

Sub-federal ownership of international commitments.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement in Alberta and British Columbia

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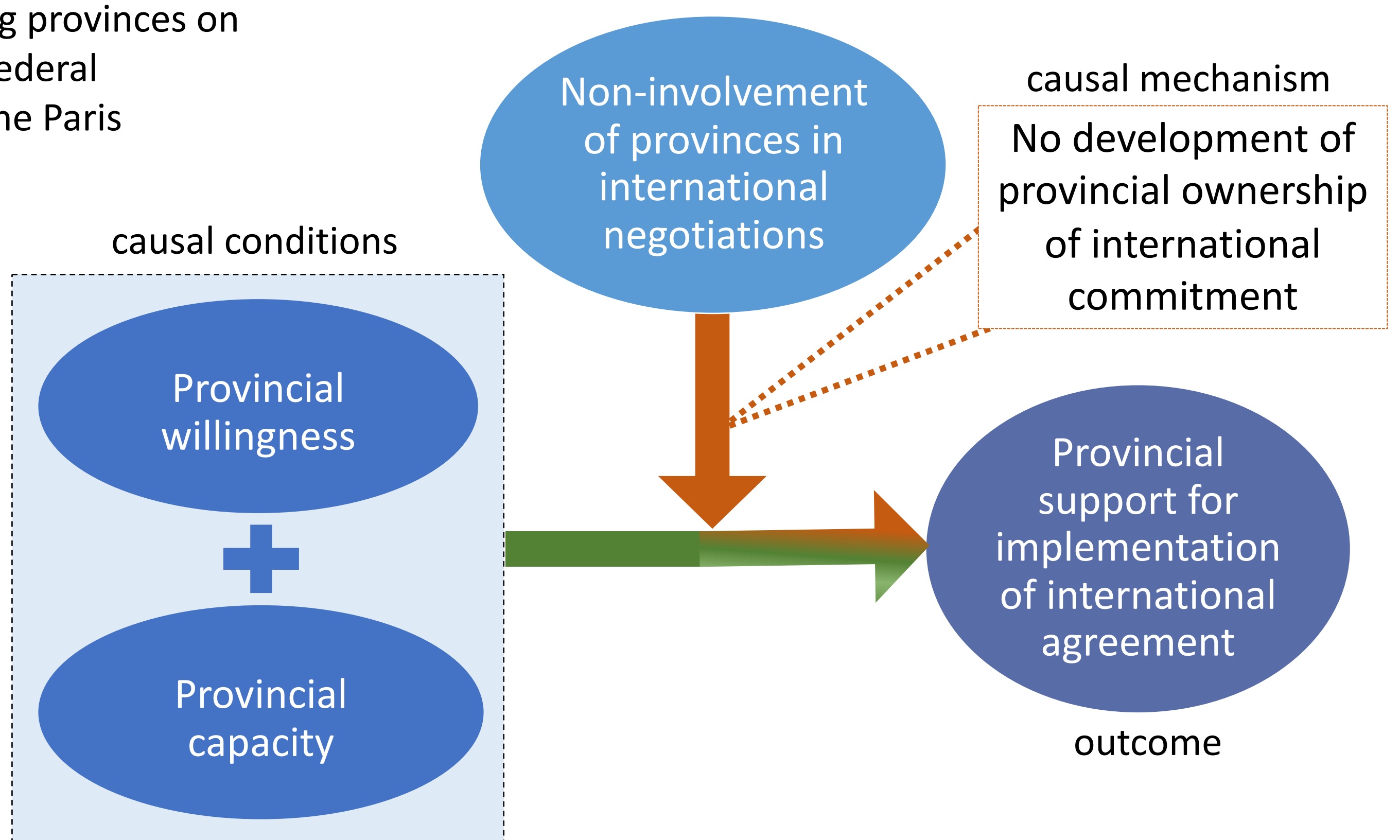
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1 Political and academic context

Federal systems face specific challenges fulfilling their international commitments: In cases of shared jurisdiction, federal governments regularly need the sub-federal level to contribute to the implementation process. Surprisingly, we know little about the conditions under which sub-federal entities support the implementation of an international agreement. For instance, Trudeau's government has had a hard time getting provinces on board to implement the Paris Agreement. Is the federal government's failure to involve the provinces in the Paris negotiations part of the explanation?

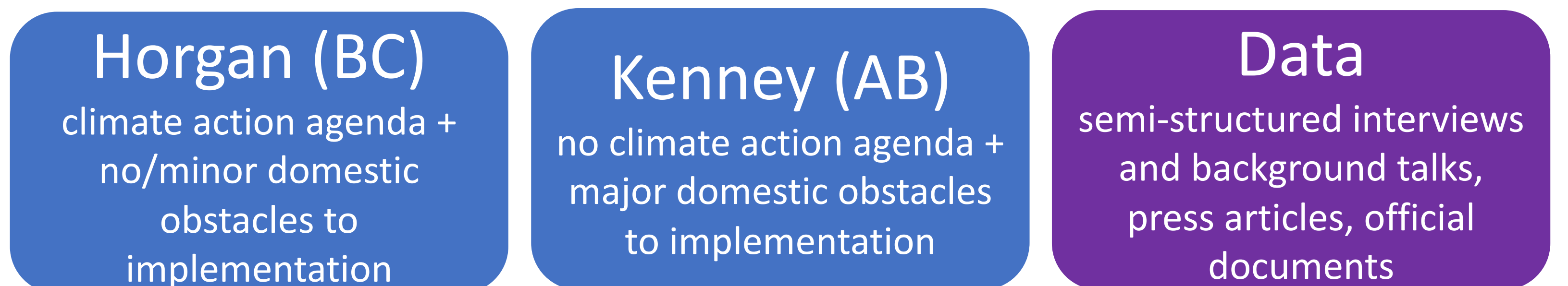
3 Theoretical framework

Based on the international compliance and implementation literature, I expect provincial willingness and capacity to be necessary conditions for their support for implementation. This causal relation is theorised to be negatively affected by the non-involvement of provinces in international negotiations.



4 Research design

Comparative process-tracing study of the role of two provincial governments in the implementation of the Paris Agreement:



5 Findings

	outcome	causal mechanism
Horgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious climate action • But: no support of federal side-payments to get other provinces on board with implementation 	<p>Reasoning: Climate action due to provincial conviction, not to fulfil federal commitments</p> <p>Willing province has no pan-Canadian commitment due to lack of ownership</p>
Kenney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No climate action and lack of willingness to cooperate • Plus: active attack of implementation process <p>→ As expected, provincial support is lower than should be given capacity and willingness</p>	<p>Reasoning: Climate action not in provincial interest; no consultation of provinces on federal commitments</p> <p>Unwilling province uses non-involvement to talk itself out of implementation</p> <p>→ Empirical evidence confirms expected mechanism</p>

Merci
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Research stay in Canada

Contributions

This project seeks to

- overcome the gap between comparative federalism and international compliance literature
- make a theoretical contribution to the literature on the functioning and effectiveness of federal systems

- Research stays at the University of Victoria, BC with Prof Oliver Schmidtke, University of Alberta, AB with Lori Thorlakson and Université de Montréal, QC with Frédéric Mérand
- 15 meetings with practitioners of intergovernmental relations and climate policies at the provincial and federal level (on and off the the record)
- Participation in local seminars and networking events
- Presentation of research findings as part of the Global Talks series at the University of Victoria, the ECSA-C conference hosted by the University of Alberta, and the annual meeting of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking countries (GKS)