

Chapter 3

Socially Oriented Sharing Economy Platform in Regional Australia: A Polanyian Analysis



Mayra Balderas Escobedo, Zhiwen Zheng, and Babita Bhatt

Abstract In this chapter, we explore the role of *sharing economy models in addressing exclusion and inequality*. We critically review the definitions, characteristics and debates within the sharing economy and identify two dominant sharing economy models: platform capitalism and platform cooperativism. Platform capitalism symbolises the increasing commercialisation and profit maximisation of sharing economy organisations. Using Polanyi's work on market society, we argue that the sharing economy firms in platform capitalism are disembedded from social relations and have a detrimental impact on the local economies, particularly on the poor and marginalised communities. We argue that community-owned and democratically governed sharing economy platforms, embedded in the local context and oriented towards economic pluralism, are more equipped to address poverty and inequality. We use the case study of bHive, a place-based, community-owned sharing economy platform, to identify the mechanisms and processes that strengthen the local communities to potentially address exclusion and inequality. Our findings show platforms could use three processes, *collaboration*, *localisation* and *decentralisation*, to implement their program. We argue these processes help the platform embed in the social context and strengthen social cohesion in the communities. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings and discuss avenues for future research.

Keywords Digital social innovation · Technoficing · Social capital · Social cohesion · Local economy · Instrumental rationality · Substantive rationality

M. B. Escobedo · Z. Zheng · B. Bhatt (✉)
Australian National University, Canberra, ACT, Australia
e-mail: u5952825@anu.edu.au; Zhiwen.Zheng@anu.edu.au; babita.bhatt@anu.edu.au

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. 2021

I. Qureshi et al. (eds.), *Sharing Economy at the Base of the Pyramid*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-2414-8_3

3.1 Introduction

Since the last decade, the sharing economy platforms have grown exponentially (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017). The proliferation of digitally enabled platforms has allowed people to disintermediate the traditional commercial channels (Qureshi et al., 2018a, 2021c; Andersson et al., 2013) and to share idle and excess resources with each other at a reasonably low transaction cost (Benjaafar et al., 2019). Research suggests that sharing has the potential to generate positive social, economic and environmental benefits for communities (Hamari et al., 2016). At a basic level, sharing (rather than owning) encourages and promotes productive usage of idle resources, reducing waste and environmental impacts and improving economic efficiency (Cohen & Kietzmann, 2014; Frenken & Schor, 2019). Sharing also leads to economic benefits in terms of higher savings with the same lifestyle and facilitates business opportunities by lowering ownership costs. Empirical evidence also shows that sharing activities can reduce consumption-induced resource depletion when products are shared instead of owned individually (Geissinger et al., 2019). Moreover, sharing leads to enhanced social interactions, embeds a sense of trust in the community and results in better societal well-being (McLaren & Agyeman, 2015; Benjaafar et al., 2019). Evidence suggests that in the communities where people share resources as simple as sugar (and other more expensive resources; cars or homes), exists the potential to build social ties and strengthen community bonds (Gibson & Dalton, 2020; Rooney, 2012).

In a resource-constrained environment (Bhatt et al., 2019; Hota et al., 2019), sharing could strengthen community resilience and manage crisis with limited resources. Sharing during the time of crisis can be helpful in providing urgent initial support to the communities. While the government support during any crisis is unmatched, in many instances crisis detection and resource mobilisation by the government may take a while. During this crucial time, sharing among the community members can be very helpful. For example, the Australian government has committed \$2 billion¹ for the Bush fire relief and \$17.6 billion for COVID-19 relief; however, this help is not immediately available, specifically for the regional, rural areas (Henry & Schimmel, 2011). In these circumstances, many community member-led initiatives have been leveraging emerging sharing models, for example, Adopt a health worker,² Adopt a neighbour,³ Home-share Melbourne,⁴ to provide resources such as home, skills, or companionship to address these crises. However, despite such a promising outlook, the increasing commercialisation of the sharing

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jan/18/bushfire-recovery-how-is-australias-2bn-fund-being-spent>

² <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-17/adopt-a-healthcare-worker-site-1/12064766>

³ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-17/volunteer-army-responds-to-coronavirus-covid-19-crisis/12064018>

⁴ <https://flatmates.com.au/info/home-share-melbourne>

economy is resulting in a focus towards efficiency and growth (Frenken & Schor, 2019).

The sharing economy platforms have made a significant shift in the operations of many businesses in various sectors such as in transportation through on-demand ride sharing services, and in tourism, through homestays and lodging (Frenken & Schor, 2019). While these business innovations have been applauded for reducing market inefficiency by putting idle capacity to use and providing cheaper, flexible and personalised services, they are increasingly seen as an epitome of ‘platform capitalism’ (Srnicek, 2017). Critics argue that while sharing economy platforms such as Uber and Airbnb differ in their organisational structure from that of the traditional corporation, they are essentially rational economic actors driven by profit maximisation and operating under the economics of supply and demand (Schor & Attwood-Charles, 2017). The commercial nature of sharing economy platforms has also proven detrimental for the local economies by destroying local jobs, creating precarious working conditions and eroding local economies by taking profits overseas (Richardson, 2015).

Using Polanyi’s work on market society, in this chapter, we argue that the commercialisation of sharing economy firms is an exemplification of platform capitalism. In this model, organisations are driven by profit-oriented value creation logics and are increasingly disembedded from social relations in the communities (Gruszka, 2017; Riaz & Qureshi, 2017; Auteurs et al., 2019). As such, they have a detrimental impact on the local economies, particularly on the poor and marginalised communities. Emerging research in the context of the base of the pyramid (hereafter referred to as BoP) also suggests that purely profit-oriented business models are ill-equipped to address the complex challenges of sustainability and social inequality (Hota et al., 2021; Pandey et al., 2021; Qureshi et al., 2018b; Parthiban et al., 2020).

In this context, it is suggested that socially oriented sharing economy platforms can provide an alternative means to BoP communities (Shalini et al., 2021; Schaefer et al., 2018). Scholars have argued that socially oriented sharing economy platforms encourage social innovation through cross-sector collaboration (Logue & Grimes, 2019). A common feature of these platforms is that they generate ‘ecosystems’ of value creation through ‘horizontalisation of interpersonal relationships’ (Shalini et al., 2021; Vallat, 2016) and through mass collaborations between independent actors on mutually beneficial arrangements (Rifkin, 2014). However, the operations and outcomes of these socially oriented sharing economy platforms remain under-explored. It is not clear, for example, who benefits, who owns and controls the process through which the sharing economy takes place in these socially oriented sharing economy platforms (Davis et al., 2017).

Building on emerging research on socially oriented sharing economy platforms, we argue that community-owned and democratically governed sharing economy platforms, embedded in the local context and oriented towards economic pluralism, has the potential to address poverty and inequality. We use the case of bHive Cooperative, a sharing economy platform, in regional Victoria, Australia, to explore the dynamics of a socially oriented sharing economy platform. We first discuss the

literature review on sharing economy, highlighting how the current narratives of sharing economy prioritise a commercial logic over the community logic. We then introduce bHive as an exemplary case study to show how a community-driven, socially oriented sharing economy platform can be developed to address the local needs. Based on the findings, we provide recommendations for theory and practice.

3.2 Literature Review

Broadly speaking, the term ‘sharing economy’ refers to a wide range of activities that are based on swapping, trading or renting products and services in a way that enables access over ownership (Andersson et al., 2013; Benjaafar et al., 2019; Cohen & Kietzmann, 2014; Frenken & Schor, 2019). As such, there is a wide range of forms of sharing economy organisations (SEOs)—from for-profit organisations to cooperatives (collectively owned enterprises) to SEOs that rely wholly on voluntary labour (Mair & Reischauer, 2017). Richardson (2015) provides an inclusive definition of sharing economy on the basis of which organisations are included. From this perspective, *sharing economy refers ‘to forms of exchange facilitated through online platforms, encompassing a diversity of for-profit and non-profit activities that all broadly aim to open access to under-utilised resources’* (Richardson, 2015 p. 121).

The concept and practice of sharing is nothing new, and sharing between families and kinship has been the oldest way of resource circulation in the communities (Belk, 2010). However, the advancement of information communication technologies has extended the spaces and practices of sharing outside the kinship and geographic boundaries (Davis et al., 2017). Specifically, the advent of location-tracking smartphones has reduced the transaction cost of sharing with the strangers (Qureshi et al., 2018b; Qureshi & Fang, 2011). Further, the digital platforms have turned sharing into a sustainable, profitable alternative to ownership by facilitating sharing goods and services at a larger scale, cheaper and easier than before (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Qureshi et al., 2021a, b, c). Organisations today, adhering to the principles of technoficing, can implement simple and inexpensive technologies to achieve bigger social impact (Qureshi et al., 2021c). As a result, the sharing economy is estimated to grow from \$14 billion in 2014 to \$335 billion by 2025 (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017).

The term sharing economy also is a historical and political construct. Its first time ‘emerged’ as an instrument to address the harsh economic realities of Global financial crisis, 2008. In that *‘weak economic environment and a depressed labour market, consumers were looking for new ways to save and workers were looking for new ways to earn, and smartphones gave them both new ways to transact’* (Botsman & Rogers, 2010).

Many social, environmental and economic benefits have been associated with the sharing economy activities. Notably, the sharing economy is seen as a response to the growing crisis of capitalism. For examples, contrary to the traditional economic

activities, the sharing economy activities are associated with the principles of openness, collaboration, equality and reciprocity (Vallat, 2016) and as such are seen an alternative to capitalism. Equally, the sharing economy firms are portrayed as a collaborative work among socially and ecologically conscious peers that appear to have bigger mandate than profit-making (Shalini et al., 2021).

However, the increasing commercialisation and profit-making possibilities in the sharing economy sector have been criticised as ‘sharing washing’ or ‘pseudo-sharing’ (Belk, 2014), and are seen as an epitome of capitalism (Richardson, 2015). Critics have labelled this dominant trend as platform capitalism. In the following section, we discuss the detrimental effects of platform capitalism on the social, economic development of local economy and argue for exploring alternative models of sharing economy to address the challenges of poverty and inequality.

3.2.1 Platform Capitalism Versus Platform Cooperativism

Platform capitalism refers to a ‘generic ecosystem’ in which a software-driven environment is ‘able to link potential customers to anything and anyone, from private individuals to multinational corporations’ (Lobo 2014 as cited in Olma 2014). As such, sharing economy platforms such as Uber and AirBnB are not just internet marketplaces which connect supply and demand between customers and suppliers (Langley & Leyshon, 2017). Instead, by enabling individuals to be consumers, producers, collaborators, financiers etc., the sharing economy has arguably brought market rationality into all areas of society (Srnicsek, 2017).

The large firms dominating the commercial space of sharing economy are considered different in their organisational structure to that of the traditional corporations. For example, unlike traditional firms, the sharing economy firms arguably do not own any assets. Airbnb, the largest accommodation provider, does not own real estate, and the world’s largest taxi company Uber does not own cars (Rifkin, 2014). However, the underlying principles of these digital firms remain the same: instrumental rationality and profit maximisation.

Even though these digital platforms do not own any physical assets, their real assets are their databases (Scholz, 2016). According to Srnicsek (2017), this centrality of data is an essential feature of platform capitalism. The provision of personal information is required as a pre-requisite for participation in ICT-mediated sharing (cf Nungsari & Chuah, 2021). This personal information used by the sellers and users can create a large database, specifically for the companies with large-scale user engagement (Langley & Leyshon, 2017). This big database could be analysed, used and sold to generate revenue for various participants (Srnicsek, 2017). As data is the basic resource that drives sharing economy firms and gives them competitive advantage, the rapid expansion of these firms is creating privacy, transparency and safety issues (Frenken & Schor, 2019).

Furthermore, similar to traditional firms in classical economics, the commercial firms in the sharing economy depersonalise exchanges by relying on a purely

price-based exchange system to coordinate between suppliers (sellers) and users (buyers) (Dobusch 2017). For example, ride-sharing platforms such as Uber use surge pricing during periods of peak demand and, alongside TaskRabbit, serve as examples of a digitally organised auction market. As such, the driving mantra of the commercial sharing economy is self-interest and profit-maximisation (Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2015; Gruszka, 2017). In that sense, the commercial firms are seen as an integral part of capitalism. Its main goal is to create a new venue for individuals to integrate themselves into the privatised economy (Frenken & Schor, 2019).

However, these peer-to-peer interactions, facilitated by platforms with a focus on profit and growth, are creating exploitative, insecure working conditions for the labour force (Attri & Bapuji, 2021), producing safety and security issues for users, contributing to gentrification and aggravating social unrest (Petriglieri et al., 2019; Tjaden et al., 2018; Törnberg & Chiappini, 2019).

Increasingly, evidence suggests that big sharing economy companies' arrivals can negatively affect local economies by disrupting the local economic structure. By expanding market logics in previously non-marketed goods (such as personal data, interpersonal trust), the commercial firms create substantial externalities (Dobusch, 2017), specifically for poor and marginalised communities (Piracha et al., 2019; cf. Riaz & Qureshi, 2017). For example, Uber and Airbnb's entrance into many towns and cities disrupted public transportation, upset the local wage balance and increased property rents. According to research by McGill University's School of Urban Planning, Airbnb induced gentrification in New York City's neighbourhoods by creating a new form of rent gap, which had detrimental impacts on the city's population, notably on the city's marginalised communities (Wachsmuth & Weisler, 2018).

As the commercial sharing economy platforms are mainly driven by profit logic, they overlook their impact on local communities as negative externalities. As a result, the cost of their activities is almost all borne by the local residents directly or indirectly, whereas local residents may not fully enjoy the benefits (Dobusch, 2017).

Using Karl Polanyi's work on 'great transformation' (1977), we can equate these current tendencies of the large sharing economy firms such as Uber and Airbnb with the (dis)embeddedness thesis. The theory of embeddedness holds that all economic activities and institutions are rooted in social relations and institutions and provides a basic framework to situate markets in a broader historical and social context (Polanyi, 2001; Qiu et al., 2021).

In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi contends that historically market has played a marginal role in allocating resources. Instead, most of the material needs were met via other allocative systems, which were not grounded in economising behaviour (Dalton, 1971). While mainstream economists have questioned the rationale behind economic activities in the absence of profit-making (North, 1977), Polanyi provides alternatives based on three principles: reciprocity (i.e. mutual gifting); redistribution (those who have shared with those who have not); and house-holding (non-monetised production for own use) (Polanyi, 2001). Polanyi's conceptual framework of reciprocity, redistribution and house-holding is grounded in social as well as economic necessity and explains the performance of the

economic system in the absence of profit-making incentives (Dalton, 1971). Indeed, as noted by Biggart and Delbridge (2004), the economic pluralism in Polanyi's work shows a shift from the pervasiveness of instrumental rationality and bring attention to substantive rationality. Substantively rational actions are not driven by pure economic calculations but instead oriented towards social and ethical values such as protecting environment, caring for employees and helping the needy by income redistribution (Biggart & Delbridge, 2004).

Applying this discussion to sharing economy organisations, it is possible to create sharing economy organisations that are oriented towards collectively held values (such as fair wages, data transparency etc.). Socially oriented sharing economy platforms, specifically platform cooperatives, are one such examples. According to Trebor Scholz, who first coined the term platform cooperativism, the sharing activities exemplified in the platform capitalism has not delivered its promise. Instead of platform capitalism, Scholz proposes platform cooperativism and argues that,

Platform cooperativism can invigorate genuine sharing, and that it does not have to reject the market. Platform cooperativism can serve as a remedy for the corrosive effects of capitalism; it can be a reminder that work can be dignified rather than diminishing for the human experience. (Scholz, 2014)

A platform cooperative is a cooperatively owned, democratically governed platform with an aim to build a fairer and equitable sharing economy (Bhatt et al., 2021; Galdini & De Nardis, 2021; Mannan & Pek, 2021; Sutton et al., 2016). The two core features of these platforms are democratic control and collective ownership (Scholz, 2018). Rooted in the long history of cooperative enterprises, a platform cooperative is owned and governed by the people who deliver the underlying services by contributing labour, time, skill and/or assets required for the functioning of the platforms (Sutton et al., 2016). Unlike platform capitalism, where companies monetise users' data, platform cooperatives aim to adopt transparency in their handling of data, especially the data on customers, and to provide clear information on what types of data is collected, how they are used and to whom they are sold. This data democracy is ensured as the platforms are owned by the users and remain accountable to the members in their use of data (Scholz, 2018).

While platform cooperatives are gaining popularity, empirical research on the nature and operations of these platforms is still lacking. There is a need to critically evaluate who benefits, who owns and who controls the processes through which sharing takes place in these platforms (Davies et al., 2017). We apply Polanyi's theory of embedded economy for such critical evaluation and propose a community-centric model of sharing economy that is embedded in local social relations and leverage trust, social reciprocity to build community social cohesion. We illustrate this through a case study of bHive, Australia, which is the world's first, place-based sharing economy cooperative and provides an interesting opportunity to understand the alternative model in the sharing economy.

3.3 Method: Research Context

Poverty in Australia has a rural and regional face. The report by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) (2018) shows that the benefits of economic growth in Australia have been concentrated in the metropolitan areas, and compared to people living in metropolitan Australia, people living in regional Australia experience significantly higher levels of insecurity and inequality.

According to a new online ‘poverty atlas’, produced by VCOSS and economic modelling firm NATSEM, there are 774,000 Victorians living in poverty (13.2%), with the poverty rate in regional Victoria (15.1%) higher than in Melbourne (12.6%) (Tanton et al., 2018). While there are many reasons for regional poverty in Australia, a key factor is an increasing defunding in regional economies (ACTU, 2018). The fragmented approaches taken by policymakers and local organisations have also failed in providing long-term, sustainable solutions. The regions have high youth unemployment (18.3%) (Patty, 2019), which is a serious challenge for rural and regional Australia. Alongside these economic issues are public health problems that manifest in epidemics of depression and suicide in the local community (AIHW, 2018). These issues are pressing for regional and rural areas of the country with 29% of people living in regional and remote parts of the country suffering from mental health issues (AIHW, 2018). At a macro level, there is a widening income gap, which creates challenges for building inclusive communities (UNDES, 2020). As found by Biddle and Markham (2017), the weekly household income for the top 20% (A\$1,579 per week) is 3.5 times the income of the bottom 20% (A\$457). Further, the geographically concentrated income distributions mean that the poor regions also lack access to the best schools and health care and lack opportunities for better job prospects (Biddle & Markham, 2017). In this context, bHive Bendigo has introduced its community-centric platform with an aim to regenerate local economies.

bHive Cooperative is a community-owned, person-to-person sharing economy platform developed for Bendigo by a team of local entrepreneurs: Ian McBurney (Executive Director), Julie Markoff (Governance), Clare Fountain (Business Development) and Marcus Turnbull (Technology Development) (bHive, 2019a). Work on the bHive Cooperative began in 2016 with the founders pitching the concept to locals and other groups (bHive, 2019b), iterating the concept prior and during its development, and later following these stages with testing of the bHive software. Once testing was completed, the platform garnered substantial community usage during its November 2020 launch in Bendigo, with plans for a national rollout following in February 2021 (BCCM, 2020).

In this chapter, we trace the journey of bHive Cooperative in three different stages – the conceptualisation of the platform; the early stages of the platform’s development; and the implementation process – and examine the challenges faced by such a sharing economy platform. Our analysis provides insights on how to design and launch a socially oriented sharing economy platform to rebuild local

economies and to address inequalities. Data was collected through interviews and secondary sources. We interviewed the co-founders of the company. We also watched various videos and attended talks given by the founders in different forums. We also collected data through secondary sources, mainly using information from their websites and social media channels.

3.4 The Case: bHive Bendigo

As noted above, bHive Cooperative is a community-owned, person-to-person sharing economy platform (bHive, 2019c). It aims to ‘allow local enterprises and people to build, operate and own Bendigo’s sharing economy’ (bHive, 2019d). Additionally, by reinvesting income and profits generated from these activities into the local economy, bHive aims to strengthen local economy. The founders believe that a place-based sharing economy platform can create opportunities to maximise social good and provide for increased security for local and global citizens alike (Align in the Sound, 2018).

As a cooperative, bHive is owned by its members. Memberships are place-based, meaning that only the resident of Bendigo can become the member of bHive Bendigo. According to the co-founder, Ian McBurney, the cooperative model has advantages (Align in the Sound, 2018). It promotes democracy by facilitating equality and transparency in all the decision-making. Each member has only one vote, no matter how many shares they own, and everyone has an equal status in the community. It also helps bHive in building trust in the communities; trust is composed of identity, reputation and user data (Align in the Sound, 2018). Each member has control over their own data, which helps in protecting their privacy and data safety. However, building a community-owned platform that promotes data democracy has not been easy. As noted by the co-founder, Ian McBurney, since the project just started, bHive does not have the technology that can ensure data safety. However, as the project continues to develop, new protection technologies will gradually be implemented to the entire project, and trust building mechanism will also evolve in this process (O’Callaghan, 2020).

bHive leverages the existing social networks and reciprocity in the communities to strengthen social cohesion. According to the bHive website, its primary unit, villages, aims to create an ‘epidemic of belonging’ (bHive, 2019e). The bHive platform allows residents to set up their own ‘villages’ of friends, family and neighbours to share each other’s tools, food and even cars. It is assumed that if individuals choose who goes in their community/village, they will be more likely to share any resources they might want to borrow. Such sharing can bring ‘back that feeling of belonging’ and has the potential to address the increased loneliness and isolation in the communities (O’Callaghan, 2020).

‘Local people, Local place, Local economy’⁵ is the slogan used by bHive. Through this localised approach, bHive challenges the dominant sharing economy model (i.e. platform capitalism). According to one of the founders, Ian McBurney, the money that goes into non-local organisations, such as Uber, goes out of local circulation. However, bHive aims to build local enterprises and aims to create work that is more meaningful for the thousands of people in Bendigo (bHive, 2019d). The income and profits generated through these various activities are reinvested in the local economy. With this platform, bHive believes Bendigo will be able to ‘develop as a digital innovation hub’ which would boost the local economy (bHive, 2019f).

The founders also believe that by returning to local economies, many of the problems facing the local communities and the planet can be solved. According to Ian McBurney, ‘We are now reaching a point where we have to make some serious choices as a civilisation about what direction we are going in’ (Align in the Sound, 2018). By operating locally and enabling sharing over ownership, the bHive project aims to promote social and environmental sustainability. As such, bHive is embedded in local social relations and oriented towards substantively rational actions such as eradicating poverty, restoring the ecology and creating a sense of belonging (bHive, 2019g).

3.4.1 *Business Model*

bHive is a cooperative, which is a business model that aims to ‘apply the concepts of sharing, democracy and delegation in order to benefit all members’ (State Government of Victoria, 2019). The model aims to build a platform for local communities to own their local sharing economy jointly. bHive’s Executive Director Ian McBurney explains the motivation behind the creation of the bHive platform is to rekindle the region’s sense of community and strengthen neighbourhood ties.

It’s about sharing access to stuff and skills locally. Finding the neighbours around you that live within a certain distance who you might like to share stuff and skills, or you have things in common with. (Gibson & Dalton, 2020)

Belonging is a really big thing for us. We want people to be able to find the others around them that they can walk to and have a chat with, and share access to stuff with, and build a sense of community. (Gibson & Dalton, 2020)

Contrary to Uber and Airbnb’s models that have been proven detrimental for local economy, bHive aims to provide the same goods and services while ensuring that income and profits stays locally. As noted above, bHive’s founders believe that they need to establish a local equivalent to the commercial sharing economy model, to serve the local economy; otherwise, global platforms like Uber and Airbnb will take over the Bendigo market (Align in the Sound, 2018). Accordingly, bHive offers an

⁵M. (n.d.). Home. bHive. Retrieved 29 September 2020, from <https://bhive.coop/>.

alternative model to platform capitalism which is being built, operated and owned by local people for local people (bHive, 2019d). As noted by economist and attorney Michael H. Shuman,

bHive allows communities to have the advantages of the economy without the liabilities of pernicious, nonlocal corporations like Uber and Airbnb.... it is an amazing, breakthrough tool for supporting local businesses and local economies. (Shuman as cited on bHive, 2019i)

3.4.2 *Operational Model*

The bHive platform consists of four modules: the City Hive, the Village Hive, the Sharing Hive and the Giving Hive (bHive, 2019c).

3.4.2.1 *Village Hive*

Village Hive is a fundamental aspect of bHive. It provides a platform for the people to come together for the good of their communities. Village Hive aims to connect people with their neighbours to build communities and enable sharing of goods and services. By subscribing to villages, the users can choose to become a member and owner of bHive Cooperative Bendigo. Membership allows them to have the same ownership share as every other member (bHive, 2019e). The idea of village is rooted in community solidarity and cohesion. It prioritises the connection, sharing and relationship between neighbours and communities and connects neighbour groups in the same village. By joining bHive as a member, people can access a shared village of neighbours. These neighbours can organise events together, build local relationships and communicate with each other and share things and skills. As such, the shared village project can address the current epidemic of social isolation and loneliness, which has a massive impact on mental health and well-being (Friedman, 2015).

As noted above, individuals can subscribe to villages as a user or as a member. Users/members can set up their own personal online village and add people who live within 1–2 km of their house to their village (as long as they consent). Villagers can also add friends from across Bendigo. As said by one member,

You get to choose who goes on your community. So if I just put on people I know I'm more than happy to share any resources they might want to borrow. (O'Callaghan, 2020)

Similar to how Facebook operates, the people in a bHive user's village can see fellow users' posts, shared items and events and have other users see theirs. bHive users can also set up and join their own community of interest, which allow them to post, message, set up events etc. with people who possess similar interests (bHive, 2019e).

Data protection and privacy is an important concern in the Village Hive. The platform ensures data privacy and safety by adhering to '*no advertising, no selling of data and no bots (fake people)*' (O'Callaghan, 2020). Individuals can also protect

their privacy by controlling who can join their village. Further, bHive is democratically owned and follow a one member, one vote principle. In such model, members own and control their private data. According to Ian McBurney,

If you are the owner of your own platform you would not imagine selling your own data, can you? Or breaching your own privacy. (O'Callaghan, 2020)

The members/users of Village Hive can also create and use their preferred local services, such as car sharing, food sharing, equipment sharing, house sharing, and peer-to-peer loans. This enables the Bendigo community to retain expenditure, work and ownership locally whilst creating meaningful local employment opportunities.

As noted above, the over-arching goal of Village Hive is to bring people together and create a sense of belonging. The platform has been particularly useful in addressing isolation and depression, which were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Ian McBurney,

the lockdown has intensified the need for a sense of community and [many] want a way to be able to organise rosters to check in on people who are living alone and who maybe could do with someone checking in on them, or to cook for them. (O'Callaghan, 2020)

As noted by many scholars, building community connection and strengthening social cohesion can have better health impact compared to giving up smoking, alcohol and fat and can also add 10 years to a person's lifespan (Brody, 2017). Hence, the potential impacts of the Village Hive exceed well beyond the individual benefits (bHive, 2019e). The Village Hive module also serves as the foundation of the entire bHive platform. In the long term, the Village Hive will be utilised to incubate other local sharing enterprises. These local sharing enterprises will be structured in the form of cooperatives. These sharing cooperatives could be centred around car sharing, skills sharing or power sharing among other prospective services or goods (bHive, 2019g). The Bendigo car sharing enterprise is currently in the implementation stage (bHive, 2019g).

3.4.2.2 Car Sharing Cooperatives

bHive Cooperative is in the process of introducing the business model for a Bendigo Car Sharing Cooperative which will enable members' access to cars over ownership (bHive, 2019g). A car sharing cooperative model will have economic and environmental benefits for the communities. As individuals and organisations can rent cars for short periods, it will help in saving on car cost. As noted on the bHive website, '*Car Sharing creates over \$60m in revenue in Australia annually, with an annual growth rate of 25%*' and has growth potential in the city of Bendigo which has a population of 95,000 and 55,000 cars (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). According to a feasibility study conducted by bHive, an average car is idle 23 h a day, and costs between 10,000 AUD and 14,000 AUD a year to run (bHiveg). They estimate that by sharing a car, a member can reduce this cost by 30–50%. Further,

every car sharing vehicle takes 13 cars off the road. Thus, car sharing helps in reducing traffic congestion as well as reducing pollution (bHive, 2019g).

Contrary to the popular ride sharing apps, such as Uber and Ola, bHive car sharing aims to use a cooperative model and will provide fleet car sharing service (bHive, 2019g). This service will allow community members to book a car hourly through the bHive app without owning the vehicle and managing or paying for maintenance.

3.4.2.3 Participant Incentives: Social Cohesion

The sharing economy platform designed by bHive leverages existing social relations and reciprocity in the communities which in turn increase social networks and build community trust and harmony (Pillai et al., 2021b; Qureshi et al., 2018b; Bhatt, 2017). As such, there is a virtuous cycle of building social cohesion through these platforms. That is, the more community members trust and develop relationships between themselves and others, the more those relationships and thus social cohesion is strengthened (Bhatt, 2017). An increase in social cohesion in the communities is associated with many positive benefits. It gives users a greater incentive to participate in local democratic discussions and decision-making through the platform. It can work as social monitoring mechanism and can help in maintaining a vibrant, civic atmosphere locally (Qureshi et al., 2016). For example, by matching those who need maintenance service to those who can provide maintenance services in the neighbourhood, the community members can learn to rely on each other, instead of relying on a specific maintenance company in the town. This peer-to-peer model can help in saving the cost, while enriching social interactions (Stofberg et al., 2019). The platform has been particularly useful during the Covid-19 pandemic, when there was a shortage of supplies, and local members were unable to venture out or farther than their place of residence. The members were able to post their needs on the platform and ask for help. Thus, the platform helped communities to keep connected during the lockdown (O'Callaghan, 2020).

In addition to Village Hive and car sharing platform, bHive also has three other projects in progress: City Hive, Sharing Hive and Giving Hive. City Hive facilitates participatory democracy by enabling the members to share local news and events and by helping citizens to engage in with their local communities (bHive, 2019c). It will be a launch pad for local online news and will allow people to receive information about events and news that directly relate to them. Sharing Hive is bHive's economic engine; this is where local cooperatives are formed to deliver the peer-to-peer services. The Giving Hive module refers to how 4% of the spending done in Sharing Hive is to be donated to local charitable projects, thus helping fund the ecological restoration of Bendigo and to improve the welfare of its residents (bHive, 2018).

3.5 Discussion

In this chapter, we aimed to explore the nature and key characteristics of cooperative platforms. Based on the case study of an exemplary cooperative platform, bHive, we have identified key characteristics (collaborative approach, localisation approach and decentralisation approach) that are integral to the embeddedness of sharing economy platform in the communities and provide descriptions of each below.

3.5.1 Collaborative Approach

Our research suggests that a collaborative approach is an integral aspect of platform cooperatives (Qureshi & Fang, 2011). It is in stark opposite to the individualised approach taken by platform capitalism. bHive provides a pathway for designing this collaborative approach by relying on emerging technology.

The bHive model seeks to build on this system by embedding technology in the daily lives of its users to connect them to essential resources and services. Additionally, by creating an online platform for discussion and collaboration between its members, bHive is strengthening social ties in the community to harness a community-led solution approach towards addressing local problems experienced by its users. This model shows how to build a digital platform to promote the circulation and development of the local economy. The sharing economy includes local logistics, transportation, energy, money and jobs. At the same time, it can also provide a platform for the local population to discuss public affairs and organise public events more democratically and openly, thereby encouraging collaboration between its residents and government (Shalini et al., 2021). By leveraging strategic partnerships with experienced entities, platform cooperatives can mobilise local resources and utilise collaboration to set up operations in the local context. As noted by the scholars in the BoP context, building partnerships with like-minded stakeholders (Bhatt, 2021, forthcoming; Kistruck et al., 2013; Parthiban et al., 2021; Pillai et al., 2021a) can further increase the potential of sharing economy platforms.

3.5.2 Localisation Approach

A key difference between bHive and its counterparts such as Uber is the localisation strategy used by the bHive platform. However, bHive does not define localisation as designing products specific to community needs (Bhatt, 2021, forthcoming) but conceptualises it as a process that helps in increasing return on investment to the local community and to re-use or leverage existing resources as much as possible. The initial insights from the case study show that the neighbourhood should be at the centre of localisation strategy. Because the unit of change is the neighbourhood,

the peer-to-peer economy should start at the very local level to form village networks that can then become a part of peer-to-peer sharing economy. Once the village networks are cultivated, they can be used for generating income opportunities. Research from purpose-driven organisations also suggest strengthening social cohesion in the communities before introducing economic opportunities (Bhatt, 2021 forthcoming; Qureshi et al., 2018b; Mair et al., 2012).

As the case study demonstrates, in a localised model of sharing economy, the residents will build, operate and own the platform and will facilitate access to the idle goods and services. In the case of bHive, the platform facilitates access to local resources such as skill sharing, car sharing and food sharing. By designing the platform around the resources and skills available in the communities and building locally owned sharing enterprises, platforms can achieve triple bottom line (Bhatt, 2017). Economically, localisation approach can save cost, improve efficiency and strengthen local economy by creating local employment opportunities. Socially, sharing of local resources and skills can increase social interactions, generate trust among the community members and thus, build community cohesion. Environmentally, localisation can also improve environmental outcomes by reducing consumption and by aiding with environmental education.

Moreover, localisation can also ensure the social sustainability of the platform. According to the co-founder of bHive, Ian McBurney, a platform cooperative has a lower chance of failure due to the high involvement of the locals in the platform's activities. As such, the localisation approach of platforms offers a holistic strategy to address poverty and inequality.

3.5.3 *Decentralisation Approach*

Data and privacy are big concerns in platform capitalism, and bHive provides an alternative way to manage data privacy. According to Ian McBurney, it is important for the organisation to work on trust, reputation and data management (Align in the Sound, 2018). These three elements are essential for a sharing economy platform – particularly, in a data-driven environment where security and privacy are a concern. Trust is an important factor in creating a '*citizen-controlled personal data economy*' (Hafen, 2019). As the cooperative model facilitates members' ownership and control of the data, it decentralises trust and accountability across the system (Scholz, 2018). Furthermore, as cooperative members, subscribers have the right to own and manage bHive with others (bHive, 2019c). Protecting data needs sophisticated technologies, which cooperatives might not have. The case study of bHive shows that cooperatives can collaborate up with another company to ensure data sovereignty. In the case of bHive, data is not stored in a centralised server, but on the local application and on the mobile of the user. This decentralisation ensures maximum privacy and security of data.

3.6 Conclusion: Challenges and Future Research Directions

Whilst the cooperative models seem ideal in building local communities, they are not beyond challenges. One of the core challenges is access to capital, especially setting up a structure that promotes data democracy. Despite lots of efforts, bHive was able to raise 35,000 AUD with the help of its 120 founding members and 60,000 AUD in the form of grants from local government (bHive, 2019h). Furthermore, building a platform that re-builds the local economy requires an ecosystem approach that is based on long-term strategy and collaboration with different stakeholders (Shalini et al., 2021). Future research could explore how these ecosystems emerge and function to maximise community benefits.

Another challenge inherent in the cooperative model is a ‘lack of transparency and government intervention’ which affect the functioning of cooperatives (Press Trust of India, 2015). For cooperatives to be successful, government involvement is needed; however, too much intervention by the government can result in inefficiencies, bureaucracy and red-tape (Bhatt, 2017). As such, how to find a right balance between control and autonomy is an important question to explore. For example, according to its founders, bHive would like government support in building transport infrastructure to encourage walking, cycling and car sharing. It is expected that such an investment by the government will help flourishing local sharing economy businesses. As noted by Karijn Bonne the ‘*idea of sharing appeals to people, which leaves local companies in this innovative area of business feeling optimistic*’ (as cited in Auterus et al., 2019). Thus, collaboration with government will help in realising the potential of sharing economy business and build local economy. However, the policy regulations and collaboration with the government is still at the early stage and will be worth exploring in future research. As community-centric platforms are embedded in local communities, they have the potential to build community resilience and navigate external crises. Exploring the process and mechanisms used by community-centric platforms to address crisis would be an interesting question for future research.

References

- ACTU. (2018, June). Regional inequality in Australia and the future of work: A supplementary ACTU submission to the select committee on the future of work and workers, ACTU Submission, ACTU D. No 135/2018
- Align in the Sound. (2018, October 22). *Bendigo co-operatives and commons co-op*. 2XX 98.3 Radio. https://soundcloud.com/behind_the_lines_98_3/bhive-bendigo-co-operatives-and-commons-platform-co-op-2018-10-22. Accessed 28 July 2020.
- Andersson, M., Hjalmarsson, A., & Avital, M. (2013). Peer-to-peer service sharing platforms: Driving share and share alike on a mass-scale. In R. Baskerville & M. Chau (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 34th international conference on information systems. ICIS 2013* (pp. 1–15). Association for Information Systems. AIS Electronic Library (AISeL).

- Attri, P., & Bapuji, H. (2021). Digital discrimination in sharing economy at the base of the pyramid. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 209–234). Springer.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2016). *2016 Census QuickStats*. https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/202. Accessed 01 Aug 2020.
- Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). (2018). *Regional inequality in Australia and the future of work*. Policy document. <https://www.actu.org.au/media/1385202/d135-fow-regional-inequality-supplementary-submission.pdf>. Accessed 01 December 2020.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). (2018). *Rural and remote populations. Australia's health 2018* (Australia's health series no. 16. AUS 221). AIHW.
- Auteurs, K., Bonne, K., Malfliet, N., Franssen, V., De Maeyer, C., Michiels, M. (2019). The sharing economy: An exploratory study on revenue models of Belgian digital platforms and sharing initiatives. *The sharing economy*.
- Belk, R. (2010). Sharing. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(5), 715–734.
- Belk, R. (2014). You are what you can access: Sharing and collaborative consumption online. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(8), 1595–1600.
- Benjaafar, S., Kong, G., Li, X., & Courcoubetis, C. (2019). Peer-to-peer product sharing: Implications for ownership, usage, and social welfare in the sharing economy. *Journal of Management Science*, 65(2), 477–493.
- Bhatt, B. (2017). *The role of social enterprises in building inclusive social capital: Evidences from multi-case, qualitative field study*. Doctoral dissertation, Carleton University.
- Bhatt, B. (2021, forthcoming). Ethical complexity of social change: Negotiated actions of a social enterprise. *Journal of Business Ethics*.
- Bhatt, B., Qureshi, I., & Riaz, S. (2019). Social entrepreneurship in non-munificent institutional environments and implications for institutional work: Insights from China. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 154(3), 605–630.
- Bhatt, B., Dembek, K., Hota, P. K., & Qureshi, I. (2021). Sharing economy model for the base of the pyramid: An ecosystem approach. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 301–316). Springer.
- bHive. (2018). *bHive prospectus*. <https://bhive.coop/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/bHive-Prospectus-2018.pdf>. Accessed 02 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019a). *Team – CoFounders and Directors*. <https://bhive.coop/team/>. Accessed 09 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019b). *bHive story*. <https://bhive.coop/our-story/>. Accessed 09 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019c). *About bHive*. <https://bhive.coop/about/>. Accessed 09 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019d). *bHive vision, first mission and purpose*. <https://bhive.coop/2020/06/05/bhive-vision-first-mission-and-purpose/>. Accessed 20 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019e). *Villages*. <https://bhive.coop/current-projects/villages/>. Accessed 10 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019f). *Why bHive*. <https://bhive.coop/2016/10/05/why-bhive/>. Accessed 18 Nov 2020.
- bHive. (2019g). *Bendigo car sharing cooperative*. <https://bhive.coop/current-projects/car-sharing/>. Accessed 28 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019h). *Press release: bHive has been awarded the \$60,000 Big ideas grant for our villages project*. <https://bhive.coop/2019/06/10/press-release-bhive-has-been-awarded-the-60000-big-ideas-grant-for-our-villages-project/>. Accessed 15 Sept 2020.
- bHive. (2019i). *Let's do it*. <https://bhive.coop/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/bHive-lets-do-it.pdf>. Accessed 28 Oct 2020.
- Biddle, N., & Markham, F. (2017). *What income inequality looks like across Australia*. <https://theconversation.com/what-income-inequality-looks-like-across-australia-80069>. Accessed 28 Jan 2021.
- Biggart, N. W., & Delbridge, R. (2004). Systems of exchange. *Academy of Management Review*, 29(1), 28–49.

- Botsman, R., & Rogers, R. (2010). *What's mine is yours. The rise of collaborative consumption*. Harper Collins.
- Brody, J. E. (2017, June 12). Social interaction is critical for mental and physical health. *New York Times*.
- Business Council of Co-opeartives & Mutuals (BCCM). (2020). *bHive Co-operative launches online sharing platform in Bendigo*. <https://bccm.coop/bhive-co-operative-launches-online-sharing-platform-in-bendigo/>. Accessed 20 Nov 2020.
- Cohen, B., & Kietzmann, J. (2014). Ride on! Mobility business models for the sharing economy. *Journal of Organization & Environment*, 27(3), 279–296.
- Dalton, G. (1971). *Primitive, archaic, and modern economies: Essays of Karl Polanyi*. The Beacon Press.
- Davies, A. R., Donald, B., Gray, M., & Knox-Hayes, J. (2017). Sharing economies: Moving beyond binaries in a digital age. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 10(2), 209–230.
- Dobusch, L. (2017). Sharing economy between commons and commodification. In *JKU Conference, Linz* (pp. 10–13). http://www.jku.at/JKU_Site/JKU/conferences/content/e290365/e321486/e321494/Dobusch_GreaTrans.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan 2021.
- Eckhardt, G. M., & Bardhi, F. (2015). The sharing economy isn't about sharing at all. *Harvard Business Review*, 28(1), 881–898.
- Frenken, K., & Schor, J. (2019). Chapter 8: Putting the sharing economy into perspective. In O. Mont (Ed.), *A research agenda for sustainable consumption governance* (pp. 121–135). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Friedman. (2015, October 23). Can you get smarter?. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/opinion/sunday/can-you-get-smarter.html>. Accessed 20 Sept 2020.
- Galdini, R., & De Nardis, S. (2021). Not only for-profit. Sharing solidarity, promoting opportunities. A case study in Rome. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 25–48). Springer.
- Geissinger, A., Laurell, C., Öberg, C., & Sandström, C. (2019). How sustainable is the sharing economy? On the sustainability connotations of sharing economy platforms. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 206, 419–429. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.09.196>
- Gibson, B., & Dalton, T. (2020, November 02). Need a cup of sugar? A ladder? Neighbours move to reconnect online in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. *ABC Cenral Victoria*. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-02/bhive-readies-online-sharing-neighbourhood-for-bendigo/12839212>.
- Gruszka, K. (2017). Framing the collaborative economy—voices of contestation. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 23, 92–104.
- Hafen, E. (2019). Personal data cooperatives – A new data governance framework for data donations and precision health. In J. Krutzinna & L. Floridi (Eds.), *The ethics of medical data donation* (pp. 141–149). Springer.
- Hamari, J., Ukkonen, A., & Sjöklint, M. (2016). The sharing economy: Why people participate in collaborative consumption. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 67(9), 2047–2059.
- Henrý, H., & Schimmel, C. (2011). *Cooperatives for people-centred rural development*. Policy document. International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/%2D%2D-ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_158998.pdf. Accessed 28 Sept 2020.
- Hota, P. K., Mitra, S., & Qureshi, I. (2019). Adopting bricolage to overcome resource constraints: The case of social enterprises in rural India. *Management and Organization Review*, 15(2), 371–402.
- Hota, P. K., Qiu, S., & Bhatt, B. (2021). Ethitrade: Countering challenges of sharing economy at the base of the pyramid using technology. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing Economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 267–282). Springer.
- Kistruck, G. M., Beamish, P. W., Qureshi, I., & Sutter, C. J. (2013). Social intermediation in base-of-the-pyramid markets. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(1), 31–66.
- Langley, P., & Leyshon, A. (2017). Platform capitalism: The intermediation and capitalization of digital economic circulation. *Finance and Society*, 3(1), 11–31.

- Logue, D., & Grimes, L. (2019). Platforms for the people: Enabling civic crowdfunding through the cultivation of institutional infrastructure. *Strategic Management Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3110>
- Mair, J., & Reischauer, G. (2017). Capturing the dynamics of the sharing economy: Institutional research on the plural forms and practices of sharing economy organizations. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 125, 11–20.
- Mair, J., Marti, I., & Ventresca, M. J. (2012). Building inclusive markets in rural Bangladesh: How intermediaries work institutional voids. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 55(4), 819–850.
- Mannan, M., & Pek, S. (2021). Solidarity in the sharing economy: The role of platform cooperatives at the base of the pyramid. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 235–266). Springer.
- McLaren, D., & Agyeman, J. (2015). *Sharing cities: A case for truly smart and sustainable cities*. MIT Press.
- North, D. (1977). Markets and other allocation systems in history: The challenge of Karl Polanyi. *Journal of European Economic History*, 6, 703–716.
- Nungsari, M., & Chuah, H. Y. (2021). Participation in the sharing economy for refugees in Malaysia: A solution that bypasses legal constraints? In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 119–138). Springer.
- O'Callaghan, T. (2020, October 29). Bendigo platform bHive about to launch, final testing underway. *Bendigo Advertiser*. Available at <https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/6988169/bendigo-now-has-social-platform-to-rival-facebook-twitter/?cs=10205>. Retrieved on January 27, 2021.
- Olma, S. (2014). *Nevermind the sharing economy: Here's platform capitalism*. Institute of Network Cultures Blog. <http://networkcultures.org/mycreativity/2014/10/16/never-mind-the-sharing-economy-heres-platform-capitalism>. Accessed 20 Jan 2021.
- Pandey, M., Bhati, M., Shukla, D. M., & Qureshi, I. (2021). Resourcing and value creation: A case of sharing economy model at the base of the pyramid. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 185–208). Springer.
- Parthiban, R., Qureshi, I., Bandyopadhyay, S., Bhatt, B., & Jaikumar, S. (2020). Leveraging ICT to overcome complementary institutional voids: Insights from institutional work by a social enterprise to help marginalized. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 1–21.
- Parthiban, R., Qureshi, I., Bandyopadhyay, S., & Jaikumar, S. (2021). Digitally mediated value creation for non-commodity base of the pyramid producers. *International Journal of Information Management*, 56, 102256.
- Patty, A. (2019, March 04). Australia's youth unemployment hot spots revealed. *Bendigo Advertiser*.
- Petriglieri, G., Ashford, S. J., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2019). Agony and ecstasy in the gig economy: Cultivating holding environments for precarious and personalized work identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 64(1), 124–170.
- Pillai, V., Shukla, D. M & Qureshi, I. (2021a). Social intermediation using sharing economy in India: A case study of Farmizen. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 93–118). Springer.
- Pillai, V., Pandey, M., & Bhatt, B. (2021b). Social sustainability at BOP through building inclusive social capital: a case study of Drishtee. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 283–300). Springer.
- Piracha, A., Sharples, R., Forrest, J., & Dunn, K. (2019). Racism in the sharing economy: Regulatory challenges in a neo-liberal cyber world. *Geoforum*, 98, 144–152.
- Polanyi, K. (2001). *The great transformation: The political and economic origins of our time*. Beacon Press.
- Press Trust of India. (2015, October 09). Government intervention affects cooperatives' functioning. *Business Standard*. Retrieved from https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/government-intervention-affects-cooperatives-functioning-115100901364_1.html. Accessed 08 Sept 2020.

- Qiu, S., Xu, Z., & Bhatt, B. (2021). The Sharing economy platforms in rural China: Bridging institutional voids through institutional entrepreneurship. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 69–92). Springer.
- Qureshi, I., & Fang, Y. (2011). Socialization in open source software projects: A growth mixture modeling approach. *Organizational Research Methods*, 14(1), 208–238.
- Qureshi, I., Kistruck, G. M., & Bhatt, B. (2016). The enabling and constraining effects of social ties in the process of institutional entrepreneurship. *Organisation Studies*, 37(3), 425–447.
- Qureshi, I., Fang, Y., Haggerty, N., Compeau, D. R., & Zhang, X. (2018a). IT-mediated social interactions and knowledge sharing: Role of competence-based trust and background heterogeneity. *Information Systems Journal*, 28(5), 929–955.
- Qureshi, I., Sutter, C., & Bhatt, B. (2018b). The transformative power of knowledge sharing in settings of poverty and social inequality. *Organisation Studies*, 39(11), 1575–1599.
- Qureshi, I., Bhatt, B., & Shukla, D. M. (2021a). Overview of sharing economy at the base of the pyramid. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 1–24). Springer.
- Qureshi, I., Bhatt, B., & Shukla, D. M. (2021b). Sharing economy at the base of the pyramid—research framework and future directions. In I. Qureshi, B. Bhatt, & D. M. Shukla (Eds.), *Sharing Economy at the base of the pyramid: Opportunity and challenges* (pp. 317–328). Springer.
- Qureshi, I., Pan, S. L., & Zheng, Y. (2021c). Digital social innovation: An overview and research framework. *Information Systems Journal*, 35(1), 1–25.
- Riaz, S., & Qureshi, I. (2017). Emergence of a new institutional logic: Shaping the institutionally complex field of community radio in India. *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, 50, 383–418.
- Richardson, L. (2015). Performing the sharing economy. *Geoforum*, 67, 121–129.
- Rifkin, J. (2014). *The zero marginal cost society: The internet of things, the collaborative commons, and the eclipse of capitalism*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rooney, M. (2012). *Sharing: If it's so good, why don't we do more of it?* <https://theconversation.com/sharing-if-its-so-good-why-dont-we-do-more-of-it-6345>. Accessed 08 Dec 2020.
- Schaefers, T., Moser, R., & Narayanamurthy, G. (2018). Access-based services for the base of the pyramid. *Journal of Service Research*, 21(4), 421–437. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670518770034>
- Scholz, T. (2014). Platform Cooperativism vs. the sharing economy. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/@trebors/platform-cooperativism-vs-the-sharing-economy-2ea737f1b5ad>
- Scholz, T. (2016). *Platform cooperativism: Challenging the corporate sharing economy*. Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung New York City. <https://rosalux.nyc/platform-cooperativism-2/>. Accessed 18 Sept 2020.
- Scholz, T. (2018). How to coop the digital economy. In I. Gloerich, G. Lovink, & P. De Vries (Eds.), *MoneyLab reader 2: Overcoming the hype* (pp. 198–214). Institute of Network Cultures.
- Schor, J. B., & Attwood-Charles, W. (2017). The “sharing” economy: Labor, inequality, and social connection on for-profit platforms. *Sociology Compass*, 11(8), e12493. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12493>
- Shalini, Manoharan, B., Parthiban, R., Qureshi, I., Bhatt, B., & Rakshit, K. (2021). Digital technology-enabled transformative consumer responsabilisation: A case study. *European Journal of Marketing*.
- Smniecek, N. (2017). The challenges of platform capitalism: Understanding the logic of a new business model. *Juncture*, 23(4), 254–257.
- State Government of Victoria. (2019). *Co-operative*. <https://www.business.vic.gov.au/setting-up-a-business/business-structure/cooperative>. Accessed 08 Sept 2020.
- Stofberg, N., Bridoux, F., Ciulli, F., Pisani, N., Kolk, A., & Vock, M. (2019). A relational-models view to explain peer-to-peer sharing. *Journal of Management Studies*.

- Sutton, M., Johnson, C., & Gorenflo, N. (2016). A shareable explainer: What is a platform co-op? *Shareable*. <https://www.shareable.net/a-shareable-explainer-what-is-a-platform-co-op/>. Accessed 21 Jan 2021.
- Tanton, R., Peel, D., & Vidyattama, Y. (2018). *Poverty in Victoria, NATSEM, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis (IGPA), University of Canberra*. Report commissioned by VCOSS.
- Tjaden, J. D., Schwemmer, C., & Khadjavi, M. (2018). Ride with me—Ethnic discrimination, social markets, and the sharing economy. *European Sociological Review*, 34(4), 418–432.
- Törnberg, P., & Chiappini, L. (2019). Selling black places on Airbnb: Colonial discourse and the marketing of black communities in New York City. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*.
- United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs (UNDES). (2020). *World social report 2020: Inequality in a rapidly changing world*. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/02/World-Social-Report2020-FullReport.pdf>. Accessed 18 Sept 2020.
- Vallat, D. (2016, June 24–26). An alternative to state-market dualism: The sharing economy. Practical and epistemological questions. In *SASE 28th annual conference*. University of California.
- Wachsmuth, D., & Weisler, A. (2018). Airbnb and the rent gap: Gentrification through the sharing economy. *Journal of Environment and Planning*, 50(6), 1147–1170.
- Yaraghi, N., & Ravi, S. (2017). *The current and future state of the sharing economy* (Brookings India IMPACT Series No. 032017). Brookings Institution India Center. http://www.brookings.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2016/12/sharingeconomy_032017final.pdf. Accessed 08 Sept 2020.

Mayra Balderas Escobedo is a Researcher in the Australia National University. Her research focuses on the role of the platform economy in addressing social cohesion.

Zhiwen Zheng is a Ph.D. student in the Research School of Management at Australian National University. Her research explores ethical issues (privacy, trust, common good) in Big data.

Dr. Babita Bhatt is a Lecturer in the Research School of Management at Australia National University. Her research mainly focuses on the role of innovative business models in addressing societal challenges.