I mean if climate change is happening now and affecting people now these are the people we need to stand by and so future generations come next…there really is this sense of urgency that takes over everything but…I find it really hard that I still have to argue…for youth to be able to have a voice… even with very close friends …they honestly don't see or believe that youth have much to bring. Or [we have to] bring it in a [certain] way which is: we can do actions, we can do unpaid work, we can do the art…it's really a constant battle to fight for the space and to be listened to."*

Many of the more experienced members of UKYCC spent increasing amounts of time supporting non-youth constituencies, prioritising this over engagement with YOUNGO. Many did not attend the Conference of Youth (COY13) though some of their newer recruits did, where they ran a workshop on climate justice. Following their training, they emphasised the links between capitalism and maldistribution, highlighting the present vulnerability of marginalised groups *including youth*, suggesting an ability and perhaps a perception of responsibility to articulate first-order claims in this youth-only conference whilst shifting in their framing from intergenerational to intragenerational injustice.

This discursive shift was more widespread. The COY13 outcome document (COY, 2017) produced by young attendees from around the world focuses only on present injustices experienced by youth and other groups (i.e. intragenerational justice as experienced by social groups in the present) in marked difference to the COY11 manifesto which made many intragenerational justice claims. Furthermore, the COY13 outcome document does not refer to intergenerational justice though does demand recognition and participation justice (both procedural and representation) in the form of "intergenerational spaces" where youth should be *"recognized and included as equal and prominent partners"* demanding "*mechanisms for genuine and meaningful engagement"* (COY13, 2017, p10). It also highlights a current lack of consultation with, capacity-building for and access to funding for youth which they attribute to a lack of social recognition of youth's leadership potential, stemming from broader lack of social recognition of youth in societies around the world (COY, 2017).

Articulation of first-order justice claims were perceived as barriers to collaboration with non-youth and came to be seen as a faux-pas. Rather than adding solidarity claims to their own advocacy after learning of other vulnerabilities, the older participants felt ashamed of their former first-order claims and stopped articulating them in public:

> *Khloe: "Sometimes it can feel quite uncomfortable or awkward to be someone quite privileged and middle class from the global north, because even if it's something we need to challenge sometimes it makes you feel guilty".*
>
> *Lily: "Claiming my own vulnerability feels pretty wrong or, I've just gotten so out of that mind set and so would steer away from that… (I'm) trying to be a bit more aware, living the decolonisation I talk about but…I do miss that feeling like I can have my own [voice]…I guess in the UK [youth is] an important category which needs to have a voice …but then the minute you come into this*

space and you're suddenly sat there with all these people from other countries then [UK youth] realise…their country's colonial past and the white privilege they have, or, not everyone has white privilege but they have UK privilege…having, the youth niche being [sic] we have more of an interest in the future cos we're going to be alive longer [awkward laughter] trails off…

Researcher interjects: "so would you cringe at that...we're young, we're gonna be alive for longer?"

Lily: "yeah it's not really an argument you can say like that" [embarrassed laughter]

Lily suggests that this perception is more widespread than just her personal position and explains how it creates a challenge for the youth constituency's articulation of justice:

Lily: "I remember [a Former YOUNGO Focal Point] saying that youth is not a political position. I remember hearing that and being like, this is very true."

The erosion of self-recognition is apparent. This phrase was repeated by several others showing that this idea had gained traction and that in interacting with non-youth constituencies, over time these youth participants had lost confidence that youth-specific concerns mattered either in the present or the future. Several youth participants stopped attending YOUNGO meetings, using accreditation from youth organisations to amplify the voices of other constituencies. As volunteers, many youth participants are not required to stay "on message" in the same way that paid employees are, increasing their susceptibility to ideological power. As such, the links between distributive justice and representation become clear along with the need for financial support to ensure consistent representation and parity of participation for youth in the UNFCCC.

3.5. Discussion of our findings and their implications for justice theory

Our results make an empirical contribution by identifying the perceptions and articulations of justice of youth as understudied UNFCCC participants. The depth and richness of our data offers new insights into the justice claims made and the circumstances in which claims are articulated (Bulkeley et al., 2013; Klinsky et al., 2017). Our longitudinal method enables identification of changes over time following interactions with other social groups. We find that youth make claims of recognition, participation and distributive injustice though the framing of these is shaped by interactions with more powerful non-youth groups over time.

In private interviews; in youth-only spaces such as UKYCC meetings and Conferences of Youth; and when interacting with other stakeholders in the UNFCCC whose meta-framing of justice aligns with their own (as seen in YOUNGO's collaboration with the cross-constituency working group on human rights), the youth participants primarily articulated personally framed, intergenerational justice claims. This highlights a link between recognition and representation justice by demonstrating that social recognition supports the articulation of first-order justice claims. Whilst acknowledging and amplifying claims highlighting the vulnerability of other social groups, they possessed self-recognition that their generation were particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts in the future and, as a result, they should be taken seriously as a key stakeholder in climate change governance.

Over time, following interactions with other stakeholders in the UNFCCC whose meta-framing of justice did not align with theirs (such as DCJ!'s emphasis on past and present rather than future injustices) their public articulation of first-order intergenerational injustice waned and became supplemented and then replaced with claims of intragenerational injustice experienced by other social groups. One may interpret interactions with other constituencies as a form of learning and argue that the shift from first-order to solidarity claims is indicative of youth broadening their understanding of global climate change impacts. This argument would be compelling if youth added the concerns of other stakeholders to their own but the replacement of first-order claims with solidarity claims suggests quiescence (Gaventa, 1982) in response to the exercise of ideological power (Lukes, 2004). Although youth are eager to challenge injustices faced by other social groups and although non-youth may seek to "train" youth in good faith, no other group in the UNFCCC is expected to demonstrate solidarity by replacing their personal advocacy messages with that of another constituency.

An exception to this was the articulation of first-order intergenerational injustice in online blogs, suggesting that it is not the public forum but the direct interaction with other social groups that acts as a barrier to the articulation of "true preferences" (Lukes, 2004). As such we suggest that the exercise of ideological power prevented youth from articulating their preferred claims. This is further supported by the finding that in COY13 (i.e. a youth-only space) youth still articulated first-order claims, highlighting present injustices experienced by youth as well as by other vulnerable groups.

In reframing their first-order claims to emphasise their present rather than their future relevance to climate change discussions between COY11 and COY13, we see the importance of self-recognition as a driver to overcome challenges to social misrecognition. Nonetheless, we note that the exclusion of certain discourses in the meta-framing of justice can influence claims-making even in private (i.e. youth-only) spaces. This supports our suggestion that in addition to the "grammar" of justice (Fraser, 2007) the "tense" of justice preferred by actors able to engage in its meta-framing is an important factor in shaping who is and isn't permitted to the community of stakeholders entitled to make justice claims on one another.

In line with other studies of youth participation (Checkoway, 2011; Tisdall, 2015), youth in our research felt their participation was tokenistic, their attendance resulting in them being seen but not heard. This supports our argument that participation justice analysis must look beyond attendance of diverse groups as Borrows (1997) suggests and beyond the presence of formal structures as Schlosberg (2004) suggests, particularly when different age groups are involved, though this is likely to also apply to other marginalised actors. Whilst some youth vocally challenged invisible barriers to their participatory parity by claiming recognition injustice and articulating the reasons for their self-recognition, others sought to circumvent these barriers by assimilating with non-youth participants. This was visually identifiable in changes to their attire and ideologically identifiable as seen in the decline of intergenerational injustice claims and acceptance of work for other constituencies without reciprocity. This builds upon Gaventa's work (1982) in illustrating how quiescence develops over time as individuals seek assimilation into over conflict with more powerful groups, hoping to overcome barriers to their individual participation but in so doing create

latent conflict as their individual assimilation fails to ameliorate the position of the less powerful group.

We suggest that in meta-framing climate justice solely around intragenerational equity to the exclusion of intergenerational equity, non-youth NSAs unintentionally excluded youth from the community of accepted justice claimants due to strong associations between YOUNGO and the temporal framing of intergenerational justice. As a result, several of our research participants lost self-recognition of youth as a relevant stakeholder in the present as well as the future and stopped articulating first-order claims. This illustrates a clear link between representation and recognition justice. Our longitudinal approach enabled us to prompt participants to reflect on these changes. Not only did they perceive first-order claims to be a barrier to collaboration, the participants came to view their previous articulations of youth claims as shameful, associated with naivety at best and racism at worst. This culminated in loss of self-recognition as youth lost confidence that they had a relevant position from which to comment on climate change governance. Again, we see this as evidence of quiescence given the parallels with Gaventa's study of the Appalachians (1982).

We also find that social and self-recognition are not mutually exclusive as Fraser and Honneth's debate suggests (2003), rather they are mutually reinforcing. Both are important in achieving participatory parity as they shape the articulation of justice claims and whether or not a group believes it has a right to be included in the community of these entitled to make justice claims on one another: a key aspect of representation justice (Fraser, 2010). Our results therefore provide empirical

evidence in support of Scholsberg's (2009) and Kompridis's (2007) argument that both psychological and structural elements of recognition are important considerations for justice. This builds on Thew's (2018) finding that recognition must be secured repeatedly from multiple actors in the UNFCCC rather than being held in perpetuity based on procedural recognition from the process convenors. Furthermore, we demonstrate that Lukes' third face of ideological power is helpful in demonstrating why self-recognition matters and how it can be eroded over time.

Lukes (2004) proposes that a less powerful group may not articulate their true preferences if they are subject to ideological power as the way in which a group perceives and articulates (in)justice is shaped by cultural norms which are established by more powerful groups. We see that articulated youth preferences changed following interaction with non-youth over time. When Gaventa (1982) applied Lukes' theory to the Appalachians he found that quiescence developed, i.e. consensus appeared to emerge when the less powerful group came to believe that they were underdeveloped and that the more powerful group's values were superior to their own. They fell in line and didn't rebel against the status quo even when it caused them to experience distributive injustices. Our results indicate that youth came to believe they were underdeveloped and rather than learning from other constituencies how to best utilise formal structures of participation to raise the first-order justice claims of their generation, they were socialised so that their perception of their right to participate as equals diminished, ultimately leading to their loss of belief that youth is a valid political position.

Rather than developing a shared identity and maximising their agency as YOUNGO, youth are encouraged to transition into adult constituencies as quickly as possible. This transience is specific to YOUNGO and the lack of paid roles for youth advocates institutionalises the lack of participatory parity that youth experience, creating what Fraser would call "status inequality". Like the Appalachians, we saw youth feeling embarrassed, blaming themselves for being at odds with the status quo (Gaventa, 1982). Unlike the Appalachians, youth share similar values to the groups who "socialise" them and it is not our intention to attribute blame. Nor is it possible to determine the extent of distributive injustice caused by the exercise of ideological power in the same way as Gaventa did, as the impacts will be felt in the future rather than the past. Rather, we call for financial investment in YOUNGO to retain institutional memory and facilitate youth-led capacity building to enable youth to adequately represent their generation *alongside* amplifying other voices. Beyond considering the vulnerability of youth in the present and the reduction of risk being transferred to them in the not so distant future, it is necessary to ensure that future framings of justice are permitted to enable visioning of alternative futures and development of just solutions (Kenis and Mathijs, 2014).

Gaventa observed that when power dynamics altered the Appalachians rebelled, demonstrating that the former appearance of consensus wasn't genuine, it was attributable to a sense of powerlessness. Similarly, we see that the quiescence that developed in our study was promptly disrupted by Greta Thunberg and other youth strikers in 2018 and 2019. This has led to a resurgence of first order, future framed justice claims from youth including research participants who had seemingly "grown out of" believing youth to be a relevant voice on climate change. Further research is

needed to explore this evolving situation. Guided by our results we present a second theoretical contribution as depicted in Table 7.

Table 7. Identifying links between facets of justice and facets of power

Facets of justice	**Concerned with**	**Identifiable by**	**Faces of power**
Recognition justice	Social recognition (structural inclusion)	Permission granted from other actors to attend/be included in a decision-making process	Non-decision-making power
	Self-recognition (psychological inclusion)	Choice/application to attend a decision-making process	
Participation justice	Procedural justice (participatory mechanisms, governing institutions and democratic rights)	Equal access to and capacity to utilise formal structures of participation	Non-decision-making power
	Representation justice (first-order justice claims and engagement in the meta-framing of justice)	Articulation of first order justice claims	Ideological power (freedom from)
		Ability to shape how justice is perceived	Ideological power (exercise of)
Distributive justice	Intergenerational justice	Decision-making outcomes reflect a group's true preferences for spatial distribution	Decision-making power
	Intragenerational justice	Decision-making outcomes reflect a group's true preferences for temporal distribution	

We suggest that recognition justice is a necessary precursor to non-decision-making power as formal and informal societal rules shape who is deemed a valid contributor to a topic and therefore who is included in and excluded from political processes and inclusion enables an individual or group to exercise non-decision-making power by

shaping what and who is discussed, but not necessarily the outcomes of that decision (Lukes, 2004). We note that self-recognition is identifiable in either a choice or application to participate in a decision-making process, acknowledging that some processes require prospective participants to self-nominate before being accepted or rejected by more powerful actors, demonstrating the importance of both self and social recognition.

We propose that procedural justice further facilitates the exercise of non-decision-making power as formal structures of participation within a political process enable the groups who have access to them and the capacity to use them to shape discussions but, again, not to determine their outcomes (Lukes, 2004). In the UNFCCC this is complicated by the difference in formal structures of participation offered to SAs and NSAs. We argue that this prevents NSAs from directly exercising non-decision-making power in the negotiations though they can influence SAs (see Betsill and Corell, 2008) to indirectly exercise non-decision-making power.

In addition to navigating the visible structures of participation associated with procedural justice, participants must navigate the invisible rules and discourses of participation which we argue are associated with representation justice (Fraser, 2010) and the exercise of ideological power (Lukes, 2004). We argue that representation justice is shaped by ideological power as it enables or constrains a group's ability to make first-order justice claims (Fraser) articulating their "true preferences" (Lukes). Here we differentiate between the articulation of first-order claims as indicative of a group's freedom from ideological power as exercised by others, and their ability to engage in the meta-framing of justice (Fraser, 2010) as them exercising ideological

power over others by shaping who is included and excluded from the community entitled to make justice claims on one another.

Finally, we suggest that distributive justice is closely connected with the exercise of decision-making power. The exercise of decision-making power by an individual or group is identifiable when the outcomes of a political process reflect their preferences for the spatial and temporal distribution of resources. We emphasise the importance of considering distribution to different social groups as well as to different countries, countering the Westphalian model's sole focus on nation states (Fraser, 2010).

Consideration of the three faces of power (Lukes, 2004) helps to mobilise justice theory in an empirical inquiry, enabling exploration of justice in action, i.e. how it is played out in social settings and thus helping to bridge the gap between the more philosophical approach taken by Fraser (e.g. 1995; 2000; 2010) and Schlosberg (2004, 2007) and the more sociological approach favoured by Bulkeley et al (2013; 2014), Klinsky et al (2017). Further empirical research is needed, in a variety of contexts, utilising Lukes (2004) to mobilise philosophical concepts of justice for sociological inquiry, developing understanding of what moderates and empowers claimants of (in)justice in reality.

3.6. Conclusion

This paper draws upon rich, ethnographic, longitudinal data on the evolution of justice claims made by a group of youth participants in the UNFCCC to address an empirical

gap regarding youth perceptions and articulations of climate justice. Responding to calls for research into justice claims-making in environmental governance spaces (Bulkeley et al., 2013; Klinsky et al., 2017), we shed light upon the type of justice claims youth make, why they articulate (in)justice in particular instances and how this is shaped by interactions with other social groups. We find that youth make a variety of claims but, following interactions with other groups, shifted from emphasising their own future vulnerability (i.e. first-order justice claims) to amplifying the present vulnerability articulated by other stakeholders (i.e. solidarity claims). Over time this eroded their self-recognition, leading to their perception, as the paper's title indicates, that youth is not a political position. We argue that, although expressing solidarity is important, youth require support to overcome invisible barriers to representing their generation in the UNFCCC.

We also offer three theoretical contributions: 1) we extend environmental justice theory to incorporate Fraser's concept of representation justice (2007; 2010) into Schlosberg's (2004) framework of recognition, distribution and participation justice. This offers analytical clarity between dual aspects of participation justice: the visible structures of participation, which we label "procedural justice" and the invisible rules and discourses through which justice is claimed and framed which we label "representation justice". 2) We illustrate the dual roles of self (psychological) and social (structural) recognition in shaping justice claims, countering Fraser and Honneth's long-standing debate on recognition. 3) We emphasis the hidden relationship between ideological power (Lukes, 2004) and the claiming and framing of justice.

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Chapter 4 (Paper 3). Does youth participation increase the democratic legitimacy of UNFCCC-orchestrated global climate change governance?

Abstract

Youth NGOs have participated as a recognised constituency "YOUNGO" in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for over a decade, yet research into their experiences, perspectives and contributions is lacking. Drawing upon an ethnographic case study of a member organisation of YOUNGO conducted between 2015 and 2018, this paper provides novel, rich, empirical evidence on youth participation in the UNFCCC. It addresses a fundamental question for environmental governance scholarship: does youth participation increase the democratic legitimacy of a UNFCCC-orchestrated global climate change regime? Applying the concepts of "input" and "throughput" legitimacy, it finds that the UNFCCC offers an accessible entry point for young newcomers to climate governance, but this does not necessarily lead to increased engagement in orchestrated initiatives. Theoretically, it proposes a conceptual distinction between "exclusive" and "inclusive" orchestration, the latter going beyond connecting likeminded intermediaries in pursuit of shared goals to increase diverse participation and actively redress power imbalances. It also draws a formal distinction between conference participation and engagement with orchestrated initiatives in order to challenge the assumption that diverse participation in UNFCCC conferences equates to diverse input into their orchestration efforts. It argues that the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP Presidencies could do more to proactively pursue democratic legitimacy and establish a fairer, more inclusive regime.

Keywords

Youth participation, democratic legitimacy, orchestration, non-state actors, UNFCCC

4.1. Introduction

On 12th December 2015, the final day of the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations in Paris, then Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki Moon, declared:

> *"We must protect the planet that sustains us. For that, we need all hands on deck." (UN, 2015)*

This quote underscores the changing logic of the Post-Paris (i.e. Paris Agreement) era of global climate change governance, whereby climate action is no longer the preserve of state actors (SAs) and instead draws in a broad range of non-state actors (NSAs) and sub-state actors (SSAs). As Hale (2016) argues, this must go beyond allowing NSAs and SSAs access to observe the intergovernmental negotiations to placing NSAs and SSAs at the very heart of the global climate change governance regime. The UNFCCC's role thus becomes that of an "orchestrator", facilitating and shaping the initiatives of non-governmental stakeholders in addition to overseeing negotiations between SAs (Abbott, 2017; Chan et al., 2016).

It is increasingly recognised that youth have an important role in climate change governance. This stems from media, public and political attention garnered by the

"Fridays for Future" movement inspired by Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg. In the context of the UNFCCC, young people have been organising since the early 1990s and were recognised as an NSA constituency in 2009: YOUNGO (youth NGOs). Despite this, limited academic attention has been paid to this important group. In this paper, we provide in-depth empirical evidence of how a YOUNGO member organisation, the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC), engages with the UNFCCC in terms of conference attendance and participation in related orchestration initiatives. It does so through an ethnography, spanning 2015 to 2018, as well as analysis of online UNFCCC data. In doing so, we address a fundamental question in the Post-Paris era of climate governance: does youth participation increase the democratic legitimacy of a UNFCCC-orchestrated global climate change regime?

The paper is structured as follows. The following Section (4.2) reviews the literature on orchestration, democratic legitimacy and youth participation in the UNFCCC and provides relevant empirical context to the research. We then explain our methods (Section 4.3) before sharing results (Section 4.4) and discussing their significance for our central research question on democratic legitimacy (Section 4.5.1). We propose a new conceptual distinction between "exclusive" and "inclusive" orchestration, emphasising a need for the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP Presidencies to play a more proactive role in redressing power imbalances (Section 4.5.2). We also draw a formal distinction between NSA participation in UNFCCC conferences and orchestrated initiatives, highlighting that diverse conference participation does not equate to diverse input into orchestration efforts (Section 4.5.3). The paper concludes by summarising our contributions and suggesting areas for further research (Section 4.6).

4.2. Literature review

4.2.1. Orchestration

This paper is guided by Abbott's (2018, pp.188-189) description of orchestration, which draws together several aspects of his previous work in theorising this concept:

> *"Orchestration is an indirect mode of governance that relies on inducements and incentives rather than mandatory controls (Abbott et al., 2015). It is common in many areas of global governance, where 'governors' – from intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) to transnational initiatives – possess limited authority and power for binding, direct action. An orchestrator (O) works through like-minded intermediaries (I), catalysing their formation, encouraging and assisting them and steering their activities through support and other incentives, to govern targets (T) in line with the orchestrator's goals (O-I-T). An orchestrator can also structure and coordinate intermediaries' activities to enhance ordering (Abbott and Hale, 2014; Abbott, 2017)."*

As the largest convenor of stakeholders on climate change, the UNFCCC is a pragmatic choice for an orchestrating institution (Abbott, 2017). Tasked with global coordination of the governmental policy response to climate change since 1992, the UNFCCC has more recently expressed an interest in mobilising NSAs to supplement state-led efforts. Opportunities for NSAs to gain authority in global climate change governance have increased particularly since 2009 when Parties in Copenhagen failed to reach agreement on a mechanism to replace the Kyoto Protocol, and as such, governments and even the UNFCCC Secretariat began exploring alternatives to reaching multilateral agreement (Green, 2013; Jordan et al., 2018). In 2015, the intergovernmental deadlock was broken when governments signed the Paris

Agreement, putting multilateralism back on track. Nevertheless, the idea of dispersing authority remains popular and the promises of a "polycentric" regime – whereby multiple centres of authority are guided by a central institution, such as the UNFCCC, continue to be promoted (Jordan et al., 2018).

Orchestration is particularly attractive to intergovernmental organisations like the UNFCCC who have limited resources and authority, yet have access to a wide range of potential intermediaries (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017). After the failure of COP15 in Copenhagen, the UNFCCC Secretariat was keen to be seen to be "doing something", leading to initiatives promoting NSA contributions to climate change governance which have been described as orchestration (Abbott, 2017; Dorsch and Flachsland, 2017; Hale, 2016; van der Ven et al., 2017). Examples include the Nonstate Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA): an online portal established by the Secretariat to track pledges from NSAs and SSAs; and the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) and Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action (GCA) orchestrated by COP Presidencies (i.e. host country governments) along with the UNFCCC Secretariat and UN Secretary General. The LPAA and GCA are designed to encourage NSA and SSA climate action and commitments, mobilised by two "High-Level Champions" appointed by host governments, as well as to showcase these activities within UNFCCC conferences. In 2016, the GCA instigated a series of events taking place on themed days during COPs where NSA actions are celebrated and further pledges are encouraged (Abbott, 2017).

4.2.2. Democratic Legitimacy

Legitimacy is a notoriously "fuzzy" concept with multiple definitions and diverse interpretations across disciplines (Bekkers and Edwards, 2007; Buchanan and Keohane, 2006; Dingwerth, 2007; Schmidt, 2013; Tallberg et al., 2018). Studies fall into two broad areas, being concerned with either 1) *sociological/popular* legitimacy i.e. the extent to which the authority of a decision-maker is accepted by others who will therefore comply with decisions made; or 2) *normative/democratic* legitimacy i.e. whether a decision-making process meets certain standards or principles (Buchanan and Keohane, 2006; Tallberg et al., 2018; Tallberg and Zürn, 2019). Whilst both are important, this paper focuses on democratic legitimacy. Following Dingwerth (2007, p15), we define democratic legitimacy as *"a normative concept that primarily refers to the input and throughput dimensions of legitimacy"* (see Figure 14). In addition to "input" and "throughput" legitimacy (the foci of this paper, explained in more detail below), Figure 14 also highlights "output" legitimacy. This refers to the quality of results arising from a decision-making process, or the effectiveness of policy outcomes for the people (Scharpf, 1999). This is an important consideration but one which falls beyond the scope of this paper, though is briefly reflected on in the discussion.

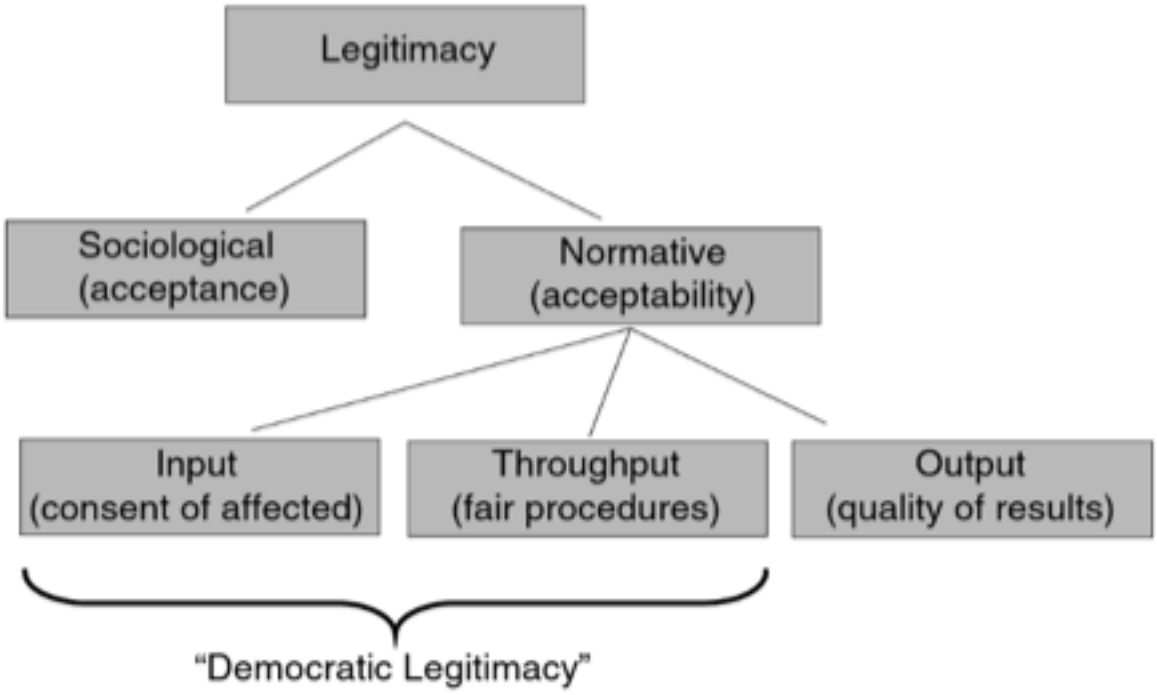

Figure 14. The Concept of Democratic Legitimacy. Dingwerth (2007, p14)

Scholars have argued that orchestrators should strive to increase the "input legitimacy" of decision-making processes by facilitating the participation of a diverse range of stakeholders (Bäckstrand et al., 2017). They should also maintain a healthy balance of power, increasing "throughput legitimacy" by ensuring that orchestrated initiatives are transparent, and that they include opportunities for deliberation and enable participants to hold one another to account if decisions taken will negatively impact them (Bäckstrand et al., 2017; Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017; Dingwerth, 2007). This has led some scholars to argue that, beyond bringing people together, an orchestrator should actively manage initiatives: *"reducing transaction costs, mistrust, and other bargaining problems amongst private actors; and assisting weaker partners when differences in power amongst parties are high"* (Hale and Roger, 2014 p64). However, it

has not been thoroughly investigated whether the UNFCCC is indeed performing this type of role.

There are both intrinsic and instrumental reasons for ensuring democratic legitimacy in climate governance at global level. Bäckstrand and Kuyper (2017) emphasise three reasons why UNFCCC-led orchestration must be democratically legitimate: 1) the UNFCCC uses public authority to create rules for orchestration, shaping the actions of its intermediaries as well as how it dispenses public resources; 2) not all Parties to the UNFCCC are democratic and even within democratic states it is not always evident that international bureaucrats have authority to make certain decisions, meaning it is not possible to claim that everyone affected by UNFCCC decisions has the potential to shape those decisions; and 3) orchestration breaks the chain of electoral accountability between citizens, states and IGOs. They therefore suggest that NSAs should have more control over how public authority is used by the UNFCCC to legitimate private actions and should be able to hold those wielding this authority to account.

Increased NSA participation in UNFCCC conferences and orchestration initiatives may be perceived to boost democratic legitimacy. However, some UNFCCC-orchestrated initiatives have specific criteria for participation, seeking to engage NSAs and SSAs with the highest mitigation potential (Hale, 2016). Furthermore, some initiatives are designed around specific themes rather than aiming for broad inclusivity and the pursuit of diverse solutions (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017; Hale, 2016). Bäckstrand and Kuyper (2017) find that the input legitimacy of NAZCA is low, dominated by businesses and cities in the Global North, particularly the USA,

suggesting that the UNFCCC could do more to increase inclusion. They argue that Action Events initiated by the LPAA, which have continued under the banner of GCA, have higher input legitimacy on account of being held at COPs offering access to all UNFCCC constituencies. Despite this, they highlight that some NSAs, such as indigenous peoples' groups, have called for more diverse participation in COPs, suggesting some constituencies still feel underrepresented despite having access to UNFCCC conferences.

This paper uses the concepts of input and throughput legitimacy to evaluate the democratic legitimacy of the UNFCCC as an orchestrator, focusing on youth participants (as an example of a marginalised group) as a case study. It is relatively rare for studies of legitimacy to focus on the participation of one interest group. However, looking beyond institutional structures to focus on the quality of participation is necessary to determine legitimacy (Schmidt, 2013). Furthermore, *"whether all relevant stakeholders…actually had the opportunity to participate [and whether] …'weak' interests were properly heard and represented"* (Bekkers and Edwards, 2007, p38) remains a key question which this paper seeks to address. We focus on youth participants as a "weaker" example of one of the nine NSA constituencies in the UNFCCC (discussed further below).

4.2.3. Youth participation in the UNFCCC

The UNFCCC attracts a growing number of NSAs to its annual COPs and is thus generally perceived as an inclusive process (Cabré, 2011; Neeff, 2013; Rietig, 2016). Over 8000 NSAs attended the Paris COP in 2015 (Lövbrand et al., 2017) and the

process officially recognises nine civil society constituencies. However, despite being born out of the Rio Earth Summit, the UNFCCC did not adopt the Major Group model of NSA participation as outlined in Agenda 21 (UN Conference on Environment and Development, 1992). Initially, the UNFCCC only recognised two NSA constituencies: business and industry non-governmental organizations (BINGO) and environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGO). Other stakeholders recognised in Agenda 21, i.e. *youth, women, farmers, indigenous peoples, local government actors, researchers and trade unions,* had to seek recognition within the UNFCCC process to gain formal participatory rights. For youth, as well as women and farmers, it took 19 years to receive the same participatory opportunities as BINGO and ENGO (UNFCCC, 2017).

Youth have engaged with the UNFCCC since the 1990s, first holding meetings outside of the COPs sharing best practice, building collaborative networks, deliberating over policy positions and presenting statements to the COPs. In 2004, they requested the creation of a UNFCCC constituency of youth NGOs (YOUNGO) (UNFCCC, 2010) which was created in 2009 and fully confirmed in 2011 (YOUNGO, 2017). The most recent data lists 72 YOUNGO affiliated organisations (UNFCCC, 2019a), ranging from large transnational networks such as the World Alliance of Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations to small voluntary groups such as the Australian Youth Climate Coalition and Cameroon League for Development, although organisations from the Global North dominate. The amount of YOUNGO accredited organisations has almost doubled since 2014 (Thew, 2018) and the number of youth participants attending COPs is also growing. At COP 22, youth represented 5.2% of NSA observers, making them the fourth largest constituency, though still a way behind ENGOs (37.6%), researchers (27.1%) and

BINGOs (15.8%) (UNFCCC, 2019b).

Nevertheless, YOUNGO has received very limited academic attention. Thew (2018) took a first step in exploring youth participation and agency in the UNFCCC, utilising ego and alter (i.e. youth and non-youth) perspectives and finding that youth participants engage in a range of activities facilitated by the Secretariat for NSAs. This includes side events, exhibits, demonstrations, plenary interventions and meetings with high-level individuals but young people struggle to utilise these participatory opportunities to their best advantage due to a lack of material resources. YOUNGO experiences high turnover due to their lack of financial capacity (the majority of youth participants are volunteers and struggle to fund repeat attendance) and also due to the transient nature of their age-based categorisation: they "grow out of" being a youth participant. As a result, youth participants often struggle to navigate the complexity of UNFCCC conferences, relying on the Secretariat to direct their participation (Thew, 2018). This renders their experiences of UNFCCC orchestration particularly interesting for questions of inclusion and legitimacy, and makes them a good candidate for this study of how a "weaker" (Bekkers and Edwards, 2007) constituency engages with orchestration initiatives. Furthermore, Thew et al. (2020) highlight that power dynamics between NSAs also exacerbate the difficulties that youth face in articulating justice claims on behalf of their generation within UNFCCC conferences, challenging assumptions that NSA experiences are homogenous and warranting further investigation into less powerful constituencies.

Applying the concepts of democratic legitimacy and orchestration to participation in the UNFCCC has precedence, although not specifically in relation to youth. Bäckstrand and Kuyper (2017) assess the democratic legitimacy of NAZCA and the

LPAA, arguing that whilst democratic legitimacy could certainly be improved, conference access does increase input legitimacy in the LPAA by widening participation, making the LPAA inclusive of the nine NSA constituencies. This paper expands upon Backstrand's and Kuyper's helpful endeavour in exploring the extent to which young people participate in orchestration initiatives in the UNFCCC, as well as identifying potential barriers to and solutions for their engagement.

4.3. Materials and methods

This article draws upon an ethnography of UKYCC conducted between June 2015 and March 2018. Data were collected in 32 interviews, over 900 hours of participant observation at COPs 21, 22 and 23 as well as intersessional conferences in between and at UKYCC's team meetings in the UK. This rich, qualitative approach enabled deep exploration of how youth experience the UNFCCC, focusing on 20 UKYCC members who have participated in climate governance activities in or around UNFCCC conferences: a typical number of participants for an ethnographic study. All participants are aged between 17 and 29 years, mirroring the age range of YOUNGO, though the constituency lacks official upper and lower age limits.

UKYCC was selected as an appropriate case study as one of the longest serving member organisations of YOUNGO, having been sending delegations of young volunteers to the climate negotiations since 2008 (i.e. a year before YOUNGO was created). As one of the longest established groups in YOUNGO, UKYCC's participatory challenges are less easily dismissed as inexperience: a challenge often levelled at newcomers to global environmental governance processes (Clark et al.,

1998) as well as at young people in general. Studying a group based in the same country as the lead researcher also enabled regular engagement and immersion in the group as they prepared for and reflected on their experiences of UNFCCC participation. This established trust and honesty between the lead researcher and participants, enabling observation of their private discussions and providing insights which would have been unachievable with less time-intensive research methods.

In addition, the lead researcher has been actively engaged with YOUNGO since 2012, participating in six COPs and five intersessionals. She subscribed to YOUNGO mailing lists and also used blogs, social media content, online documents and observation of broader constituency activities to contextualise the interviews and observations (Hodkinson, 2005; Madden, 2010). Triangulation between multiple sources of data, collected via the three methods: interviews, participant observation and document analysis, enabled the researcher to identify and reflect on inconsistencies as well as on her interpretation of the data (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000).

There has been much debate over the advantages and disadvantages of insider and outsider status in ethnographic research (e.g. Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Hodkinson, 2005; Madden, 2010). However, many argue that this is a false binary and that one's positionality in ethnographic research should not be seen as either an insider or an outsider, but rather as a continuum (e.g. Macrae, 2007; Miled, 2019). The lead researcher was aware of UKYCC before embarking upon this research but the vast majority of participants were unknown to her. There were many occasions when aspects of her intersectional identity resonated with those of the research participants, enabling rapport to be quickly established, increasing participants'

willingness to discuss potentially sensitive issues and personal concerns, and being able to access certain spaces without suspicion (MacRae, 2007; Miled, 2019). However, the very nature of her presence as a researcher marked her as an outsider, as did her need (and eagerness) to comply with ethical processes which included identifying herself as such at the beginning of every interaction. As is the case in any qualitative research and particularly in ethnography, reflexivity was a necessity at every stage of the research process, with ongoing attentiveness to whether personal experience was clouding her interpretation and a deep commitment to representing the research participants accurately and fairly (MacRae, 2007; Madden, 2010; Miled, 2019).

The UK is not the only country in which voluntary youth groups have been created to participate in the UNFCCC. Similar groups attend from across North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australasia. Therefore, as a case study of a UK-based organisation, we do not claim that our findings are universally applicable. For example, youth from the Global South may experience participation in the UNFCCC differently, particularly when interacting with their own governments with whom they may share common feelings of marginalisation. They may also find more challenges in engaging with orchestrators who are unequally situated in the Global North (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017). Nevertheless, it is well-established that global environmental governance processes are heavily dominated by participants from the Global North (Newell et al., 2012) which, based on the lead author's experience as a participant-turned-researcher over the last eight years, can also be said to apply to the UNFCCC and its youth constituency. Our findings are thus likely to have relevance beyond our case study.

All interviews were semi-structured to allow flexibility. Where possible they took place at COPs or intersessional conferences in order to capture the experiences of participation whilst fresh in the minds of the interviewees. However, where this was not possible due to time pressures on the participants, interviews took place via telephone or Skype following the conferences. Interviews were fully transcribed and the coding software Nvivo was used to makes sense of this large, complex data set. Themes in the data were identified by zigzagging between the data and the literature (Emmel, 2013) i.e. following a process of abductive coding whereby codes are identified iteratively drawing upon both theory and data. We thereby identified orchestration and legitimacy as key concepts in the climate governance literature that our data had relevance to. We took a reflexive, critical realist approach to enable a more thorough consideration of context, as appropriate for the ethnographic methodology (Madden, 2010). All participants have chosen pseudonyms, which may or may not match their gender identity. Data have been anonymised though it may be possible for youth participants to recognise themselves and their peers in their quotes and description of activities.

4.4. Results

4.4.1. Opportunities offered by conference access

Our results show that the UNFCCC's recognition and facilitation of YOUNGO motivates young participants to engage in climate governance, mobilising them to take greater responsibility for their individual actions and pursue collective goals. The formal platform for youth participation provides a non-threatening avenue into climate governance (in contrast with activist opportunities which some find off-

putting), whilst the prestige of the UNFCCC dismantles some logistical barriers to their participation. As volunteers, youth participants often struggle to obtain permission from their employers or educators if governance activities fall within working hours, which is a significant barrier. The UN lends an air of prestige which encourages employers and educators to sanction young people's short-term absences for volunteering, enabling them to attend conferences. In addition to observing the intergovernmental negotiations, it is broadly assumed that youth participants are made aware of and have the opportunity to engage in orchestrated initiatives through conference attendance. However, the extent to which this actually happens requires closer investigation.

4.4.2. Youth engagement with orchestrated initiatives

Despite providing an accessible entry point into global climate change governance, our results show that youth participation in UNFCCC conferences can be exceedingly repetitive. As UKYCC member and a former Focal Point of the YOUNGO constituency (i.e. key contact between constituents and the Secretariat) describes:

> *Toby: "From all of the briefings and things YOUNGO seem to ask the same old question: how can we involve youth in this? [...] I've had visibility of all of these different sessions because I've had to coordinate them [and] that seems to be constantly what we ask [...] It is raised by different young people [but] it just seems to be the same question."*

It appears that if you ask a repetitive question you receive a repetitive answer, though whose responsibility it is to learn from this and experiment with a new script remains unclear:

> *Toby: "The response seems to be the same, it's well, if you let us know how you want to be involved then you can be […] no one seems to be trying to shut us down, it's just how to fit it in around the current system. I'm not sure whose responsibility it is to get young people involved, whether it's the people organising it or the young people themselves to make a space. I think that's one of the problems with the high turnover in YOUNGO is that you go and ask that question but aren't really around to follow it up, so the next people don't know what the answer is so they ask the same thing."*

This suggests that youth participants struggle to utilise their conference accreditation to build their capacity, expand their networks and to pursue their preferred solutions. YOUNGO's high turnover makes it difficult for them to be held accountable for implementing governance tasks and, as a result, authority is not readily delegated to them. A double-edged sword, this also prevents them from holding others accountable for previous conversations and commitments.

UNFCCC orchestrated initiatives could potentially support young people to overcome these challenges by offering regularly scheduled opportunities for NSA input which could be prepared for in advance, with youth requests formally documented to enable newcomers to hold decision-makers accountable for issues raised in previous meetings. However, our observations suggest that youth participants are only engaging with orchestrated initiatives on a limited basis. For example, in a 2016 consultation from the High-Level Champions only one of over 50 NSA submissions came from a youth organisation. UKYCC endorsed this submission, prepared by French youth organisation "CliMates" (CliMates, 2016). They thank the Champions for conducting a wide consultation with NSAs, lending weight to arguments for input legitimacy, though subsequently challenge this by highlighting the dominant focus on businesses and local authorities and calling for increased inclusion,

particularly of youth and indigenous representatives in the "Roadmap for Pre-2020 Climate Action".

The submission also raises several issues relating to transparency, calling for a transparent monitoring process of pre-2020 action, asking that high-level events use simple language that youth and all others can understand, and requesting creation of an online platform, similar to NAZCA, to document and monitor initiatives relating to education. They emphasise the importance of including "social" aspects of climate action in orchestration initiatives, rather than only focusing on the type of action delivered by business and local authorities. To our knowledge this has not been created, nor has education been included in NAZCA, though the UNFCCC Secretariat does promote education under the umbrella of "Action for Climate Empowerment" which we will discuss shortly.

Whilst the submission from CliMates indicates that some young people were aware of NAZCA at this time, our lead researcher did not observe any conversations within UKYCC or YOUNGO meetings about engaging with NAZCA and contiguous to data collection there were no youth organisations listed as participants on the platform. A more recent search (in 2020) found just one: Young Power in Social Action Bangladesh, which has committed to a cooperative initiative to build resilience to support vulnerable social groups (UNFCCC, 2019a). The website of this group emphasises their commitment to transparency, accountability and justice, indicating that youth involvement in NAZCA has the potential to contribute to its democratic legitimacy; however, this isn't currently being realised due to the general lack of awareness of and engagement with the platform by youth groups. Similarly, observations suggest that young people did not perceive events held under the LPAA

or Marrakech Partnership for GCA to be different to any other UNFCCC side event, aside from one comment during a YOUNGO meeting that these events were *"even more formal and political and unlike youth events",* suggesting a lack of willingness to engage with these initiatives.

4.4.3. Barriers to youth engagement with orchestrated initiatives

Our data show that many young participants remain focused on influencing SAs to shape the negotiations rather than engaging with UNFCCC orchestrated initiatives for NSAs. During COPs 21 to 23, YOUNGO working groups (including many UKYCC members) tracked negotiations, wrote policy briefs and arranged meetings with negotiators to discuss incremental policy amendments. YOUNGO has actively pursued the "pink badges" of governmental accreditation for several years and continues to request this as a priority whenever they meet with the Secretariat and High-Level Champions. This is telling. Youth participants appear to believe that the best way to improve NSA participation is to enable more of them to be treated by the process as SAs; the legacy of two decades of casting NSAs as observers seemingly maintaining a hierarchy within the UNFCCC with SAs at the top.

Youth participants who are financially secure enough to maintain participation over several years often seek this accreditation. As a result, within YOUNGO a pink badge has become a status symbol associated with experience. Some use this to maximise their individual authority, unconsciously reinforcing a hierarchy which undermines the collective authority of NSAs and frames youth participation as an apprenticeship for something more prestigious.

At COP23 a member of UKYCC secured a pink badge to support a government from a developing country. In addition to having more access and thus being able to follow the negotiations more effectively, Katrina noted a marked difference in how others responded to her on account of her governmental accreditation:

> *Katrina: "It was definitely a jump you know…the difference between [how] people treated me in Marrakech and how they treated me now was just so big!"*

She described how other participants (both NSAs and SAs) asked her for updates on the negotiations, were more polite to her in the corridors, and how an embarrassed academic apologised for dismissing her after noticing the pink badge. Another youth participant also perceived the power dynamics between NSAs as a particular challenge for youth:

> *Euan: "It's very hard for your voice to be louder than the voice of business […] and the biggest problem is if people are prioritising engaging with business and financial concerns above engaging with young people and the welfare of humans […] if people are having ten other conversations with someone who has more power and does not share your interests then that's not going to help. It's all power in the end."*

This demonstrates that youth participants are aware of the hidden power dynamics which cement their position in the UNFCCC's hierarchy, which may be why many continue to focus on trying to influence SAs rather than engaging with orchestrated initiatives for NSAs where they perceive that they will be a particularly weak group compared to others such as businesses.

4.4.4. Another example of UNFCCC orchestration?

The differentiation between orchestrated and non-orchestrated NSA initiatives is somewhat ambiguous. On its website, the Secretariat states that:

> *"As part of our vision to spur ambition, we directly orchestrate, convene or support a number of key 'moments' throughout the course of the year. The intention behind engaging in these events is to build a new form of inclusive multilateralism that is vital to achieving our goals, specifically with regard to the urgent implementation of the Paris Agreement." (UNFCCC, 2020)*

Thus, although youth participants appear to have limited engagement with NAZCA and GCA activities, this does not necessarily mean that they are not involved in any UNFCCC orchestration initiatives, broadly defined.

One long-standing initiative which youth participants are aware of and highly engaged in is Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE). ACE is a rebrand of Article 6 of the 1992 UNFCCC Convention pertaining to six elements: climate change education; training; access to information; public awareness; public participation and international cooperation on these matters. The UNFCCC Secretariat has proactively engaged young people in this policy area for several years. However, since 2015 they have contributed additional time and resources to the promotion of ACE within UNFCCC conferences and online, facilitating a series of activities which bring SAs and NSAs together. ACE is listed under Climate Action on the UNFCCC's website and could potentially be seen as a UNFCCC-orchestrated activity, as depicted in Figure 15, though has not yet been formally identified as such in the literature.

Orchestrator	Meta Intermediary	Intermediaries	Targets
•UNFCCC Secretariat •UNESCO •UN Alliance on Education, Training and Public Awareness	•ACE	•IGOs •NSAs •Transnational Networks •Public Private Partnerships	•States •NSAs •Businesses

Figure 15. Orchestration of Action for Climate Empowerment

Further justifying its credentials as an example of orchestration, ACE includes individual commitments and cooperative initiatives, its primary function being Implementation of Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement (which re-emphasises the importance of the six elements mentioned above). Individual activities encouraged by the "meta intermediary" (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017) and subsequently engaged in by the "targets" include: nominating National ACE Focal Points; identifying opportunities for international and cross-sectoral collaboration; and mainstreaming Climate Change Education and Education for Sustainable Development in curricula. Cooperative initiatives include: participating in annual ACE Dialogues; creating green jobs; and developing public awareness schemes. Soft inducements are used to encourage these activities such as: public promotion of successes; ACE funding sources; and networking opportunities (UNFCCC, no date).

Notably, ACE could be seen as a good example of how orchestration can deliver on input and throughput legitimacy. Participation is diverse; ACE Dialogues facilitate deliberative, non-hierarchical discussions between stakeholders; and transparency is encouraged through various mechanisms including the publication of nominated National ACE Focal points along with their contact details on the UNFCCC website,

which currently lists Focal Points for 119 Parties (UNFCCC, 2020b). Furthermore, the encouragement of monitoring and reporting with established key indicators to measure progress in National ACE strategies increases accountability, and the Secretariat has produced ACE guidelines (UNFCCC, no date) which encourage engagement with marginalised stakeholders, including youth.

However, there is room for improvement. Youth participants often comment that in ACE Dialogues, presentations take up the majority of the time, hindering opportunities for deliberation:

> *Mona: "The overall feedback was that people [in YOUNGO] were quite disappointed, but also didn't want to say that they were too disappointed because it was a first step and it was at least trying to reach out towards us a bit."*

Furthermore, many young people feel frustrated that their contributions are restricted to these softer elements of climate change governance, wishing to contribute to more tangible climate change adaptation and mitigation actions which they see as more urgent than education and awareness raising, but struggle to know how to engage. This problem is partially attributable to an overfocus on education in ACE rather than on the other five elements, particularly participation. For example, ACE networks could be used to raise awareness among its intermediaries of upcoming opportunities for NSA participation through the GCA; ACE events could include deliberation on how its dedicated intermediaries could better engage in other aspects of climate action; and lessons learned from ACE could be replicated to increase input legitimacy within orchestrated initiatives under the GCA. This would benefit from recognition of ACE as a positive (though not perfect) example of orchestration, at least in terms of democratic legitimacy – something we believe is an

original contribution to the literature.

4.5. Discussion

4.5.1. UNFCCC youth participation and legitimacy

Our results build upon Thew's (2018) investigation of UNFCCC conferences from the perspective of youth participants. Through deeper engagement with over a longer period of time, we contribute empirical data to improve understanding of young people's lived experiences of UNFCCC participation. Our results indicate that UNFCCC accreditation mobilises young newcomers to climate change governance as the UNFCCC's prestige enables them to overcome logistical barriers to their participation. This lends weight for arguments for its input legitimacy. However, our results also demonstrate that youth participants are not being adequately supported and lack capacity, hindering their ability to hold other actors to account for discussions and commitments made in previous interactions. This limits opportunities for genuine deliberation and hinders youth from entering into mutually beneficial collaborations. In turn, this reinforces an underlying hierarchy between SAs and NSAs, and between youth participants and other NSAs, whereby young people come to see themselves as less powerful: an erosion of their self-recognition which, as Thew et al. (2020) establish, has implications for justice as well as for democratic legitimacy.

An exception to this is within ACE. We propose that this could be seen as an example of orchestration, and a fairly democratically legitimate one at that, but which isn't currently recognised as such within the literature. Our argument here is indirectly supported by a recent paper by Kolleck et al (2017) which identifies that the UNFCCC Secretariat plays an influential role in ACE (though the authors focus

specifically on education) by establishing links between SAs and NSAs, establishing goals, raising ambition, creating an "*enabling environment*" for discussions (p119) and "*providing tools for the enhanced coordination of actors*" (p120). While they do not connect this to orchestration or legitimacy, given these qualities we believe it supports our case that ACE is an example of orchestration. Furthermore, using a social network analysis of Twitter discussions on education at COPs, they identify five key actors shaping the debate, including the Secretariat, an international environmental NGO, one African youth NGO and two individual participants (one young activist based in Nigeria, another a former member of UKYCC now working with the ENGO constituency). This demonstrates that the UNFCCC are broadening NSA input beyond engaging businesses and city actors, though these contributions are siloed and as a result receive different levels of attention from both academics and policy-makers.

We now turn to the concepts of input legitimacy and throughput legitimacy (Bäckstrand et al., 2017). Input legitimacy refers to the participation of a diverse range of stakeholders in orchestrated initiatives i.e. who participates, whereas throughput legitimacy refers to the democratic quality of orchestrated initiatives: ensuring they are transparent, include opportunities for deliberation, and enable the participants to hold one another to account if decisions taken will negatively impact them i.e. how they participate (Bäckstrand et al., 2017, Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017; Bistagnino, 2016; Dingwerth, 2007). Our results show that despite rising youth attendance at UNFCCC conferences, this does not equate to participation in all UNFCCC orchestrated initiatives for NSAs and thus enhanced input legitimacy. For instance, most research participants had not heard of NAZCA and although they could attend GCA events at COPs, the majority did not. UNFCCC orchestration therefore has

the potential to improve the input legitimacy of the GCA, but lack of proactive engagement of diverse actors currently inhibits this. As a result, youth remain primarily focused on influencing SAs or in protesting what is happening within the negotiations, rather than engaging with orchestrated climate action initiatives.

We find that throughput legitimacy is also limited, at least from the perspective of youth inclusion. The lack of awareness among youth participants of opportunities for NSAs through the GCA suggests a lack of transparency, or at least a lack of targeted communication. Our results also indicate a lack of possibilities for genuine deliberation and highlight that high turnover in YOUNGO hinders both their ability to hold others accountable, and in turn to be held accountable themselves. This calls for a different way of looking at orchestration. We argue that, as orchestrators, the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP Presidencies should do more to balance power dynamics in NAZCA and the GCA (as they strive to do in ACE) and ensure that marginalised actors are better included. By the same token, proactive engagement of well-resourced actors within ACE would be beneficial, so long as close attention is made to addressing power imbalances. We thus propose a conceptual distinction between "exclusive" and "inclusive" orchestration, which we expand upon further in the following section (4.5.2).

4.5.2. "Exclusive" and "Inclusive" orchestration

Building again on Thew (2018) which emphasises that youth participants' agency is hindered by lack of material resources and high turnover within YOUNGO, we suggest that because youth participants struggle to maintain participation over longer periods of time, due to financial constraints and because they "grow out of" being

young, YOUNGO struggles to develop the institutional memory needed to best utilise participatory opportunities during UNFCCC conferences and within orchestrated initiatives. Their difficulties relate to their engagement with negotiators as well as with orchestrators and intermediaries. Although Toby attributes lack of awareness of the ways in which youth can engage to high turnover in YOUNGO, it is important to note that youth are not having these conversations in isolation. This raises a question as to why UNFCCC Secretariat staff are repeatedly having the same conversation with youth participants without taking steps to enhance YOUNGO's capacity. Whilst noting the Secretariat's lack of resources, we echo Bäckstrand and Kuyper (2017) in arguing that they could do more to engage the next generation in a broader range of governance tasks in pursuit of more diverse solutions. Again, this is important for justice as well as for legitimacy.

Whilst the argument for UNFCCC orchestration is pragmatic given their convening power, we also argue that COP Presidencies and the Secretariat could do more to promote to YOUNGO (and other constituencies) the full range of initiatives being orchestrated for NSAs. They could increase transparency and inclusivity by encouraging youth (and others) to fully engage with orchestrated initiatives such as NAZCA, GCA events and ACE, as well as helping all conference newcomers to understand that a role exists for NSAs beyond "observing" negotiations. Whether youth participants choose to utilise orchestration events to pledge their own commitments, to raise concerns regarding how pledges from other actors may affect them, or to act as watchdogs holding more powerful actors to account, they could help to make these initiatives more equitable, thus improving throughput legitimacy (Bäckstrand et al., 2017; Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017) whilst also potentially making

them more effective. However, though further research into output legitimacy is needed in order to evaluate this latter claim.

Our findings resonate with Abbott's (2017) conclusion that climate governance could benefit from more active orchestration, leading us to make a conceptual differentiation between "exclusive" and "inclusive" orchestration as depicted in Figure 16. The latter goes beyond the initial establishment of an initiative to proactive, ongoing management of its implementation with the explicit purpose of balancing power dynamics, supporting weaker partners as encouraged by previous studies (Bekkers and Edwards, 2007; Hale and Roger, 2014). We argue that inclusive orchestration is particularly crucial to building trust and dispersing authority which are necessary if global climate change governance is to reap the benefits of polycentricity by engaging diverse actors in a range of solutions (Jordan et al., 2018). In contrast, despite showing promise in some areas, the current approach taken by the UNFCCC can be described as exclusive orchestration (on the basis that results suggest a lack of proactive efforts to include all NSA constituencies and thus diversify input), and may hinder the transformation of the global climate regime towards a truly polycentric form by narrowing rather than broadening input over time. With it, the spectrum of what are deemed "acceptable" policy solutions may also become narrowed over time (Ostrom, 2010; Ostrom, 2012).

We suggest that inclusive orchestration refers to a proactive strategy to improve input legitimacy by engaging a wider range of stakeholders in orchestrated initiatives, as well as throughput legitimacy i.e. the ability of participants to enhance accountability, transparency and deliberation within orchestrated initiatives to improve their democratic quality (Bäckstrand et al., 2017). In contrast, exclusive

orchestration seeks only to engage likeminded partners in pursuit of a shared goal, seeking effectiveness without striving for inclusion i.e. focusing only on output legitimacy at the expense of input and throughput legitimacy, thereby undermining the ability of a polycentric regime to *"ensure that no one is left behind"* (Jordan et al., 2018, p13).

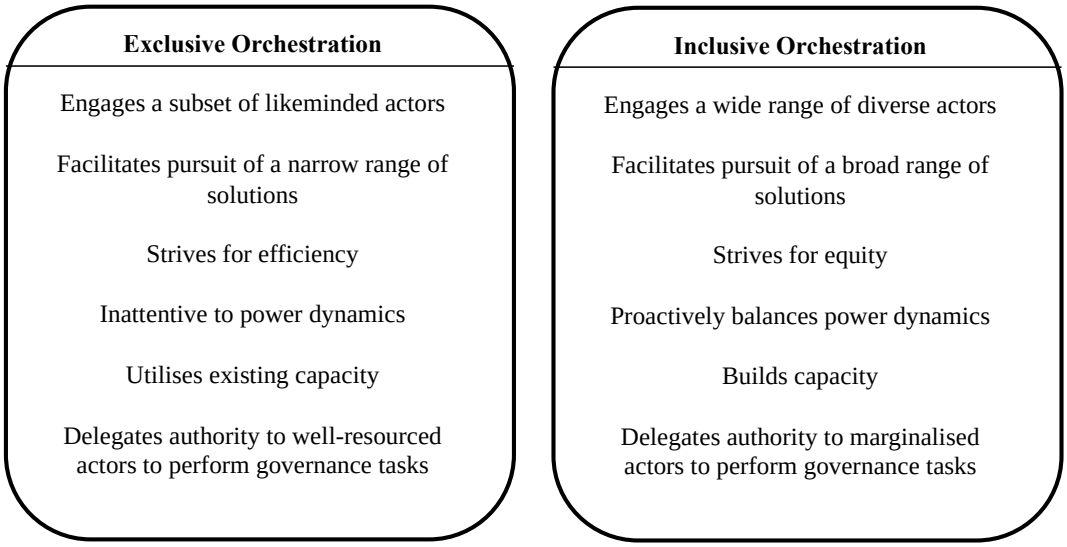

Figure 16. Characteristics of exclusive and inclusive orchestration

4.5.3. Conference participation vs. participation in orchestration initiatives

Finally, our results identify a series of challenges that young people face in UNFCCC conference participation which may be acting as barriers or deterrents to their participation in orchestrated initiatives. This includes the finding that a hierarchy remains between SAs and NSAs in the UNFCCC which is reinforced by youth and the other NSAs they interact with, meaning that many young people still prioritise attempts to influence the intergovernmental negotiations (either through lobbying or protest) rather than participating in orchestration initiatives (with the exception of

ACE which we have argued is an overlooked example). Our results indicate that youth participants have little awareness of and limited engagement in UNFCCC orchestrated activities and no involvement in their design. They continue to regard themselves as observers on the side-lines rather than occupying a central role at the heart of the Post-Paris regime as some scholars have suggested (Chan et al., 2015; Hale, 2016; Hale and Roger, 2014). This may exacerbate feelings of powerlessness, increasing negative psychological impacts such as eco-anxiety (which is already prevalent among younger generations) and stifling ongoing engagement (Ojala, 2012; Threadgold, 2012). Whilst we recognise that youth experiences may not be representative of all NSAs in the UNFCCC, our results suggest that the unspoken hierarchy our participants speak of potentially shapes the behaviour of others and thus likely has wider impact.

Our final contribution is therefore to suggest a formal distinction between the celebrated rise in NSA initiatives orchestrated by the UNFCCC (e.g. Hale, 2016) and the rise in NSA participation in UNFCCC conferences (Cabré, 2011; Neeff, 2013). These two phenomena, although easily conflated on account of their similar timescales, shared spaces, and to some extent shared participants, should be regarded as separate so as not to muddy the waters in determining where authority actually lies in the global climate regime. This is an important distinction as it challenges the assumption that diverse participation in UNFCCC conferences equates to diverse input into and legitimacy of their orchestration efforts. Previous work has warned that NSA activities can provide a distraction from state accountability, facilitating neoliberal roll-back from states striving to minimise their governance profiles (Okereke and Coventry, 2016). We thus want to draw attention again to the accountability of SAs for the effective delivery of the Paris Agreement, rather than

passing the burden onto youth and/or other NSAs.

4.6. Conclusion

In this paper, we shine light on an empirical gap in the literature on youth participants in the UNFCCC as a largely overlooked NSA constituency. We find that the prestige of UNFCCC conferences mobilises young newcomers to climate change governance and helps them overcome barriers to their participation. However, within the UNFCCC, youth participants face a range of constraints including lack of institutional memory, high turnover and hierarchical power dynamics. We propose that the UNFCCC could do more to empower youth and other marginalised NSA participants to better engage with the process, both with the intergovernmental negotiations and with initiatives orchestrated for NSAs, such as NAZCA and the GCA.

Informed by contemporary debates in environmental governance, we also explore whether the input and throughput legitimacy of the UNFCCC as an orchestrator of the global climate governance regime is increased by NSA participation in UNFCCC conferences, drawing upon youth participants as a case study to answer this question. We find that youth participants have limited engagement with UNFCCC orchestrated initiatives, challenging the assumption that the UNFCCC is pluralising input into orchestrated climate action through inclusion of its diverse conference attendees and calling into question its throughput legitimacy i.e. how decision-making processes occur. These findings are important because, just as the diversity of conference attendees lends input legitimacy to UNFCCC negotiations (Rietig, 2016), it also bolsters the sociological legitimacy of initiatives orchestrated by COP presidencies and the UNFCCC Secretariat.

As the largest convenor of actors interested in global climate governance, the

UNFCCC is a logical and pragmatic choice to take on the orchestration of NSA initiatives. However, our results suggest that youth and perhaps other marginalised NSA groups need additional support to fully engage with these initiatives on a level playing field. We thus make a conceptual distinction between exclusive and inclusive orchestration, the former going beyond establishing an initiative to proactive management of its implementation with the purpose of balancing power dynamics between participants and ensuring that decision-making is transparent, deliberative and offers opportunities for accountability. This is important to ensure that less powerful actors are not further marginalised by the narrowing of policy solutions around contributions that only well-resourced NSAs actors can make. An inclusive approach to UNFCCC orchestration could help to overcome power dynamics between states as well as between NSAs and to establish a fairer, more democratically legitimate climate change regime.

Echoing the youth submission to the High-Level Champions (CliMates, 2016) we recommend, as a starting point, that orchestrators take greater steps to communicate upcoming opportunities for NSAs and that this information is shared with all constituencies in language which is simple and easy to understand, making initiatives more accessible and appealing to newer participants. This needs to be done in a timely manner so that groups with minimal resources have sufficient time to prepare. Again, echoing the wishes of youth participants themselves, we urge that orchestrators consider social as well as economic and environmental aspects of climate action, recognising the importance of pursuing diverse solutions and diversifying input. For this to be a success, orchestrators, such as the Secretariat and COP presidencies,

need to be more proactive in maintaining a healthy balance of power and building capacity of "weaker" constituencies.

Further research should assess whether other marginalised NSAs are participating in UNFCCC orchestrated initiatives with fuller consideration of what input and throughput legitimacy should look like in the Post-Paris climate regime (Bäckstrand et al., 2017), as well as focusing on output legitimacy and exploring possible tensions between efficiency-oriented and inclusive approaches to climate governance. We also argue that increased granularity (e.g. through ethnographic, qualitative methods) is needed to determine whether all NSAs in the UNFCCC are experiencing an enhanced role in global climate governance in the Post-Paris era. Finally, we propose that COP Presidencies and the Secretariat could do more to improve democratic legitimacy by actively supporting less well-resourced NSAs and redressing power imbalances to ensure that no one is left behind in the Post-Paris era of global climate governance.

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5. Discussion and Conclusion

The overarching aim of this thesis was to increase understanding of the lived experiences of youth participants in the UNFCCC and to critically analyse the implications for theory and practice. Specifically, it was guided by three research questions:

1. What are the key factors affecting youth participation in the UNFCCC and how do they interact to shape young people's lived experiences?

2. How do youth participants in the UNFCCC perceive and articulate justice and how is this shaped by their participatory experiences over time?

3. To what extent is youth participation in the UNFCCC fit for purpose and how can it be improved to better contribute towards a fairer and more inclusive global climate change governance regime?

The first research question was addressed in paper one which identified, applied and amended an analytical framework from the youth participation literature (the 7P model) to provide a broad categorisation of the key factors shaping youth participation in the UNFCCC, making empirical and theoretical contributions relating to: *Purpose, Positioning, Perspectives, Power Relations, Protection, Place and Psychological Factors.* It also identified several ways in which these factors interact and the consequences this has for young people's participation, with significance for both the youth studies and environmental governance literatures.

The second research question was addressed in paper two which identified and documented changes in young people's perception and articulation of justice over time, responding to a call for empirical research within environmental governance. Mobilising concepts from political philosophy, paper two not only sheds light on how this understudied group of actors in the UNFCCC think and talk about justice, but also on what this can tell us about the relationship between key concepts of power and environmental justice in the context of justice claims-making.

The third research question was partially addressed in paper three which explored whether youth participation in UNFCCC conferences contributes to democratic legitimacy in UNFCCC-orchestrated initiatives for NSAs, finding several barriers to young people's engagement which undermine input and throughput legitimacy. However, increasing democratic legitimacy is just one reason for widening participation in the UNFCCC which is used to justify the inclusion of youth participants. Section 5.1 therefore takes a step back to analyse the results of the three papers from another angle, drawing upon the findings of each paper and on interdisciplinary insights from the environmental governance and youth studies literature to identify five key rationales which underpin youth participation in the UNFCCC. This approach provides multiple lenses through which to consider whether youth participation in this context can be considered fit for purpose. It also situates this work within existing studies across a range of disciplines and identifies the various ways in which this thesis contributes to these areas of scholarship.

Section 5.2 addresses the second part of the remaining research question, drawing upon the three papers to identify a series of practical recommendations for policymakers and practitioners to ameliorate youth participation in a way which contributes to a fairer and more inclusive global climate governance regime. Section 5.3 identifies limitations and suggests areas for future research. To conclude, Section 5.4 summarises the key findings and theoretical and empirical contributions of this thesis.

5.1 Rationales for youth participation in the UNFCCC

To examine the implications of this thesis it is necessary to take a step back and look at the three papers as a whole. In doing so, the obvious question remaining is:

To what extent is youth participation in the UNFCCC fit for purpose?

To address this question, it is necessary to consider the range of normative rationales which underpin youth participation in the youth studies literature and NSA participation in the environmental governance literature. To do this, I draw upon two important studies which identify key rationales for participation in decision-making: one specifically focusing on youth participation (Farthing, 2012) and the other on NSA participation in environmental governance (Willetts, 2006). I synthesise these typologies to construct a novel framework for analysing the rationales underpinning youth participation in the UNFCCC, drawing upon wider literature where necessary to fill gaps and add greater detail on specific aspects. Based on this analysis, I argue that there are five core rationales for youth participation in the UNFCCC:

- Rights-based rationale;
- Knowledge-based rationale;
- Efficiency rationale;
- Youth development rationale;
- Empowerment rationale.

I now turn to each of these rationales to explain them in more detail and to evaluate the extent to which current youth participation in the UNFCCC delivers upon each rationale, as demonstrated by the results of this thesis.

5.2.1. Rights-based rationale

The rights-based rationale is identifiable in both the youth participation and environmental governance literatures (Duyck et al., 2018; Farthing, 2012; Head, 2011; Wallbott and Schapper, 2015). In youth studies, this is based on the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); a policy agreed by 196 member states making it the most universally ratified UN Convention. The CRC gives children a series of rights, including the right to participate in decisions which affect their lives, broadly interpreted as having the right to engage in dialogue with adults where mutual respect is shown and children's perspectives are appropriately considered (OHCHR, 2009a).

The CRC-based rationale found in the youth studies literature is not prevalent in my results. This is likely because it grants specific rights to under 18yr olds but not to young adults, and the UNFCCC places significant restrictions on conference attendees aged under 16 years old (which was lowered from 18 years old during the

course of this study). As a result, there are very few children to claim against the CRC in this context, and given that my results in paper two show that youth participants lack social recognition it is unlikely that any under 18s are experiencing mutual respect. Furthermore, within the UNFCCC there is a marginal discourse, driven by the United National International Children's Fund (UNICEF), which connects the CRC to other human rights (UNICEF, 2019) and, whilst several youth participants in this study were aware of this rationale, they did not feel it applied to them and considered it strange that there was an assumption that YOUNGO represented children as well as youth, given their minimal engagement with younger age groups.

Within the environmental governance literature, I have found no mention of the CRC, though there is a rights-based rationale for NSA participation, based on Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration, and supported by regional policies i.e. the pan-European Aarhus Convention and the recent Escazu´ Agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean (Jodoin et al., 2015; Stec and Jendrośka, 2019). As noted in paper three, YOUNGO has engaged with an inter-constituency group on human rights in the UNFCCC which led to the inclusion of rights-based language in the preamble of the Paris Agreement:

> *"Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity." (UNFCCC, 2015, p1)*

Whilst YOUNGO were pleased with the inclusion of intergenerational equity as paper two highlights, the term is not clearly defined in the UNFCCC and in the academic literature is primarily focused on the rights of future (i.e. unborn) generations from an economic perspective rather than on the rights of living younger generations (Bromley and Paavola, 2002; Diprose and Valentine, 2019; Norton, 2002).

As a result, young people find themselves betwixt and between, too old to be granted rights under the CRC but not recognised as a group with particular needs or unique rights within human rights discourse (OHCHR, 2009b). As paper two demonstrates, young people feel more able to demand rights for future generations than they do for their own age group on account of being positioned and socialised in a way which diminishes their perception of their right to participate as equals, resulting in the belief that *"youth is not a political position"*. This means that young people's unique experiences are not shared, undermining the knowledge-based rationale as discussed in Section 5.2.2.

I therefore propose that youth participation in the UNFCCC is not currently delivering against a rights-based rationale. This contributes an interesting finding to the youth studies literature which to date has emphasised a CRC-specific, rights-based rationale to justify the inclusion of children and youth without critically distinguishing between the legal rights held by different age groups. It also contributes to the environmental governance literature in demonstrating that although human-rights discourse has gained traction in the UNFCCC over recent years (Cabré, 2011; Duyck, 2019; Jodoin et al., 2015) the right to participate is seemingly not perceived as universally applicable to all NSA constituencies.

5.2.2. Knowledge-based rationale

For the knowledge-based rationale, I combine two justifications which emphasise the participation of different NSAs based on their ability to input different types of knowledge. First, stemming from international relations, "functionalism" is a prevalent rationale within the environmental governance literature which argues that NSA participation increases legitimacy by providing impartial advice to decision-makers, thus depoliticising negotiations (Nasiritousi et al., 2016; Willetts, 2006). Second, a justification I'll call "contextualisation", justifies NSA participation based on the provision of local and indigenous knowledge (e.g. Bäckstrand, 2003; Belfer et al., 2019). Functionalism emphasises the value of technical and specialist knowledge and is used to justify the participation of epistemic communities (Haas, 1992) to the potential exclusion of marginalised groups; contextualisation seeks to counteract this by emphasising the context-specific contributions of "non-experts", particularly women and indigenous representatives. A small number of environmental governance studies use contextualisation to justify the participation of children and youth, though they tend to focus on the local level and justify youth participation in adaptation and disaster risk reduction rather than in international policy-making processes (e.g. Haynes et al., 2010; Tanner, 2010; Treichel, 2020; Walker, 2017).

Turning to the youth studies literature we find this rationale used to justify youth participation in national-level policymaking in Perry-Hazan's (2016) study of the Israeli youth parliament. My results in paper one build upon Perry-Hazan's work in identifying that youth participants are also positioned and position themselves in

international policymaking as being necessary to bring discussions *"back to real people*" as Grace's quote emphasises. Building upon other studies of youth participation at international level (Kwon, 2019; Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia, 2019), in paper one I propose that young people's ability to contextualise decision-making in this context is hindered by a focus on "universal" rather than local knowledge. On reflection, this refers to the tension between functionalism and contextualisation, which to my mind is a false binary which restricts the type of input which participants can provide.

My observations throughout this research project suggest that youth participants in the UNFCCC lack confidence in the value of their own knowledge, be it "local" or "expert". Paper two explains that UNFCCC youth participants from the UK do not recognise themselves or other young people in "at risk communities" in the UK or around the world as having local knowledge which is unique to their age group. As a result, when seeking to contextualise decision-making, many repeat scientific messages or amplify the testimonies of other vulnerable social groups rather than sharing insights and experiences which are specific to young people. This impedes their mandated to represent younger generations in the UNFCCC.

This finding contributes to the literature on environmental and social justice, particularly in relation to self-recognition as discussed in paper two. It also contributes to the youth studies literature, which seems to make no mention of functionalism or anything close to it in its justification of youth participation. This is telling as it suggests a lack of recognition, even among youth scholars, that young people can be technical experts. If this is the case, it is no wonder that in paper three

I find that young people are largely excluded from orchestrated initiatives such as NAZCA which prioritises the inclusion of actors with technical expertise.

I propose that the framing of young people as non-specialist and therefore categorically less capable than adults is a disservice to climate change governance. The young people in this study could be considered specialists in their daily lives, having expertise based on their personal experiences and the ways in which they use and relate to spaces and places. In addition, they also possess some educational/professional experience with the majority working towards or having achieved Bachelors and sometimes Masters degrees in relevant subjects, with several participants working as environmental consultants or policy-advisors on high-profile projects in leading organisations. For example, one participant was the lead contact for Environmental Impact Assessments in her company and was referred to as their "adaptation guru", yet her age was a barrier to recognition of her expertise at work as well as in the UNFCCC:

> *Toni: "I've got four or five people underneath me who report directly to me and they're all older than me… I try not to tell them how old I am [laughs], in case they object to having a younger supervisor."*
>
> *Harriet: "So when you're [at COP] do you work on things that are similar to your job?"*
>
> *Toni: "Not at all…I find it hard to see how youth really can be included as, I don't really know how to explain it …in some of the more technical policy things I guess it is like 'why should we listen to you over anyone else?'"*

It appears that Toni has internalised ageist perspectives which have eroded her self-recognition and prevents her from sharing her expertise. Other youth participants

had similar experiences, losing social and self-recognition when they donned the label of "youth participant". Instead, within the UNFCCC, recognition of young peoples' expertise are reduced to their understanding of education systems and their technical skills solely in relation to their use of social media (as identified in my MSc dissertation and published in Thew, 2018). As lamented by one of the participants:

Katrina: "Young people are not seen as having a legitimate knowledge claim."

This could account for the finding in paper three that young people meaningfully participate in ACE activities organised by the UNFCCC Secretariat, enhancing the democratic legitimacy of that policy area, yet ACE is not considered to be an example of UNFCCC orchestration and therefore does not receive the same level of interest or support as the Marrakesh Partnership which focuses on "more technical" aspects of climate governance.

In summary, the extent to which youth participation in the UNFCCC is currently delivering against a knowledge-based rationale is very slim. This is a fundamental problem for the future of environmental and economic governance if we are to invest heavily in the education and training of the next generation (a proposed strategy to align COVID-19 recovery with climate action while also addressing youth unemployment) only to disregard their input until we deem them old enough to take seriously, which by all accounts will be too late. Therefore, recognising the knowledge of young people could also help to increase efficiency, as discussed in section 5.2.3.

5.2.3. Efficiency rationale

Efficiency is used as justification for participation in both the youth studies and environmental governance literatures, though their characterisation is different. In youth studies, Head (2011) couples efficiency with effectiveness, identifying it as a key rationale for youth participation:

> *"Services, programs and policies that directly impact on young people (and especially those intended to benefit them directly) will be more efficient and effective if young people's perspectives are engaged." (p544)*

Farthing (2012) echoes Head's characterisation in a way which demonstrates significant overlap with the knowledge-based rationale:

> *"This rationale suggests that young people best know real truths about youth, and that if adults can come to know these truths through participation, policy and practice can be improved. In this context, youth participation is seen as desirable as a source of knowledge for policy makers and practitioners." (p76)*

Farthing (2012) goes on to suggest that this rationale is underpinned by neoliberal norms which position young people as citizen consumers. In other words, young people's participation is only valuable if it can improve the efficiency of the services they use. This differs from the efficiency rationale within environmental governance, categorised as "neocorporatism" which justifies NSA participation on the basis that it secures buy-in and mobilises additional resources to supplement state-led efforts (Willetts, 2006). This is the rationale which most closely relates to the first purpose identified in paper one (Figure 12): the drive to make a positive contribution to governance challenges. It also underpins orchestration and has previously been referred to in this thesis as the "All Hands on Deck" approach to climate governance.

As explained in paper three, and further supported by the environmental governance literature (e.g. Allan, 2019; Hale, 2016; Nasiritousi et al., 2016), this rationale has become increasingly pervasive in the UNFCCC.

As paper three illustrates, whilst the UNFCCC has embraced this rationale and is offering increased opportunities for NSAs to engage in orchestrated initiatives both within and outside of their global mega conferences, it has had little direct impact on youth participants, who have limited awareness of, and access to orchestration initiatives which tend to target better-resourced actors.

A key finding is that participants in this study were not "bought into" orchestrated initiatives and in the main were not contributing to them, suggesting that youth participation in the UNFCCC is not currently delivering against an efficiency rationale. One exception to this is within ACE, which I argue in paper three should be recognised as another example of a UNFCCC-orchestration activity which is currently overlooked in the literature. Within ACE, the youth studies understanding of efficiency i.e. improving services for young people is addressed to an extent, though with a dominant focus on education. Further work is therefore needed to ensure young people's views are incorporated in the other aspects of ACE.

Within ACE, the environmental governance understanding of efficiency is also being delivered against as young people are mobilising their peers and using their (limited) resources to engage in relevant activities. The discrepancy between young people's experiences of different initiatives/policy areas highlights an inherent risk that young people's actions and expression of their perspectives are only considered to be "efficient" and therefore only supported when they align with the expectations and

goals of incumbent power holders. Furthermore, I propose that the efficiency rationale used to justify youth participation in the UNFCCC differs from the efficiency rationale used to justify the participation of better-resourced NSAs. The former enthuses over young people's agency whilst failing to acknowledge their lack of (particularly financial) capacity to exercise it and recognises young people as citizen consumers of education but not of any other climate policies and programmes. The latter enthuses over the (particularly financial) resources of certain NSAs whilst refusing to acknowledge that their agency may be exercised in ways which perpetuate, rather than challenge the status quo of fossil fuel driven neoliberalism. This creates a problematic distinction between the rationales for the participation of NSA constituencies and directs even more resources to the "haves" than the "have nots", exacerbating inequality. It also means that youth participants receive mixed messaging regarding their role as the NSA constituencies are often referred to collectively as well as separately, so it isn't clear whether they are expected to support the status quo or to challenge it (as highlighted in paper one).

In paper three, I propose a conceptual distinction between "exclusive" and "inclusive" orchestration, to differentiate between a laissez-faire approach to connecting likeminded actors in order to mobilise NSA resources to supplement government capacity, to proactively engaging in capacity building to support marginalised groups to play a greater role in climate change governance. Exclusive orchestration aligns closely with the efficiency rationale whereas inclusive orchestration is more closely related to the knowledge-based and empowerment rationales. However, inclusive orchestration could also contribute to an efficiency rationale if the capabilities of young people (and other constituencies who lack material resources) were

recognised as a potential resource in terms of their expertise, their roles in the workforce and as consumers of services. However, to mobilise these capabilities would require capacity-building support, leading us onto the empowerment rationale discussed in Section 5.2.4.

5.2.4. Empowerment rationale

Empowerment is a key rationale for participation within the youth studies literature (Farthing, 2012; Tsekoura, 2016; Wong et al., 2010). It stems from the New Social Studies of Childhood (James et al., 1998; James and Prout, 2003) which sought to emphasise young people's agency, countering developmental psychology which framed young people as passive and deficient future adults rather than acknowledging their agency in the present (Farthing, 2012; Tisdall, 2008; Tisdall and Punch, 2012). This rationale envisages a deliberative democratic society (see Dryzek, 2002) where all stakeholders, including all age groups, contribute to decision-making (Farthing, 2012). It views empowerment in terms of young people being more able to exercise their existing capabilities rather than in supporting them to develop new ones, differentiating this from the youth development rationale which is discussed in section 5.2.5.

Within the environmental governance literature there is a rationale with some similarities, categorised by Willetts (2006) as "Democratic Pluralism". It argues that NSA participation improves decision-making processes by making them more deliberative, transparent, representative, inclusive, accountable and just. It is this rationale that positions NSAs as watchdogs who use discourse to challenge unequal

power dynamics to empower vulnerable groups, which underpins the second purpose pursued by youth in the UNFCCC identified in paper one (Figure 12): to demand that more powerful actors address governance challenges.

Both literatures focus on the potential to reduce marginalisation by widening access to decision-making, though within youth studies there is less consideration of discursive power. An exception this this is Farthing (2012), who argues that in order to overcome the assumption that participation automatically leads to empowerment, scholars must go beyond a one-dimensional understanding of power. To do this, she recommends engagement with Lukes' seminal work (Lukes, 2004). Only a limited number of studies have done so (Adu-Gyamfi, 2013; Walsh et al., 2018) perhaps because, as Adu-Gyamfi states, identifying covert and invisible forms of power is particularly difficult. Studying youth participants in policymaking in Ghana, Adu-Gyamfi argues that participation does not lead to empowerment as young people's suggestions are disregarded if they don't align with adult values and goals and where young people's demands are met, decision-makers perceive this as a favour. This highlights a tension between the empowerment and efficiency rationales.

Similarly, in studying young entrepreneurs in Australia, Walsh et al. (2018) find that young people's empowerment is constrained by the exercise of ideological power. This is succinctly expressed by one of their participants: *"I…am most influential when I conform to someone else's normal" (*2012, p230). My results in paper two demonstrate this to be the case in the international context, indicating that youth participation is not currently delivering against an empowerment rationale. Whilst individuals can

assimilate into more powerful groups, increasing their personal influence, this does nothing to address ageism and to empower youth participants as a constituency.

In applying Lukes' theory of power, paper two helps to illustrate how justice plays out as a dynamic process of power-laden interactions between different social groups. This could lend weight to the argument that youth participation is used to control rather than to empower young people, obfuscating rather than challenging unequal power dynamics (e.g. Bessant, 2003; 2004). This argument is also found in critiques of participation in development (particularly Cooke and Kothari, 2001) which see participation as a "tyranny", designed to stifle dissent. I have no evidence to suggest that there is any malicious intent to control youth participants. This study has only engaged with youth participants' perspectives so further research is needed to determine the motivations of other actors. Instead, I propose that greater reflexivity is needed to ensure that what Gaventa (1982) refers to as "quiescence" is not incorrectly mistaken for consensus and empowerment. To deliver against an empowerment rationale, it is therefore necessary to improve the self and social recognition of youth participants. This links closely to the youth development rationale discussed in Section 5.2.5.

5.2.5. Youth development rationale

Within youth studies there is a strong "developmental" rationale which justifies youth participation on the basis that it enhances young people's knowledge, skills, self-esteem and psychological wellbeing (Checkoway and Gutierrez, 2006; Checkoway, 2011; Farthing, 2012; Head, 2011). This is shaped by the positioning of young people

as "human becomings" and their participation as "apprenticeship" (Checkoway, 2011; Edwards, 2009; Harris et al., 2010; Qvortrup, 1994; Tisdall, 2015) which, as discussed in paper one, seeks to train young people in accordance with pre-existing norms, remaining largely uncritical of how these norms shape society in the present and their consequences might be in the future. This training is assumed to give young people they necessary skills and values they will need for adulthood, though these are determined by the incumbent power holders and are thus unlikely to challenge the status quo (Farthing, 2012). Young people are expected to be individually responsible for their life transitions, which many of them accept (Furlong et al., 2011; Wyn and Woodman, 2007), leading some to see their extended life transitions as a personal failing, despite research emphasising an extended period of "emerging adulthood" as the usual markers of adulthood become more and more difficult to attain (Arnett, 2000).

Several youth studies have highlighted that these opportunities for personal development are usually only be available to the "usual suspects" who already have substantial social capital and self-confidence (Head, 2011; Tisdall et al., 2006). This is arguably the case in the UNFCCC as youth participants are primarily middle-class, university educated individuals who have sufficient time and financial resources to overcome the many barriers to participation as highlighted in this thesis. Even so, several participants in this study have commented, and my observations support, that having spaces dedicated specifically to youth voices and a group which is majority female has helped them to become more comfortable in sharing their opinions and taking on leadership of certain initiatives. However, as paper two demonstrates, this self-confidence is eroded by the lack of social recognition from adult participants, and,

as emphasised in paper one, participation in this context can involve negative psychological impacts.

This rationale is difficult to evaluate as the concept of youth development is a vague one and there is no firm outline of the knowledge and skills that young people are expected to learn. However, as paper one highlights, young people do pursue personal development goals and are keen to develop skills such as blogging, vlogging and event planning. This helps to mitigate against some of the negative psychological impacts of participation in giving young people more manageable individual goals so they can feel some small sense of achievement even in the face of large structural barriers to achievement. However, the underlying driver of the youth development rationale is the neoliberal framing of the individual's responsibility for their life choices, trajectories and wellbeing (Farthing, 2012; Walsh et al., 2018). I argue that youth participation in the UNFCCC is not sufficiently delivering against this rationale as there are no formal routes to employment or decision-making positions associated with UNFCCC participation and transitions to adulthood remain difficult and competitive, even within this rather privileged pool of young people.

The developmental rationale is not particularly strong within environmental governance which habitually treats NSAs as homogenous, with the underlying assumption that they are adults and therefore fully "developed". This is problematic as it assumes that adults have nothing to learn through participation, which is a barrier to open-mindedness, compromise and change. However, it has been suggested that UN participation represents a "citizenization" approach (Auvachez, 2009), developing a sense of supranational citizenship and in relation to climate change governance it

has been argued that individuals in all countries, especially affluent ones, should be encouraged to accept individual responsibility for climate change and to be "good global citizens" (Harris, 2008). Results in paper one challenge this idea, showing that the concept of an "ideal global youth citizen" is problematic as it undermines young-people's ability to share local knowledge and therefore to be deemed to have a unique knowledge claim.

Building upon recent youth-studies (Kwon, 2019; Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia, 2019) results in paper one show that some young people see their participation as a moral responsibility, striving to challenge neoliberal norms relating to market-based solutions whilst simultaneously pursuing personal-development goals as a fall-back option for when challenging the status-quo proves too difficult. This echoes recent youth studies (France and Threadgold, 2016; Walsh et al., 2018) in demonstrating young people's awareness of multiple rationales and their ability to reflexively navigate them. It thus adds a crucial piece of the puzzle: that young people are motivated to pursue multiple goals in order to mitigate against negative psychological impacts, which can help to sustain their engagement over time.

In summary, the results of this thesis indicate that youth participation in the UNFCCC is not fully delivering against any of these five rationales, in no small part because there is no consensus over which one is used to justify young people's inclusion and also because there are numerous tensions between the rationales. Youth participants in the UNFCCC do a rather impressive job of navigating this confusing landscape of mismatched expectations though it takes a significant toll on their limited resources, self-recognition and psychological wellbeing. Greater reflexivity regarding the

rationales used by more powerful actors when facilitating and promoting opportunities for youth participation in climate governance could help to ameliorate this situation, along with identification of synergies between the rationales and the co-production of activities which could contribute to multiple goals. This must include deeper engagement with young people themselves to determine which rationales they deem most important and identify how processes can better support them to achieve their desired outcomes.

5.3. Recommendations

Guided by Denzin and Lincoln (2017) who emphasise the need for careful consideration of how findings are presented and shared, I intend to present these findings in a series of formats, tailored to different audiences. I have already shared some findings with UKYCC, participating in a "Q and A" session about my research which was facilitated by the youth participants themselves and focused on their particular interests at that time. Published papers have been/will be shared with UKYCC and YOUNGO, who have expressed an interest in receiving findings in an academic format, given that many of them are students themselves, and that citing an academic study potentially gives them greater scope to influence decision-makers due to the favouring of "expert" over lay knowledge, even when in this case, the "expert" knowledge is just my interpretation of their lay experiences, in a more "acceptable" package. I will provide in person or online training for UKYCC and YOUNGO going forward on an ad-hoc basis, depending on their requirements.

I have also shared all three papers (as well as Thew, 2018) with two policy makers in the UK government who requested them as an urgent need to guide their initial plans for youth engagement in COP26. However, I am aware that a much shorter policy-brief, using non-academic language would be more appropriate for this audience, which I intend to create and share with a range of contacts in various UK government departments. I will shortly be commencing a UKRI funded "COP26" fellowship, working closely with a range of policy makers and academics in the lead up to the UNFCCC's 26th COP which will be held in the UK in 2021. I will use this opportunity to share the findings of this thesis whilst also building on them with further research into the role young people can play in a just transition to a low carbon future.

I will also share findings with the UNFCCC Secretariat, specifically with their key contact for youth participation. Based on previous experience I expect that the preferred format will be for me to prepare a presentation to deliver in a UNFCCC side event and/or in-session "ACE" Dialogue in a future UNFCCC intersessional meeting, which would enable me to share findings with other non-youth participants in the UNFCCC. Below I present a summary of key recommendations as an example of the type of content I will share in subsequent interactions with three main audiences: COP Presidencies and the UNFCCC Secretariat; youth participants preparing to attend UNFCCC conferences; and other non-youth COP attendees.

5.3.1. Recommendations for COP Presidencies and the UNFCCC Secretariat

1. Increase clarity regarding your rationale(s) for facilitating youth participation. With close input from YOUNGO, consider the establishment of specific targets for youth participation and indicators towards achieving them, establishing a monitoring and reporting scheme, perhaps guided by the UNFCCC's Gender Action Plan.
2. Acknowledge that although young people may be eager to contribute to climate action, they face many barriers in doing so, being careful to avoid discourses which suggest that hope for the future rests solely on young people's shoulders.
3. Rather than positioning youth participants as "global citizens" which limits them to sharing "universal" knowledge, recognise their unique expertise and experiences as members of their communities, encouraging the input of local knowledge to develop awareness of how young people experience climate change around the world, the challenges they face and identifying the support they need to overcome these challenges. In addition, recognise that many young people have a wealth of educational and professional experience and should not necessarily be perceived as non-specialists on account of their age.
4. Facilitate opportunities for deliberation between SAs and NSAs including opportunities for cross-constituency collaboration. This could include facilitation of regular briefings and informal meetings for all NSAs to meet together with government delegations and high-level actors such as SB chairs. It could also include regional meetings for participants who are unable to travel to COPs. Ahead of these deliberative meetings, offer capacity building support to

YOUNGO so they know what to expect, including sharing details of what has been discussed and requested by previous cohorts of young people in similar meetings to avoid repetitive conversations and to increase accountability.

5. Acknowledge that the majority of youth participants are unpaid volunteers and as a result are not directly comparable to other, better resourced NSAs. Consider the provision of funding to build YOUNGO's capacity and retain institutional memory.
6. Take into account that youth participants' transitions to adulthood could lead them away from (or cement) their professional engagement in climate governance, considering the facilitation of careers events and skills training sessions within ACE.
7. Proactively pursue the inclusion of young people in all orchestrated activities, guided by the principles of inclusive orchestration outlined in this thesis (Figure 16). Incorporate social aspects of climate action such as the six elements of ACE into orchestration platforms such as NAZCA, proactively engage with young people to increase their awareness of all orchestrated initiatives for NSAs and highlight opportunities for them to engage with the High-Level Champions. Be prepared for and open to the sharing of diverse perspectives, which may not always align with your own.
8. To reduce the material and psychological risks relating to protection of youth and other conference participants, liaise with young people (and other NSA constituencies) to identify any logistical challenges they perceive, far in advance of the conference and deliberate with them over how these can be addressed, bearing in mind that these will alter each year as conferences are held in different locations. However, acknowledging that some challenges occur every year, there

are some specific logistical barriers which could be addressed as standard by COP Presidencies:

- Consider the provision of bursaries for youth participants from underrepresented regions and social groups to increase input legitimacy and ensure that the voices of young people from vulnerable communities are heard;
- Increase opportunities for online participation to maximise reach, acknowledging that some marginalised groups lack reliable internet access;
- When conference dates and locations are confirmed and host governments begin reserving accommodation for their staff, it would be beneficial to also reserve safe, low cost accommodation close to the conference venue for youth participants. Ensure that this is accessible, includes gendered and/or private accommodation options and space for prayer/meditation as well as for communal working;
- When organising transport for conference participants to travel from the city centre/local transport hubs to the conference venue, ensure the provision of free, safe transport to the aforementioned accommodation for youth participants to move around safely, particularly late at night;
- Ensure that low cost, healthy food with a low carbon footprint is available within all UNFCCC spaces so young people and other participants with limited financial resources are able to adequately sustain themselves during conference hours;
- Provide visas on entry for all COP accredited participants to overcome visa restrictions, widening participation.

5.3.2. Recommendations for youth participants in UNFCCC conferences

1. Facilitate discussions within YOUNGO about the range of rationales for youth participation as discussed in Section 5.1 in this thesis (and any other rationales identified based on your experiences) to identify potential synergies and conflicts between them and how the constituency might navigate them.
2. I have recommended above that the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP presidencies facilitate opportunities for deliberation between SAs and NSAs including regular briefings and meetings with high-level actors. Whilst the Secretariat could play a greater role in providing capacity building support to YOUNGO, youth participants can also increase accountability and retain institutional memory by taking detailed notes of discussions, in particular recording requests made in these meetings, responses given by high-level actors and details of any action taken.
3. Carefully consider whether to accept offers of "pink badge" accreditation, weighing up the pros and cons and reflecting on the implications it has for your ability to represent younger generations. Reflect on the potential to utilise this type of accreditation without diminishing the status of NSAs within UNFCCC conferences (as discussed in paper three in this thesis).
4. Engage with young people at local and national level to identify the unique vulnerabilities and challenges that young people face as a result of climate change impacts, policies and programmes around the world. There have been many examples of young people sharing solutions they are leading on, particularly in the UNFCCC's ACE Dialogues, but less focus on what makes young people unique, both in terms of vulnerabilities and barriers faced.

5. Learn about your rights and don't be afraid to exercise them, drawing parallels between international laws on human rights and on climate change to strengthen your advocacy positions.
6. Have confidence in your own voices and work within YOUNGO to develop a stronger justification for why you believe youth is a political position i.e. why you have a unique stance from which to interpret the negotiations and have thus been recognised as one of nine NSA constituencies.
7. Be attentive to power relations; learn how to recognise the exercise of the three "faces of power" (discussed in paper two) and reflect on how this may shape your participation and how to respond.
8. Reflect on ways in which your participation is shaped by psychological factors. Are you engaging in "problem-focused coping" i.e. tackling the problem head on to reduce your anxiety about it; "meaning-focused coping" i.e. breaking the problem down into smaller pieces to better understand it; or "emotion-focused coping" which can include anger, fatalism and placing blame on yourself and/or on others (Ojala, 2012). Consider the impacts of each and devise strategies accordingly to support you to manage your emotions proactively rather than reactively.

5.3.3. Recommendations for non-youth participants in UNFCCC conferences

1. Youth participants require support to overcome invisible barriers to representing their generation in the UNFCCC. When non-youth stakeholders are facilitating discussions, for example about climate justice, invite young people

to participate in these discussions, welcome them as equals, share your platforms and encourage identification of youth-specific experiences of injustice and the articulation of first order claims. Encourage and support them to identify the ways in which age intersects with other identity-based disadvantages, reaching out to young people in vulnerable communities to amplify these voices which often go unheard.

2. Where possible, consider the provision of funding to enable young UNFCCC participants to reach out to less privileged young people worldwide to gather unique, youth-specific insights into how their generation is affected by climate change.
3. For NSAs who are unable to provide funding to support youth participants, identify ways in which capacity building initiatives and knowledge exchange within your own constituency could include young people and enable them to share youth-specific perspectives. This could include identifying intersectional concerns, such as the challenges faced by young women, young indigenous representatives, young business leaders, young farmers and so on.
4. I also encourage former youth participants who are now members of adult constituencies not to turn your backs on YOUNGO but to engage with them to build their capacity and pass on institutional memory. This must be managed carefully to ensure it is a dialogue to avoid exacerbating adultism.
5. Human Rights specialists could support young people to understand and exercise their rights to participate, perhaps facilitating training on ways in which climate change and human rights intersect.
6. Recognise that as adults you can learn through participation and deliberation with other actors; learning is not solely the preserve of the young.

5.4. Limitations and areas for future research

5.4.1 Methodological issues

The thesis focuses on a single case study organisation based in the UK. Focusing on a group based in the same country was necessary given my teaching commitments in Leeds and the need to engage with their private meetings, which enabled identification of the differences between what youth participants articulated in public and in private. Whilst this means that empirical findings are not generalisable to youth groups from other countries, theoretical findings can be. The immersive, ethnographic research experience with a single case study organisation led to many findings in this thesis and was particularly important in enabling the identification of psychological factors in paper one; of quiescence (Gaventa, 1982) and the stifling of young people's true perspectives through the exercise of ideological power (Lukes, 2004) in paper two; and of barriers to youth engagement in orchestrated initiatives in paper three. The ethnographic approach taken restricts sample size in comparison to some studies, though twenty participants is fairly substantial in deep qualitative research of this kind. When studying potentially sensitive and emotional topics, a small sample size is necessary to building trust (Crouch and McKenzie, 2006). This was necessary in order to be confident that findings are robust, particularly in developing understanding of justice claims-making as a power-laden process. The ethnographic approach enabled me to bring empirical inquiry and justice theories together in an innovative and ambitious way. This contributes to knowledge as political philosophers primarily focus on these theories and concepts in the abstract, whilst environmental governance

scholars tend to focus more on the empirics, making the deeper dive into theory taken in paper two particularly novel. Furthermore, this contribution is particularly useful in providing insights into how justice claims-making happens in reality.

As discontent can remain latent until power relations shift, visible only in retrospect (Gaventa, 1982), the longitudinal approach was particularly necessary for paper two. Further research should explore whether the recent rise in prominence of youth activism outside of the UNFCCC has shifted this power imbalance, leading to an increase in first-order claims from youth participants inside climate governance spaces, as well as exploring justice claims from other marginalised NSAs. Collecting data over an extended time period was challenging as it meant that not all participants were available to participate in follow up interviews. This is common in longitudinal research (Allen, 2016) and was exacerbated by the life-stages, mobility and international interests of the participants, with several of them going to study or work abroad making them unavailable for interview. However, collecting data over an extended period enabled the thesis to offer more than a single snapshot of participatory experiences (Yin, 2009). It also helped to ensure credibility of my findings as it enabled me to shift between data collection and analysis throughout the project, engaging in "communicative validation" checking my understanding and interpretations by running ideas past my participants in subsequent interviews and informal discussions (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000).

There is increasing recognition of the value of using deep qualitative methods such as ethnography to study global environmental governance processes as scholars are increasingly turning their attention to these complex, power-laden processes, seeking

to situate certain actors and understand the ways in which global environmental politics is negotiated, both formally and informally (Depledge, 2013; Hughes et al., 2019; Marion Suiseeya and Zanotti, 2019). In addition to its empirical and theoretical contributions, this thesis therefore also offers potential methodological insights, its longitudinal, ethnographic engagement with a group of UNFCCC participants being something of a rarity. As a result, I am currently working with an international team of researchers to co-author an article and contribute to a book project on the use of new methodological approaches in the study of global environmental negotiations (Hughes and Vadrot, forthcoming), sharing my personal experiences of conducting ethnographic research in this context to support and inspire new scholars entering the field.

5.4.2. Scope of the study

This thesis engages solely with youth perspectives. I chose to only interview and observe youth participants as I sought to develop a deeper understanding of their lived experiences of participation, though future research could help to contextualise youth experiences further and provide more detail on the rationales that different actors such as the UNFCCC Secretariat and host governments are striving for in their facilitation of youth participation.

The decision to focus solely on youth perspectives was partially opportunistic: I began this research in my late twenties as an existing member of YOUNGO, giving me a rare and privileged insight into the inner workings of the constituency. I was aware,

having witnessed it several times in the past, that youth participants can be wary of adult "outsiders" attending their meetings and recognised that I had a fairly short window in which to conduct this type of research. Finalising this project, I am now in my mid-thirties and whilst I could probably still manage to "walk a mile in the shoes" (Madden, 2010) of my participants, my back is no longer up to the task of sleeping on the floor in student houses and my enthusiasm for sharing noisy dorm rooms (despite the benefits of getting the "inside scoop" as participants take a step back and reflect on the day's events) has waned. Furthermore, I had previously collected data on adult perceptions of youth participation in the UNFCCC for my MSc dissertation, the results of which were published during the same timeframes as this PhD (Thew, 2018), and felt that in order to push the field forward without risking overlap between the two projects, deeper ethnographic investigation was the necessary next step to shed light on the complex and rich experiences of youth participation in this context.

5.4.3. Normative assumptions

While the discussion of this thesis engages with a range of normative rationales for youth participation, the three papers are undoubtedly shaped by my values as a researcher and my own understanding of why youth participation is facilitated. The research is influenced by my past experience of working in roles which were dedicated to youth empowerment, aligning my personal beliefs most closely with the empowerment rationale, though with some overlap into others. My values and experiences shape the research I deem to be most interesting and valuable, influencing the choices I have made in selecting models and theories I have used to analyse the

data. This is inevitable in any research process (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000), especially in ethnography (Miled, 2019), and is particularly common in the youth participation literature which does not shy away from normativity given it draws upon a vast body of evidence of young people's marginalisation (Checkoway, 2011; Farthing, 2012). Environmental governance is more reticent regarding normativity, with the exception of some critical studies (e.g. Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017; Lövbrand et al., 2017; Nasiritousi et al., 2016) which have also guided this work, though I would argue that this needs to change given the urgency and severity of the climate crisis.

5.4.4. Opportunities identified / future research needs and priorities

As highlighted in paper one, future research should include greater consideration of the ways in which individual life trajectories shape participatory experiences. This is a helpful insight from the youth studies literature which is absent in the environmental governance literature but could help to move the literature on NSA participation forward by emphasising their heterogeneity. Further research should also explore how material risks experienced by youth participants in climate governance spaces exacerbate the psychological burden they experience when learning about climate change and being positioned as the generation that will "solve" it. This could include applications of the amended 7P model in paper one which emphasises the importance of and interactions between psychological factors and other influences which shape youth participation. Table 5 may be a useful tool to support this. In addition, future studies could test the typology of purposes for youth participation identified in paper one (Figure 12) and adapt the diagram which depicts the positioning of youth

participants in the UNFCCC (Figure 13) to map the ways in which youth participants are positioned in a range of other contexts.

Paper two highlighted the need for further empirical investigation into the justice claims made by the full range of actors engaging in climate change governance spaces. I hope that the theoretical contributions made in this paper can guide these studies, in particular Table 6 which depicts my amendment of environmental justice theory to include representation justice and Table 7 which identifies links between facets of justice and faces of power. The latter may be particularly useful in guiding further studies to increase understanding of how justice claims are censored or encouraged in different spaces.

Paper three highlighted a need for future research to explore the participation of marginalised NSAs in UNFCCC orchestrated initiatives and consider what input and throughput legitimacy could and should look like in the Post-Paris regime of global climate change governance (guided by Bäckstrand et al., 2017). In particular, increased granularity (through qualitative methods including ethnography) is needed to determine the extent to which the Post-Paris era of climate governance offers a new, central role for all NSAs and if not, what the implications of this are for the aforementioned rationales which underpin multi-actor participation.

Finally, Section 5.1 highlighted a need for closer investigation into the rationales used by different actors to justify youth participation in climate governance spaces; to explore the tensions between these rationales; and the impact of these rationales on participatory experiences, on legitimacy and on justice.

5.4. Concluding remarks

In this thesis I have sought to increase understanding of the lived experiences of youth participants in the UNFCCC, a group which is increasing in number and prominence but has been largely overlooked in the academic literature to date. To achieve this, I selected a longitudinal, ethnographic, case-study approach to facilitate deep, rich insights into how young people experience and navigate the complex and power-laden environmental governance spaces of UNFCCC conferences. This has proven fruitful, lending weight to recent calls for deep qualitative methods to advance the study of global environmental governance processes (Hughes et al., 2019; Marion Suiseeya and Zanotti, 2019). Furthermore, it has been immensely enjoyable and I have found that immersive engagement with youth participants, despite, or perhaps because of the challenges they face, can be a tremendous source of inspiration and a valuable lesson in resilience.

Interdisciplinary in nature, this thesis has drawn upon a range of theories and concepts from youth studies, environmental governance and political philosophy. Applying an analytical framework from the youth studies literature (Cahill and Dadvand, 2018) facilitated the identification of empirical and theoretical insights relating to seven key factors which shape young people's participatory experiences. This includes their purposes or reasons for participating; the ways in which they position themselves and are positioned by others; the perspectives which are included and excluded; the power relations they experience; and a series of issues relating to their protection and safety, including those arising from the places in which conferences are held. Amending the model, I propose that psychological factors are another important

consideration, finding that emotions play a key role in shaping young people's participation in the context of climate governance. This contributes to the youth participation literature in highlighting an important avenue for future research, advocating for closer attention to psychological studies on youth and climate change (Ojala, 2012; Threadgold, 2012). The amended 7P model and consolidation of "prompting questions" is another contribution to the youth studies literature and could also be of practical use to scholars in other disciplines seeking to gain a greater understanding of youth participants in environmental governance processes, though I would also urge them to delve deeper into the youth studies literature which I have found to be treasure trove of critical insights.

In addition to highlighting the challenges which young people experience, which I hope will be of benefit to young newcomers to the UNFCCC in managing their expectations and establishing realistic goals, and to practitioners seeking to support young people in this endeavour, I have sought to emphasise the agency that young people demonstrate in various situations. This is evident in their efforts to challenge power asymmetries and broaden inclusion and lends weight to arguments within the youth studies literature that young people are reflexive social actors who critically engage with and respond to their surroundings and should be taken seriously (Skelton, 2010; Tsekoura, 2016).

This is particularly apparent in their interest in and commitment to justice, which emerged in my data collection as their primary topic of concern. Guided by this, as well as by recent calls in the environmental governance literature for empirical research into justice claims made by a range of different stakeholders in climate

governance spaces (Bulkeley et al., 2013; Klinsky et al., 2017) I have also explored how youth participants in the UNFCCC perceive and articulate justice and how this is shaped by their participatory experiences over time. I found that when they first start participating in the UNFCCC, young people most commonly articulate injustices which are specific to their generation, based on perceived future risks. However, over time, they came to abandon these youth-specific or "first-order" claims (Fraser, 2010), instead amplifying claims made by other vulnerable groups within the process. I argue that although it is important to demonstrate solidarity with others, the silencing of youth-specific claims impedes the mandate of young people to represent their own interests. Furthermore, it results in youth-specific injustices being overlooked, along with the ways in which age-specific vulnerabilities intersect with other markers of disadvantage.

This finding led to another important theoretical contribution made by this thesis: the incorporation of the overlooked concept of "representation" justice (Fraser, 2010) into a prominent environmental justice framework (Schlosberg, 2004). This expands understanding of participation justice from a limited focus on participatory mechanisms and democratic rights to include broader consideration of a group's ability to make "first-order" justice claims and to engage in the meta-framing of justice in any given space. Deep ethnographic engagement with the research participants also highlighted the importance of both external recognition and self-recognition for the articulation of justice claims. This has significance for political philosophy, lending weight to the argument that both psychological and structural elements of recognition are important considerations for justice (Kompridis, 2007; Scholsberg, 2009) thus

helping to overcome a long-standing debate over which one should be the focus of inquiry (see Fraser and Honneth, 2003).

Mobilising philosophical theory for use in an empirical inquiry also proved to be beneficial in identifying a potential relationship between power and justice claims-making. Drawing upon Lukes' seminal theory of the three "faces" of power (2004), this study also furthers understanding of what moderates and empowers claimants of (in)justice in the context of the UNFCCC. This is a valuable theoretical contribution which should be applied to other participants in other contexts to further understanding of justice claiming and framing as a social and power-laden process.

I then considered the extent to which youth participation in the UNFCCC can be considered "fit for purpose", guided by recent critical work within the environmental governance literature (Bäckstrand et al., 2017; Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017), with an exploration of young people's engagement in activities being "orchestrated" to increase the participation of NSAs in climate change governance. I suggest that the diversification of UNFCCC conference attendance has been conflated with recent enthusiasm over an enhanced role for NSAs in climate change governance since the landmark Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 (Chan and Amling, 2019; Hale, 2016; Jordan et al., 2018) and that increased granularity is needed to determine which NSAs are included and excluded and what this means for democratic legitimacy. My findings indicate that although UNFCCC conferences help to mobilise young participants, this does not necessarily equate to their engagement in orchestrated initiatives, proposing a conceptual distinction between "exclusive" and "inclusive" orchestration and urging orchestrators to engage in the latter to proactively increase democratic legitimacy.

Recognising that increasing democratic legitimacy is just one way in which youth/NSA participation might be considered "fit for purpose", I then identified five key rationales from the youth studies and environmental governance literature, as well as from my own observations, to evaluate the extent to which each rationale is being met. As has been acknowledged and discussed, the thesis has several limitations including methodological limitations which prevent broader generalisation of empirical findings to other participants or participatory processes. As such, further research is needed to test its findings in other contexts and with other actors. However, based on the results of this thesis, I suggest that, whilst youth participation in the UNFCCC certainly has its benefits, it is currently not fully delivering against a rights-based, knowledge-based, efficiency, empowerment or youth-development rationale.

To address this, I offer a series of recommendations for the UNFCCC Secretariat and COP Presidencies; for youth participants themselves and other NSAs within the process to support and improve youth participation so that it might better contribute towards a fairer and more inclusive global climate change governance regime.

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Appendix 1. Participant Information Sheet

Youth Participation in Climate Change Decision-Making

Dear UKYCC Member,

You are being invited to take part in a research project, conducted as part of my PhD at the University of Leeds, in which I am investigating the participation of UK youth in climate change decision making at different levels. Please read this information sheet which is designed to advise your decision as to whether or not you wish to take part. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please get in touch with me if you would like more information or clarification on this research and take your time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the project?

This research aims to develop a deeper understanding of the perceptions, motivations and values of youth participants engaging in climate change decision making at international and local levels. The project focusses on the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC) chosen as a case study on account of the youth-led, voluntary nature of the organisation.

The initial phase of research will take place from June to December 2015, following UKYCC's international delegation as they attend the United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and prepare for and attend the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) in Paris in December.

Additional research will follow after COP 21, to assess the impact of this conference upon the youth who participate in it.

Why have I been chosen?

All members of UKYCC's International Team who are participating in UNFCCC conferences this year are invited to participate in this study.

What do I have to do? What will happen to me if I take part?

Participants agree to be observed by the researcher during the two aforementioned UNFCCC conferences. This includes observation of your preparations before COP, participation during formal and informal meetings with your delegation and the youth constituency and interactions with other governmental and non-governmental actors taking part in the UNFCCC process.

In addition to in-person observations during the conferences, my research will also include ongoing observation of online Google groups used by the youth constituency throughout the year and of UKYCC Skype calls and training meetings.

I also intend to conduct follow-up interviews in the UK later in the year, outside of the hectic environment of a UNFCCC conference when you will have more time to reflect upon your participation in this process. These interviews will be informal,

semi-structured and will focus on the reasons behind your participation (such as what motivated you to become involved, what sustains your engagement) and your experience of climate change governance processes.

What are the possible disadvantages, risks and benefits of taking part?

There is no foreseeable risk or disadvantage nor any direct benefit for participating in this research. However, research findings will provide a better understanding of the processes that enable and restrict youth participation which is likely to be of interest and potential benefit to participants.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and you can still withdraw at any time, without giving a reason, and have your data removed from the study (up until the point of publication).

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential? What will happen to the results of the research project?

Your participation in this study will be confidential, securely stored so that it is only accessible to the researcher and all data will be anonymised to ensure that individuals cannot be identified in any reports or publications which form part of this PhD or subsequent research.

Contact for further information

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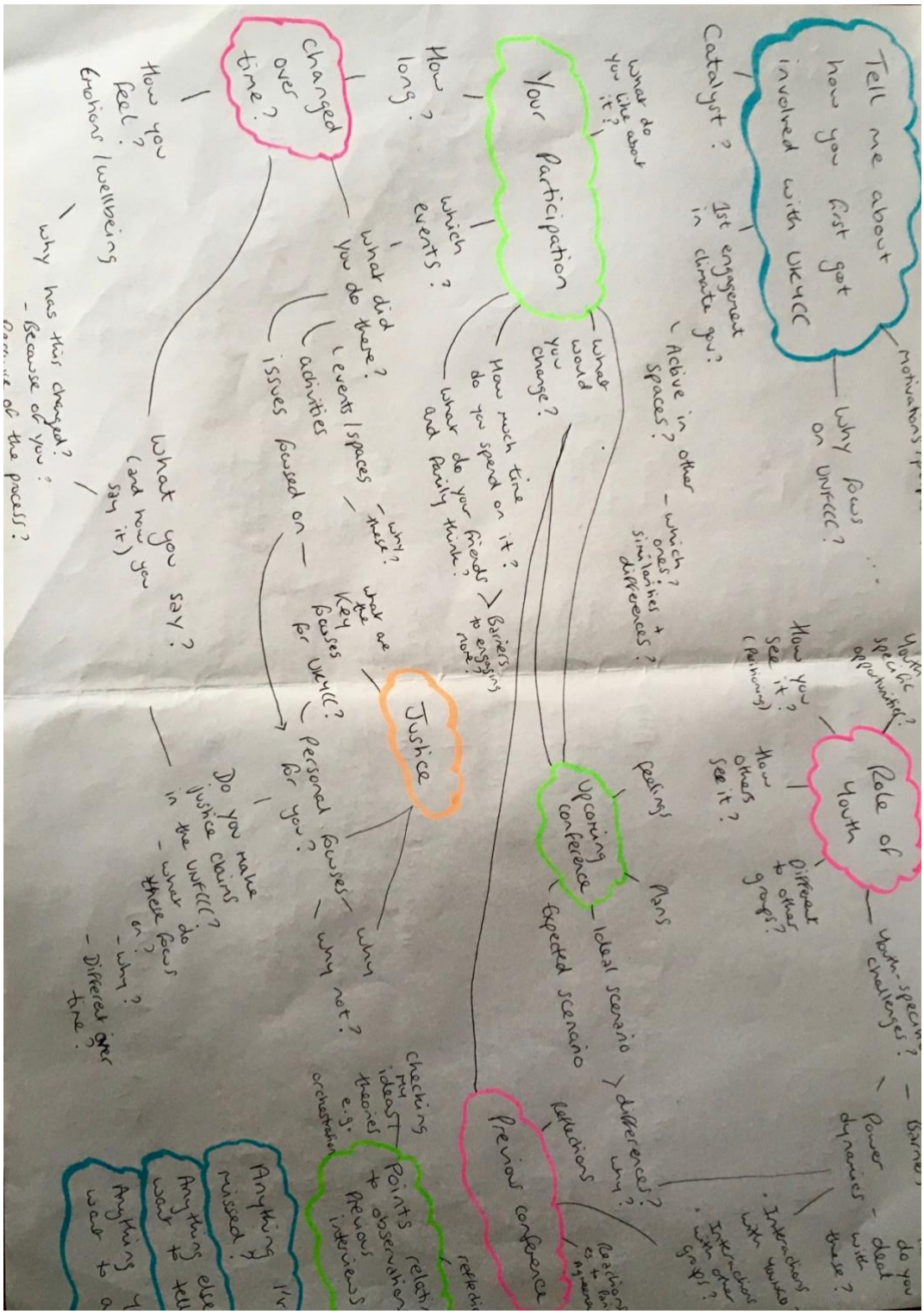
Appendix 2. Interview Mind Map



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