

Article

Take Your Foot off My Mountain: The Impact of Mobilizing Marginal Stakeholders on Corporate Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

This study explores a case of stakeholder mobilization and activism to cancel a mining project in the most important mining state in Brazil, Minas Gerais. It examines the “Tira o Pé da Minha Serra” (Take Your Foot off My Mountain) campaign, which aimed at suspending a mining license granted to a large mining company. Grounded on stakeholder theory and based on documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews, this study examines the extent to which stakeholder mobilization can bring about changes in corporate practices. The main findings suggest that much of the success of the campaign pertained to its influence on political and judicial decision-making rather than on its ability to influence corporate behavior. Notwithstanding, findings also speak to the importance of the usage of some tools capable of enhancing the attention and responsiveness of large corporations regarding their stakeholders’ demands.

KEYWORDS: corporate sustainability; marginalized stakeholders; mining industry; stakeholders’ mobilization

INTRODUCTION

In May 2022, environmentalists, activists, social movements, and civil society organizations gathered in the movement Tira o Pé da Minha Serra (Take your foot off my mountain), drawing the attention of the population of Minas Gerais, Brazil, to a mining project with significant potential impact on the metropolitan region of the capital, Belo Horizonte. This concerns the Serra do Taquaril Project, by the company Taquaril Mineração S.A. (Tamisa), which aims to exploit iron ore in the farm Ana da Cruz, located in a part of the Serra do Curral, an important environmental [1], cultural, and scenic heritage [2] of Minas Gerais.

Considered of high environmental impact—classified as level 6, the top of the scale provided for in legislation [3]—the project aims to exploit one of the still preserved parts of the mountainous complex Serra do Curral, with the forecast to deforest stretches with native Atlantic Forest

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vegetation in permanent preservation areas [4]. Despite this, in an online meeting, the State Council of Environmental Policy (COPAM) voted in favour of the project and approved its licensing [5], which generated great public indignation. With various actions, such as creating a digital petition, a website for the campaign, a manifesto signed by nationally renowned artists, and social media posts, the movement *Tira o Pé da Minha Serra* dedicated itself to questioning the licensing approval [3], presenting irregularities in the process and its potential risks to the environment, animal and plant species, communities near the mountain, and cities that host it.

Among the largest sectors of the economy in various countries worldwide, mining is important for several industries and, therefore, the global economy [6]. However, despite its economic relevance, the activity is associated with significant socio-environmental impacts that can extend to places far from the exploitation area ([7], p. 310), generating growing concern about the conduct of projects in the sector and the absence or inefficiency of responsible corporate practices [8].

In Brazil, a country where mineral extraction has historical relevance [9], the risks of mining activity are well-known by authorities and society, especially in the state of Minas Gerais, which experienced the consequences of the rupture of two mining tailings dams, one in Mariana and another in Brumadinho [10] (Bravin, 2019). Such episodes increased communities' awareness of the potential socio-environmental impacts of mining [7], a process that contributed to the increase in conflicts between companies and local populations, involving social mobilization to challenge and participate in decision-making processes of sector managers [7].

Through mobilization actions, which often use social media for social activism [11], stakeholders affected by mining ventures announce impending changes and reveal public issues to society [10], building an environment conducive to dialogue and learning processes [12]. In particular, counter accounts—"accounting information produced by individuals and/or external organizations about their representation of the social and environmental impacts of others" ([13], p. 109)—are used to make demands of affected groups visible and draw the attention of other individuals with the intention of forming alliances and demanding changes [10].

Mobilization thus emerges as a tool that helps balance power in relation to unequal parties [14] and increases awareness of the urgency of the issue raised [12]. It typically originates from less powerful social groups, the so-called marginal stakeholders, who, although they have legitimate and urgent demands, do not pose significant risks to a corporation's activities because they have no contractual or resource dependency relationship [15]. Characterized by geographical, cultural, and political distance from the headquarters of the exploiting companies, these actors do not have the necessary political support to participate in

decisions that affect them [15] and therefore need to make efforts to pressure and influence corporate social responsibility [16] to ensure long-term human development, but also the well-being and quality of life of each individual directly [17].

In the case of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra campaign, which is the focus of this study, it is known that the venture could impact Belo Horizonte's main postcard, the Serra do Curral, its beauty, stability, fauna, and flora, as well as cause harm to the health and compromise the quality of life of residents of communities near the exploitation area and residents of the cities Belo Horizonte, Sabará, and Nova Lima, which host the mountain range. Throughout the campaign, various reports, news, popular and judicial actions led to the temporary suspension of the license granted to Tamisa, preventing the mining activity from taking place as planned [18].

This study examines to what extent stakeholder mobilization is capable of bringing about changes in sustainable corporate practices. For this purpose, an initial documentary analysis was conducted, which includes data from various sources, including digital news portals, blogs, social networks, television and web video reports. In order to complement the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with movement articulators to understand their perceptions of the case.

After analyzing all the collected information, it was possible to conclude that, although Tira o Pé da Minha Serra achieved significant victories for the protection of the Serra do Curral, they were mainly obtained through influence on the decisions of political and judicial actors involved in the case, but not through initiatives originating from the company Tamisa. Considering the relevance of the impacts on the venture, which had its project rendered unfeasible, this study may contribute to understanding possible tools capable of increasing the attention and responses of large corporations to the demands of stakeholders affected by their activities.

BACKGROUND

The mining industry ranks among the largest sectors of the economy in many countries worldwide [19]. Essential for various activities, the supply of mineral commodities from underground is a necessity for industries such as high technology, which is of paramount importance to the global economy [6]. To illustrate the significant financial movement of the sector, in 2022, the revenue of just the top 40 global mining companies totaled around 943 billion US dollars [6].

Parallel to its economic relevance, mining is often associated with significant socio-environmental impacts [7], generating growing concern about project management and the absence or inefficiency of sustainable corporate practices [8]. Known for involvement in high-risk ventures, with a strong potential to negatively affect human communities and high-value environmental resources, companies and projects related to the activity have faced more demands to improve their environmental and social

performance [8], whether through pressure from affected groups, government entities, public policies, or even the media.

Like many industries that exploit natural resources, mining is constantly linked to ecosystem damage, workplace accidents, occupational diseases, and economic issues such as involvement in corruption [19]. With potential impacts ranging from contamination of the exploitation site to large-scale environmental degradation, the activity can have negative effects that extend far beyond a mine's location [7]. Effects such as chemical contamination of surface and groundwater, increased erosion and siltation, emissions of sulfur dioxide and heavy metals, disruption of wildlife and local communities, noise disturbances, and loss of vegetation and original biodiversity [8] can extend to locations far from the concession area, reaching different levels depending on where and how the exploitation occurs, the necessary infrastructure, the stages of the venture, and the absence of risk control and management practices [7]. For example, rural areas tend to deal with air pollution, deforestation, erosion, and water contamination. Meanwhile, urban areas suffer effects such as "urban sprawl, slum development, increased violence, sexual exploitation, and over-demand on public health, sanitation, and security services" ([7], p. 310).

The increased awareness of these impacts has contributed to the rise of conflicts between local populations and companies involved in mining, generating common conflicts that include, as Franks et al.'s research shows [20], immediate environmental issues such as pollution, competition, and access to natural resources coming first. In the background, conflicts arise from the lack of consultation and opportunity for involved stakeholders, as well as concerns about the health and safety of nearby communities. Finally, there are social and economic issues that include the distribution of benefits, cultural impacts, and the absence or lack of quality in continuous consultation and communication processes.

Among the available examples is the Johannesburg district in South Africa, where water contamination and acidification resulted from the oxidation of heavy metals from the mine tailings deposits [21]. Although the effects were more severe in the shallow groundwater, the polluted groundwater, when discharged into the streams in the area, had the capacity to spread contamination over 10 km away from its source [21]. In Brazil, the state of Minas Gerais has also experienced the consequences of the rupture of two mining tailings dams in the cities of Mariana and Brumadinho. In Mariana, the rupture of the Fundão dam in 2015 released about 34 million cubic meters of ore tailings into the environment [22]. After the rupture, the materials continued to be slowly discharged, following the flow of the waters towards the mouth of the Doce River, traveling about 500 km until reaching the ocean off the coast of Espírito Santo state [23]. Meanwhile, the rupture of the Córrego do Feijão dam in Brumadinho resulted in the discharge of 12 million cubic meters of tailings through the Ferro-Carvão stream and the Paraopeba River, causing the

loss of 270 human lives and damage to the environment, public and private property, biodiversity, and water resources [24].

In Brazil, a country where mineral extraction has historical significance [9], the value of mineral production increased by 950% between 2001 and 2013, generating \$77.9 billion, equivalent to 168.2 billion Brazilian reais. In 2018, the sector's representation in the gross domestic product (GDP) reached 4.06%, equivalent to 296.38 billion reais [25]. Today, mining remains one of the country's main economic activities [9], recognized for bringing positive economic contributions to cities and municipalities, such as the generation of direct and indirect jobs, advantages for the local economy, and the manufacture of products.

However, despite the significant gains, mining companies may underestimate the financial impacts of social conflicts. An example presented by Demajorovic and Lopes [7] describes a large-scale mining project with expenditures ranging from \$3 billion to \$5 billion, which suffered financial losses of \$20 million per week due to production delays resulting from a conflict. In addition to damage to the environment, human, animal, and plant populations, socio-environmental risks can incur significant costs to a business, serving as another important driver of change for corporate behavior [7].

With risks that concern not only residents of regions near the exploitation site but also scientists, environmentalists, politicians, businesses, and communities that depend on natural resources such as soil and water, as well as the corporations themselves, mining requires the adoption of control instruments that ensure the safety of workers and communities in line with a sustainable development model that serves the development of the region where it occurs [26]. To ensure its continuity, it is necessary to minimize negative environmental impacts through the establishment of guidelines for pollution control, both in the implementation phase and in the operation and termination of activities [27].

Cases like those of Johannesburg in South Africa and Mariana and Brumadinho in Brazil are examples that, although the risks of mining are widely known, the lack of measures to control them still characterizes ventures around the world. Thus, in many cases, it is common to see civil society seeking other ways to ensure the well-being and safety of communities and the environment that surrounds them [10], especially when there are groups more exposed to the effects of the activity or who feel their needs ignored by sector ventures and the permissions granted to them by public authorities [10].

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Stakeholders Involved in Mining Conflicts

One of the most traditional definitions of stakeholders was offered by Freeman ([28], p. 174), who considers them as "groups and individuals

who benefit from or are harmed by, and whose rights are violated or respected by, corporate actions”. Despite being popular, even after being appropriated by other authors, the term “stakeholders” has not generated an agreement on who the parties that matter to a company are, leading scholars in the field to seek more concrete definitions. In this movement, drawing from various theoretical literatures, Mitchell et al. [29] developed an identification theory based on observing and identifying three main attributes of the relationship between stakeholders and an organization: power, legitimacy, and urgency.

Power, according to Mitchell et al. [29], refers to the stakeholder’s ability to influence an organization. A stakeholder has power when they can “gain access to coercive, utilitarian, or normative means to impose its will in the relationship” ([29], p. 866), and since this access to means is a variable state, power is also transitory as it can be lost or acquired. Legitimacy is distinguished from power by the authors, who understand its existence independently or combined with power based on Schumann’s definition ([30], p. 574): “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions”. In other words, the claims of a particular group and the power it exercises over a company are considered legitimate. Finally, for Mitchell et al. [29], the urgency of stakeholders’ claims is based on two factors: the first is time sensitivity, or the degree to which the company’s delay in addressing the claim or relationship is unacceptable to the stakeholder; and the second is criticality, which refers to the importance of the claim or relationship to the stakeholder. Thus, the authors define urgency as the degree to which stakeholders’ claims require immediate attention.

Based on these classifications, Mitchell et al. [29] argue that different types of stakeholders can be identified based on the possession, or attribution of possession, of one, two, or all three attributes, resulting in eight different types of stakeholders: (1) dormant stakeholders; (2) discretionary stakeholders; (3) demanding stakeholders; (4) dominant stakeholders; (5) dangerous stakeholders; (6) dependent stakeholders; (7) definitive stakeholders; (8) non-stakeholders. Each stakeholder is typified according to its representativeness for the organization based on the previously mentioned classifications. Definitive stakeholders possess the three attributes. Dominant, dangerous, and dependent stakeholders possess only two of them. Non-stakeholders do not possess any, and the other types of stakeholders possess only one attribute.

Considering the stakeholders involved in mining conflicts, it is common to see communities affected by the negative effects of the activity when there is damage to the environment around them, economic capacity, and ways of life [10]. In this context, workers, local residents, and communities have little power to influence large corporations, taking on the role of demanding stakeholders according to Mitchell et al.’s [29] identification

methodology. With little legitimacy power, despite urgent claims, demanding stakeholders are “the ‘mosquitoes buzzing in the ears’ of managers: irksome but not dangerous, bothersome but not warranting more than passing management attention, if any at all” (p. 875). In this case, the urgency noise is not yet capable of making the claims of an affected party important to an organization.

Another possible classification within the same methodology would be that of Dependent Stakeholders, referring to groups that have legitimate and urgent demands but lack power and depend on other stakeholders to have their demands met. For example, government advocacy, volunteers, and the judiciary system [29]. By relying on the support and protection of other parties considered more significant by an organization, such as the so-called dominant stakeholders—those who have power and legitimacy, and therefore, their influence in the company is assured—dependent stakeholders and demanding stakeholders can move to another class of stakeholders, increasing their influence and the likelihood of being addressed in a political conflict. This is because it is expected that dominant stakeholders have some formal mechanism in place capable of recognizing the importance of their relationship with the company, such as corporate boards that include representatives of owners, community leaders, and public affairs offices important for companies that depend on maintaining good relations with the government [29].

More generally, people from communities affected by projects such as mining are considered marginal stakeholders by authors like Daudigeos et al. [15], according to whom these groups do not directly endanger the operation and survival of a company due to the lack of contractual relationship and weak resource dependency, reducing companies’ concern for their needs. Characterized by geographic, cultural, and political distance from the headquarters of the exploring companies, these actors do not have coordinated political support [15] and, therefore, need to exert efforts to pressure multinational corporations to adopt more responsible practices [16].

Hart and Sharma ([31], p. 8) characterize marginal stakeholders as “adversarial, divergent, poor, weak, illiterate, uninterested, illegitimate, or even non-human”. Less powerful and disadvantaged, these parties have less voice, power, and urgency and are not usually considered important for the success of a company [32]. Poor, weak, and illiterate people, isolated and enslaved, indigenous peoples, women in certain contexts, and other marginalized individuals remain invisible but have important opinions that are ultimately expressed through non-governmental organizations or community organizations acting as their representatives [33].

Marginal stakeholders are those who may be affected by the company but have little or no direct connection to its activities. Despite this, they may have fundamental knowledge and perspectives for the development of an organization, both to anticipate potential future sources of problems

and to help identify opportunities and innovative business models for the future [31]. It is still important for managers to consider the possibility that their stakeholders may change in relevance depending on the moment and context [29], requiring different degrees and types of attention. In the case of mining projects, this movement may involve strategies aimed at influencing the practices of the organization responsible for the activity or individuals with decision-making power over it, including mobilization campaigns, networking, creation of counter-accounts, exposure of corporate scandals, and alliances with relevant political and economic actors for the business [10,12,15].

Social Mobilization and Networking

According to Beck [34], major disasters such as Chernobyl (1986) and Exxon-Valdez (1989), which gained significant attention in the 1980s, can no longer be considered mere accidents or fatalities, as they indicate an inability to control negative impacts brought about by modernity. Similarly, incidents in the mining sector, including dam break events in Minas Gerais, also become unacceptable to society, which increases pressure on how such ventures should be conducted [7].

With the capacity to generate significant social and environmental impacts, the mining activity coexists with various conflicts that question and demand the responsibility of the state and companies, requiring collaborative management involving civil society in agreements, consensus, and public participation [7]. Under constant surveillance from social forces, these ventures are expected to maintain ongoing dialogue with communities to facilitate the implementation of a local and regional development plan [7]. However, it is common, especially in Latin American countries, for companies to negotiate separately with the central government and the involved communities [7]. In such circumstances, if regulatory power is unable to mitigate or socialize the risks of a venture, more stakeholders end up exposed to its effects [35].

These stakeholders, when well-informed about the negative externalities of a company's activities, seek ways to pressure them to act more responsibly [17]. Thus, movements emerge such as awareness campaigns, mobilization, and protests aimed at making the demands of affected groups visible, drawing the attention of other individuals to form alliances and demand changes [10]. These movements reinforce the right to say "no" to projects that compromise the living conditions of the most vulnerable people and future generations [10], amplifying the voice of social actors through communication technologies [7].

In a context of strong digitalization, corporations use media to communicate corporate sustainability information, while stakeholders use the same platforms for social activism [11]. In the case of conflicts related to mining, many movements question and challenge the laws and rules applied to mining activities around the world and in Brazil, with a common focus on locations where exploitation occurs more intensively

[10]. These movements are generally conceived as forms of communication, announcing impending changes and revealing public issues to society [10]. Thus, announcing means “to demand payment today for a future that may happen to the populations living in the vicinity of areas of ‘mining interest’, such as the Gandarela Mountain Range, or even in towns and localities transformed into ‘zones of sacrifice and death’ by the concrete threat of iron mining tailings dam ruptures” ([10], p. 5).

In such movements, digital communication networks are crucial for groups opposed to large corporations, such as NGOs and social mobilization movements. According to Castells [36], both corporations, as holders of power, and actors of social change depend on the creation of networks to expand the acceptance of a particular worldview and increase their dominance over other actors. Castells (2011) [37] argues that power is exercised in society through networks, and one form of power under these social and technological conditions is network-making power, defined as “the power to program specific networks according to the interests and values of the programmers, and the power to switch different networks following the strategic alliances between the dominant actors of various networks” ([37], p. 773).

Here, programming capacity is the ability to shape and introduce a worldview into a network, a process that occurs through the creation of an environment conducive to dialogue, promoting processes of learning and recognition of diverse viewpoints [12]. Conversely, the capacity for alternation refers to the ability to create and switch communication networks where the dissemination of alternative worldviews to different connected entities is viable [36]. When the capacity for alternation is strengthened, actors of social change can form networks where currently marginalized stakeholders gain prominence in the dialogue process by bringing their experiences, reinforcing the understanding of their context, and, as a consequence, enabling alliances with powerful stakeholders such as policy makers and investors [36,37].

Another relevant factor is the interactivity and connectivity of social media, important mechanisms to help marginalized stakeholders in seeking power when conflicts related to mining arise [12]. In the digital environment, it is possible “to frame and disseminate counter accounts that reveal the target corporation’s irresponsible activities to a wide range of corporate stakeholders” ([12], p. 7). In return, the reached stakeholders are invited to interact with the presented information and express their opinions using the same interactivity [12]. Counter-accounts are defined as “accounting information produced by external individuals and/or organizations on their representation of the social and environmental impacts of others” ([13], p. 109). With information systems used by activists to promote their causes and challenge the official and hegemonic position, they are an instrument for balancing power in relation to unequal parties [14], as they increasingly attract stakeholders to the engagement process and broaden the perception of the urgency of the exposed issue [12]. These

accounts can exist in various formats, ranging from traditional ones such as reports and social audits, to maps, videos, blogs, and social media messages [12]. They typically originate from less powerful social groups that problematize the socio-environmental legitimacy of a company's activities and advocate for changes to correct undesirable practices [12], involving concern for “the needs of oppressed groups, women, ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, colonized peoples, the poor, exploited individuals, people with disabilities, children, and the elderly” ([14], p. 4), considered as marginal stakeholders by authors such as Daudigeos et al. [15] and Khazaeia et al. [32].

Although such movements aim to create alerts for damages that can still be caused, these alerts are based on traumatic past experiences for the affected groups [10]. For example, the tailings dam failures in Mariana (MG) in 2015 and in Brumadinho (MG) in 2019, which caused “economic, social, cultural, and symbolic damage to affected populations, urban and rural, especially traditional communities of fishermen, riverside farmers, indigenous peoples, and quilombolas who lived from and with the river” ([38], p. 59). Thus, it bears traces of a recent past, not imagined, but empirically proven [10].

METHODS

This work is based on an explanatory case study [39] aimed at understanding the relationship between corporate sustainability and the mobilization of stakeholders, especially marginalized stakeholders, in a mobilization event against mining activity. With the research focus on a specific case, theory is used as a support to understand its specificities, allowing the researcher to find explanations for the observed practices within a particular scenario [39]. In this study, the developments of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra mobilization campaign against a project by Taquaril Mineradora S.A. (Tamisa) in the Mountain Range of Curral, a mountainous area of high historical, cultural, and environmental value in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, were monitored [40]. The movement sparked a lengthy dispute between different stakeholder groups and the organization, which remains unresolved at the time of completion of this work.

Studies and research in Minas Gerais identified one of the richest iron ore mineral areas in the world, the Iron Quadrangle [1]. Shaped like a square and covering approximately 7000 square kilometers, it is in the central-southern region of the state and encompasses several municipalities. Today, it is divided into 12 megadomains, created from its main structures, with Curral mountain being one of them [41]. With intense mining activity, the mountain has large iron and gold mines, as well as ventures that explore other minerals such as topaz and bauxite [41].

Mining has made Minas Gerais one of the largest ore producers in Brazil, being the state that has produced the most ore for several consecutive years [26]. In 2021, it was responsible for 41.47% of the

commercialized mineral production in Brazil, equivalent to R\$ 129,776,411,960 [42]. Despite generating jobs and resources for companies and municipalities, mineral extraction has significant negative effects on the environment and society [41]. Therefore, the state still has protected areas, such as Serra do Gandarela and Serra do Rola Moça, which have experienced conflicts between environmental protection and mining until the establishment of parks for the preservation of their biological, geological, and hydrological heritage [41].

In addition to being a major symbol of Belo Horizonte, the Curral mountain plays an important environmental role: it is part of the Espinhaço Mountain Range, the second-largest mountain range in the Americas, “which houses the biomes of Atlantic Forest, Cerrado, and Caatinga, and forms an ecological corridor between the states of Minas Gerais and Bahia, defined by UNESCO as a ‘priority area for the conservation of natural and cultural riches on the planet’” ([43], par. 2). The Espinhaço Biosphere Reserve covers an area of 1200 kilometers that includes dozens of federal, state, and municipal conservation units [43], where various animal species live, including rare species and over 125 types of endangered animals, such as the jaguar, maned wolf, and collared peccary [44]. The Serra also houses caves, springs, the Curral Mountain Park, with an area of 400,000 square meters of vegetation, the Mangabeiras Park, and quilombos, slums, and peripheral communities that have been suffering from the impacts of mining for some years [44].

In April 2022, the COPAM, administratively subordinate to the State Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development (SEMAD), in Belo Horizonte, decided to approve the licensing of a large mining project in the Curral Mountain [45]. This concerns the “Serra do Taquaril Project”, by the company Taquaril Mineração S.A. (Tamisa), which aims to exploit iron ore in approximately 101 hectares of Ana da Cruz Farm, a private area acquired in the 1970s, located in a part of the mountain in the municipality of Nova Lima [46]. The decision was made in a virtual meeting lasting 18 hours, with protests from over 280 people who registered to speak against the project, being pronounced at 3 a.m. when civil society representatives were no longer present [47]. Of the 12 COPAM counselors, only four voted against the project [47].

Considered to have a high environmental impact—classified as level 6, the highest on the scale set by legislation [3]—the project aims to exploit one of the still-preserved parts of the mountain complex and plans to deforest 41.27 hectares of native Atlantic Forest vegetation, almost 6 hectares of which are in permanent preservation areas [4]. In the second phase of the project, another 58 hectares are expected to be devastated, but the final license has not yet been approved.

Since 2014, Taquaril Mineração S.A. (Tamisa) has been attempting to initiate the project in the Curral Mountain [3]. The impacts foreseen by the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra movement include: risks to the region’s biodiversity, which hosts about 40 species of plants and animals

threatened with extinction; air pollution resulting from explosions necessary for ore extraction; noise pollution caused by activities planned to occur in three daily shifts; risks of landslides; and the death of watercourses originating in the region [5]. Thus, beyond the direct impacts on the exploited area, there is a prediction that other negative consequences, such as the discomfort caused by dust and tremors from mining, could be felt by residents of Belo Horizonte, nearby traditional communities [3], and residents of the Serra agglomerate, the largest favela complex in the state capital, with about 50,000 inhabitants [48]. Another major concern is that the installation of mine structures could damage a water main responsible for supplying approximately 70% of the capital's population [5].

As the case developed, few responses were given by the mining company. On April 30, 2022, the company spoke for the first time after COPAM approved the license [49]. In a press release, Tamisa stated that the license was approved democratically and that an organized group of people tried to disrupt COPAM's virtual meeting by registering more than 200 participants to speak. In its defence, it also claimed that the Environmental Licensing Process was regular and based on technical studies conducted over seven years, emphasizing that the project's impacts would be restricted to the exploration area and all conditions for its implementation would be met [49]. Later, in an interview with the MG1 news portal, the company's consultant, Leandro Amorim, asserted that the population was mistaken and being misled by accepting false information brought by the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra movement [50]. According to him, the project would not affect the Serra do Curral, and there was no possibility of interfering with the Pico Belo Horizonte [50]. In the interview, the economic benefits were presented as advantages of the project, which is expected to generate "R\$ 4 billion in taxes, as well as 500 direct and 2000 indirect jobs" ([50], par. 7). Finally, Leandro Amorim highlighted that the project included environmental compensation measures such as preserving twice the area of vegetation suppression and creating a preservation area within the explored farm of about 600,000 square meters [50].

The Tamisa project in the Mountain Range of Curral received significant local and national attention. By generating agendas against the project in major Brazilian television channels, print media, digital newspapers, and social networks, the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra campaign drew attention to society about a series of potential risks of the project and pointed out irregularities in the licensing process and its approval [3]. According to information from Tira o Pé da Minha Serra [3], the project would endanger a region defined by UNESCO as a "priority area for the conservation of natural and cultural riches existing on the planet" ([43], p. 2), a warning made at a time when environmental impacts and the consequences of disasters such as the tailings dam failures in Mariana and Brumadinho increased public concern about mining activity [10]. Thus,

the case should be contextualized within broader debates about mining and its impacts. However, it still brings particular developments of a specific challenge with judicial decisions favorable to the interests of stakeholders involved in the contestation process (Andrés, F. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

To obtain a greater understanding of the case and how it unfolded up to the final moment of this research, data were extracted from various sources, including digital news portals, blogs, social networks, television video reports, web, and interviews. The diversity of sources was important in bringing complementary information about the observed scenario, adding different data, events, perspectives, and accounts (Table 1). Initially, in a stage of documentary analysis, all documents, releases, news, posts, and videos were read and watched carefully to facilitate the understanding of the challenge, its stakeholders, and its developments in chronological order. For the analysis of social networks, Instagram was chosen for its widespread use for stakeholder engagement, its link to the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra website, and its strong role in marketing [51]. Additionally, during the research, the network favored the provision of more detailed information about the case due to its format that combines images, videos, and lengthy texts, as well as external links.

After studying the available documents, semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals involved in the campaign and the broader contestation movement. Potential interviewees were identified through document analysis, leading to two interviews with different key figures in the movement (Table 2). The interviews covered questions related to the campaign's development, objectives, outcomes, perceptions of Tamisa's actions, and the role of the organizations involved in the case. All interviews were conducted via video call, ranging from 21 minutes to 1 hour and 12 minutes in duration, recorded, and subsequently transcribed.

Table 1. Summary of data sources.

Data source	Description
Tira o Pé da Minha Serra Website	Pages from the official website of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra movement.
Tamisa Institutional Website	Pages from the official website of the Tamisa mining company.
Online Newspaper	46 news articles from 10 Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, and national journalistic outlets.
Instagram Posts	25 posts on Instagram from 17 independent sources, including environmentalists, politicians, news outlets, and influencers.
Video Reports	16 video reports from television and online news outlets.
Technical Opinion	Technical opinion on the licensing of Tamisa's project conducted by the Cordilheira do Espinhaço Institute.
Interviews	Interviews with two participants (May 2023). The interviews lasted from 21 minutes to 72 minutes. (Total of 1 hour and 33 minutes).

Further attempts were made to contact other stakeholders, including federal deputies, their aides, and members of governmental bodies such as the SEMAD. However, the lack of responses or availability made such interviews unfeasible. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that the interview data have limitations as they do not cover all possible perspectives. While the interviewees represent some of the key individuals involved in the contestation movement, many groups remain absent (residents of the Manzo Quilombo, representatives of the COPAM, politicians who declared their support for the movement, and representatives of Tamisa, to name a few). In an ideal scenario, more people would have participated in the study and contributed to understanding the movement and perceptions of corporate sustainability by Tamisa. Despite these limitations, the interviewees' statements, combined with interviews and information obtained from the analyzed news, posts, and reports, helped capture some of the viewpoints of the absent groups.

Table 2. Interviewees.

Participant	Date	Duration	Description
Movement articulator	22/05/2023	1:12	Environmental activist, environmental counselor, and resident of Serra do Curral
Movement articulator	24/05/2023	0:21	Urban planner and university professor (UFMG)

It is important to note that, despite their reliability, some important data sources that are mentioned in the following section can be considered secondary sources. For example, we only had second-hand access to the responses given by the mining company: one press release [49] and an interview [50] reported in online newspapers. Another example is the interview with the Secretary of the SEMAD, Marília Carvalho de Melo [52]. Hence, considering the role of the media in shaping and mediating information, this data must be analyzed with caution.

The way of handling the data in this study can be best described as descriptive qualitative document analysis. We were looking for explicit meaning instead of latent meaning in the data and we did not provide an analysis of data extracts but rather used them as illustrative examples [53]. Analysis of the data was an iterative process. The data were scrutinized several times. In the first round, the documents were analyzed to form a general picture and to identify the most important issues and stakeholders. In the second round, the focus was on the discussions connected with the Serra do Taquaril Project and its effects on stakeholders as well as with the movement Tira o Pé da Minha Serra. A final analysis of the data was conducted to ensure that no important aspects were missed. and that the analysis was coherent with the data.

In the following section, some elements concerning mining in Minas Gerais and an overview of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra movement will help contextualize the central event of this explanatory case study. Then,

an analysis will be presented regarding the central question of this work: “To what extent can the mobilization of marginal stakeholders bring about changes in responsible corporate practices?”.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Barriers to Dialogue with the Mining Company

One of the first points identified by the study was a significant barrier to communication between the movement for the protection of Curral mountain and the Tamisa company. As an indication of the lack of efficient channels for dialogue, Tira o Pé da Minha Serra had, from its inception, actions aimed at mobilizing public opinion and putting pressure on political actors, such as the Governor of Minas Gerais, Romeu Zema, and institutions like COPAM.

When talking to the interviewees about the possibilities of negotiation and the company’s responses to the campaign’s actions, both affirmed that the organization was not willing to discuss the issue or propose adjustments to the project. First, given the nature of the enterprise and the impacts of mining, reaching an agreement would not be possible since the central issue was the region to be exploited, not the method of exploitation. Thus, potential environmental or community compensations would not suffice, had they been proposed. During the interview with Jeanine Oliveira, who was the coordinator of the movement, an environmental activist, a member of Projeto Manuelzão, and a resident of Serra do Curral, the denial regarding the existence of expectations and openness to negotiate adjustments to the project by Tamisa was reinforced:

“No, there’s no way. In the classification of human activities, mining has a high potential for polluting and destructive impacts, and there’s no discussion. That’s the nature of the activity. Every activity generates an impact that destroys something. Mining’s impact is terrible, it ranks at the top. (...) And we’re talking about a place where destroying the rock means destroying the aquifer” (Oliveira, J. Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

When pointing out irregularities in the licensing process and its approval, the campaign highlighted some points: the lack of consultation with the Manzo quilombo, which is located within the influence area of Tamisa’s project; the failure to present updated and adequate impact and risk studies; the lack of authorization from heritage agencies, such as IEPHA, delays in the state-level tombstone of Curral Mountain; the absence of participation from the municipalities of Belo Horizonte and Sabará in the licensing analysis; and the permission for the project to continue even after the advisory councils of the Baleia and Rola Moça parks rejected Tamisa’s project with significant voting [3]. It is noteworthy that some of these points refer to issues that could not be revised by Tamisa, such as the possible protection guaranteed by the state-level tombstone process of Curral Mountain, capable of preventing any exploitation in the area.

Curral Mountain is protected by federal and municipal tombstones and has been the subject of study for protection purposes since 2018 by the State Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IEPHA) [5]. Ready since 2020, the tombstone study has not yet been approved by the Conselho Estadual do Patrimônio Cultural, CONEP (State Council for Cultural Heritage) [54]. Despite this, its existence makes Curral Mountain protected according to professionals like the architect and urban planner Flávio Carsalade, who is part of CONEP “by federal decree No. 25, of November 1937, when the process begins, the property in question gains a “provisional tombstone”, so that no one can disfigure it before its completion” ([54], par. 28).

Additionally, conducting a consultation aimed at the Manzo community, as recommended by experts and members of the movement, would hardly result in permission for Tamisa's exploitation in Curral Mountain. In a live interview for the Record broadcaster, the community leader of the Quilombo, Makota Kidoiale, stated that the residents had not been consulted about their concerns regarding the impacts in the exploited area [55] and mentioned some impacts of mining that have been felt for years, such as air pollution [55]. In the interview, she expressed concern that the situation would worsen with the project and expressed dissatisfaction with seeing the needs of her community disrespected “In addition to violating our rights as a quilombo territory, they are violating the practice of maintaining our land. They go against our existence”, she said ([55], par. 4).

Despite the impasses, the Secretary of the SEMAD, Marília Carvalho de Melo, defended Tamisa's licensing process in an exclusive interview for Bom Dia Minas, from Globo network [52]. According to the professional's statement, the licensing process has a technical and legal procedure that was respected to guide the secretariat's analysis based on the studies presented by the company, which comply with all environmental norms and respect the limits established for all types of interventions, including vegetation suppression, atmospheric emissions, and water usage [52], in addition to highlighting the commitment to environmental and forestry compensations that include the recovery of about 4 times the total area suppressed and the investment of 0.5% of the total project investment value in environmental actions [56]. Furthermore, according to the secretary, after the operation begins, the entire process is monitored and inspected to ensure compliance with environmental legislation, which is why SEMAD defends its technical security on the process and how it was analyzed [52].

Tamisa also reinforced the compliance of its licensing process to explore Curral Mountain in one of the few press releases sent to the media, issued in April 2022:

“This is an absolutely regular Environmental Licensing Process, based on detailed environmental studies developed over 7 (seven) years, followed by rigorous analysis by the competent environmental agency for

two years, which, in the end, issued a favorable opinion for the granting of the license, approved at the meeting” ([49], par. 16).

In the same statement, it highlighted its commitment to comply with the conditions for project approval, as per the agreement issued by the federal agency responsible for the tombstone of Curral Mountain, and reiterated that the ridgeline and the Peak of the Mountain would be preserved [49]. The same communication criticized some of the actions of protesters against the project, especially the participation of members of civil society in the COPAM meeting on the date of approval of the license by the agency:

“TAMISA informs that the Installation License for its project, located exclusively in the municipality of Nova Lima, was democratically approved yesterday at the ordinary meeting of the Mining Chamber of COPAM, which lasted long due to the attempt by an organized group of people to make the virtual meeting unviable by registering more than 200 participants to speak, each entitled to 5 minutes, which led to over 16 hours of demonstrations” ([49], par. 15).

Finally, a passage from the document shows the company’s refusal to acknowledge the validity of the movement by questioning the accuracy of the information presented by Tira o Pé da Minha Serra.

“TAMISA considers that the opinion of an organized group with personal and political interests, which has been disseminating distorted information about the project, should not render a regular venture, in compliance with the law, which benefits society as a whole unviable” ([49], par. 17).

With few statements in the mainstream media and on its social media platforms, we can infer that the mining company did not adopt an open stance to engage in dialogue with civil society. The same was observed by the interviewee Roberto Andrés, who noted that the company never attempted to address any of the points raised by Tira o Pé da Minha Serra (Andrés, F. Personal communication, May 24, 2023). A statement from the Government of Minas, on the other hand, reported a proposed action by the company related to Hospital da Baleia, a reference center for cancer treatment for children and adults, located less than 2 kilometers from the planned mining area, according to Tira o Pé da Minha Serra [3]. “Although there is no impact expected on Hospital da Baleia, Tamisa has agreed to assess the sensitivity of hospital equipment to vibration, as well as to implement a dust protection project in the hospital’s surgical block” ([56], par. 29).

The perception of the impossibility of dialogue with Tamisa appeared in Instagram posts such as Macaé Evaristo’s [57], who, when announcing the maintenance of the suspension of the license for Tamisa’s mining in Curral Mountain, states “If the greed of mining companies knows no bounds, let justice fulfill its role”. Thus, the campaign did not seek direct contact with the mining company but focused on shifting public opinion to pressure decision-makers involved in the case to achieve favorable

political and judicial decisions, such as the annulment of the license and the federal tombstone.

All individual expressions and actions of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra campaign aim to attempt to participate in decisions that influence the use and balance of the environment, highlighting the absence of collaborative management involving civil society in agreements and consensus on economic activity, which is essential when high-impact ventures on the environment and society are at stake [7]. In the case of this study, the clash between stakeholders and the company points to the lack of corporate sustainability regarding the human development of the community, in general, but also regarding the capabilities of each individual human being, as proposed by Nussbaum [58]. This is considering the possible consequences of exploiting Curral Mountain for environmental balance, the cultural and scenic heritage of the region, as well as risks to the water supply of the involved cities, the health of their residents, and changes in the daily lives of communities like the Manzo Quilombo and the Serra Agglomeration, which are more exposed to the negative effects of the activity due to their proximity to the exploitation site.

Reflecting on corporate sustainability using this case as an example, ensuring compliance with the limits established by legislation for the types of intervention by the company ceases to be sufficient if risks to the integrity, dignity, and opportunities of stakeholders are not taken into account, especially when there are vulnerable individuals and communities who may not always have access to basic capabilities such as control over their own material or political environment [17]. The Tira o Pé da Minha Serra Movement, in this context, emerges as a way to expand the control of populations over their environment and their way of life.

Mobilization, Public Opinion Shift and Ally Acquisition

Although the study has pointed to the lack of corporate sustainability on the part of the mining company Tamisa, the stakeholders involved in the opposition achieved favorable judicial decisions for the protection of Curral Mountain. This result indicates the relevance of other actors, including government officials and members of the judiciary, in resolving conflicts related to mining.

According to Roberto Andrés (Personal communication, May 24, 2023), one of the main effects of the campaign was to create a significant shift in public opinion:

“In that first month, we had a lot of political and media strength, and that spread the word. I think the fact that we acted a lot in that month, created this petition, and used this wave to reinforce our ability to make an impact contributed a lot to consolidating things in public opinion. (...) Public opinion was mostly against mining in the mountain and in favor of defending its protection” (Andrés, R. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

The mobilization efforts focused on providing information about the negative impacts of Tamisa's activities on Curral Mountain, both for the environment, the mountain's structure, and its plant and animal species, as well as for the residents of the cities that house the mountain range. This was achieved through coordination with various social movements, artists, festivals, influencers, and media outlets. During the process, the interactivity and connectivity of social media facilitated reaching a large audience that began to support the cause. We can consider that "Tira o Pé da Minha Serra" worked by creating a counter-narrative by presenting information about the social and environmental impacts of the organization on its own, gathering studies and opinions from experts and professionals external to the organization. This dissemination served as a tool to balance power between unequal parties and attract more stakeholders to the engagement process, expanding the perception of the urgency of the issue exposed, as presented in She [12].

Understanding these effects, in turn, increased visibility on the demands of groups considered marginal stakeholders according to authors such as Daudigeos et al. [15] and Hart and Sharma (2004) [31]. Without contractual relations, with weak dependency relationships, and geographically, culturally, and politically distant from the headquarters of exploiting companies, people from communities most vulnerable to the effects of mining ventures often are not considered in negotiations between organizations and the central government [7] and often lack support to participate in such agreements [15]. Thus, they mobilize to express their opposition to such ventures, as was the case with "Tira o Pé da Minha Serra", which received support from other societal groups to echo concerns and demands surrounding the protection of Curral Mountain, including mainstream media, influencers, artists, and political representatives. Here, we can consider the formation of a new network, created with the aim of broadening acceptance of a new worldview, emphasizing all potential damages of the venture in question, and increasing its dominance over other actors, exerting power of programming, as proposed by Castells [35].

By creating a campaign with various informative actions, participation in interviews with major media outlets, and the use of digital networks with wide reach, the movement manages to build an environment conducive to dialogue and the promotion of learning processes and recognition of diverse viewpoints [12]. In this space, so-called marginal stakeholders gained prominence for their experiences and needs and paved the way for alliances with other stakeholders with greater decision-making power over the issues of the specific case.

Regarding media support, Roberto Andrés said:

"We had this meeting, a lot of press, and many interviews. In that first month, we had a lot of political and media strength, and that spread the word. (...) I had never experienced this. Front page after front page of Estado de Minas, of O Tempo, talking about the biodiversity of the

Mountain. I had never given so many interviews to Globo in my life as I did at that time” (Andrés, R. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

The movement’s organizer also presents a possible connection between the widespread reach of the movement’s messages and actions, the mobilization of public opinion, and the gaining of allies with significant decision-making power:

“That’s why I think the judiciary is on our side today, not because they’re nice. The thing solidified in public opinion. (...) We were carrying out these more targeted actions throughout the year. This while various groups and collectives went to court. The Public Prosecutor’s Office went to court, the city hall sided with us, which was something we didn’t know would happen. Guaicuí went to court, and a bunch of people went down that judicial route” (Andrés, R. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

Other allies of the movement also played a crucial role in suspending Tamisa’s licensing. Among them, political representatives and members of the federal judiciary, who were mentioned by the two interviewees in this study:

“When the second round [of presidential elections] came and Lula came to BH, in his first campaign event, the street one, in the second round. In the middle of the event, people started shouting ‘Curral Mountain, Curral Mountain!’ and he didn’t understand and asked people to explain what happened. And then I think there was a consolidation that ultimately the recent judicial decisions, which are quite favorable to the defense of the heritage, in my view, reflect this mobilization of public opinion. Justice is not immune to public opinion pressure” (Andrés, R. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

“We have a political scenario of such intense exploitation in Brazil, that I believe our stories only happened because we managed to change the federal government. We have still been shouting a lot, the federal government has already been changed and the only decisions and victories of Curral Mountain that bring peace to our hearts came from the federal government” (Oliveira, J. Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

Since the beginning of the campaign, Tira o Pé da Minha Serra has had the support of political representatives, including city councilors and state and federal deputies. However, it is commonly perceived that the change in presidency, with the replacement of Jair Bolsonaro by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, strongly influenced the judicial decisions that temporarily prevented Tamisa’s exploitation in Serra do Curral. By reaching representatives at various levels, the movement began to leverage the power of other stakeholders to have its demands met. Thus, with government support, we can understand that the stakeholders supporting the contestation change in relevance within Mitchell et al.’s classification [29] and now require another level of attention from the organization, which is pressured to the point of having its activity rendered unfeasible.

Marginal stakeholders can fit into two classifications of Mitchell et al.’s typology [29]: the dependent, who have legitimate and urgent demands

but little power, and thus the urgency of the issue is not sufficient to make their claims important to an organization; and the dependent, who, in a situation very similar to that of the demanding, rely on other stakeholders to have their demands met, such as government support, volunteers, and the judiciary. In the case of this study, the collaboration of the new federal government can be understood as the support of dominant stakeholders—who have the power and legitimacy to use formal mechanisms of influence over the company.

A Movement Formed from Various Others

Lastly, the interviews conducted highlighted the importance of movements preceding Tira o Pé da Minha Serra in strengthening the campaign's discourse and increasing its understanding, leading to favorable judicial decisions for the protection of Curral Mountain. During the interview for this study, Roberto Andrés spoke about the movement as the result of the union of several parliamentarians and organizations already working on the issue:

“There were already many parliamentarians and many social organizations working on the defense of Curral Mountain. What we did, in April 2022, a year and a month ago, was to bring these people together and say, ‘let’s campaign together?’, propose this name, Tira o Pé da Minha Serra, and bring everyone together” (Andrés, R. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

Jeanine Oliveira, another organizer, also emphasized that Tira o Pé da Minha Serra incorporated various other movements fighting for the defense of Curral Mountain, reinforcing the importance of the mobilization history against mining in the state for the results obtained in the Tamisa case:

“With a mobilization of decades, do you think a campaign that started now, with people who just joined, would be the main responsible? It’s not. We needed this layer of society, which is an intellectual elite, but not necessarily a financial elite. (...) But, if it weren’t for the community, if it weren’t for what happened back then, Belo Horizonte’s peak itself would have been knocked down by Empabro if we had stopped in 2018” (Oliveira, J. Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

The interviewee also mentions other movements that paved the way for the fight against mining in the state of Minas Gerais, including Mexeu com a Serra do Curral Mexeu Comigo, Projeto Manuelzão, and Fórum São Francisco, attributing few of the achieved results to the actions of Tira o Pé da Minha Serra:

“My struggle is from another generation. My mother fought for Curral Mountain, and now I fight for Curral Mountain. So, I come from this place, and I am an exception within this movement (...). Very little came from the campaign. There’s Mexeu com a Serra do Curral Mexeu Comigo, there’s Projeto Manuelzão, there’s Fórum São Francisco. (...) And I, who have been in this story for fifteen years, can categorically affirm to you: if it weren’t

for every little step of this, even with all the mobilization, the case wouldn't have reached where it did" (Oliveira, J. Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

In addition to presenting somewhat distinct perceptions of the campaign's impact on protecting Curral Mountain, the interviewees also demonstrated different expectations for the outcome of this case. With the recent court decisions, architect and professor Roberto Andrés expressed confidence in a positive outcome:

"I think we're going to win. I think it's clearer now, before I didn't think so clearly. These court decisions are very significant in terms of the mood, quite favorable. I think we have a role in keeping the issue alive, we can't let it disappear. But I think we have more reasons to believe we'll win today than I did at the beginning because the process is very confusing. The mining company appealed, and they have a lot of power, and now they're not able to reverse it, so I think we're in a good moment" (Andrés, R. Personal communication, May 24, 2023).

On the other hand, activist Jeanine Oliveira provided a more global analysis of the issue and expressed concern for the protection of the environment and society, recalling the provisional nature of the court decisions for Curral Mountain:

"So what's to come isn't a victory. We're not celebrating a victory. We're very anxious. We haven't achieved any measure that could truly protect Curral Mountain, to negotiate its preservation, because it was very good for protecting Curral Mountain" (Oliveira, J. Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

While the final outcome regarding Tamisa's license to exploit Curral Mountain cannot be anticipated, the recent court decisions have been favorable for the protection of the environmental, landscape, and cultural heritage, benefiting nearby communities and stakeholders involved in the opposition movement. Furthermore, they have had an impact on the activities of two other mining companies operating in Curral Mountain, Gute Sicht and Fleurs Global, with both suspending exploration due to irregularities in the area's release process [44]. Therefore, although significant efforts of corporate sustainability by the mining company have not been identified in this specific case, given the impossibility of its activity, we can consider that the organization has been forced by other actors to act more responsibly.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the examination of the impacts of social mobilization on corporate sustainability, with a special focus on the mining sector, using the unfolding of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra campaign as an example. Through the analysis of news, reports, social media posts, websites, technical documents, and interviews, the effects of the dispute between stakeholders involved in a movement against mining

in Curral Mountain and the company Taquaril Mineração S.A. (Tamisa) were observed.

Firstly, the coordination of activists, social movements, and civil society organizations facilitated the dissemination of a series of information about the project that was not widely known to the general public until the approval of Tamisa's license by COPAM. Throughout the campaign's actions, mainly based on the creation and use of counter-accounts, especially in the digital environment, and cultural and artistic mobilization actions, the understanding of the negative impacts of exploration in Curral Mountain contributed to a shift in public opinion, which predominantly turned against mining and in favor of heritage protection. Society's involvement in the debate ultimately increased pressure on decision-makers involved in the case, leading to a significant legal victory: the suspension of the mining company's exploration license by the Federal Regional Court of the 6th Region (TRF-6).

All actions were devised due to significant communication barriers with the mining company. Unable to find less damaging forms of exploration for the region and its communities, the impasse over whether to mine or not led the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra movement to focus its efforts on dialogue and pressure on other actors and political bodies, such as the city councils of Belo Horizonte, Nova Lima, and Sabará, Governor Romeu Zema, COPAM, and legal entities like the Public Prosecutor's Office of Minas Gerais (MPMG), the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office (MPF), and the Federal Regional Court of the 6th Region (TRF-6).

During the process, some allies strengthened pressure on these actors, such as major media outlets, which raised the issue across different communication channels, and other stakeholders with greater influence and decision-making power in the observed case, including the TRF-6 judges who voted in favor of maintaining the suspension of the license. As a common perception among the two interviewees in this study, the change in the federal government was of great importance for the achievement of the decisions to suspend Tamisa's exploration license in Curral Mountain and its maintenance.

With the acquisition of new allies, we can consider that the stakeholders involved in the opposition process change classification within Mitchell et al.'s [29] methodology. Initially regarded as marginal stakeholders, with urgent and legitimate demands but little power over an organization, the organizers and supporters of "Tira o Pé da Minha Serra" gained the support of dominant stakeholders, those with power and legitimacy to use formal mechanisms of influence over the company. Thus, their demands, which were not considered by Tamisa in the project's definition and negotiation with public authorities, now require another level of attention not only from the mining company, which has had its activity halted but also from other entities responsible for the society's well-being, including state government, city councils, and the judiciary.

Therefore, the final conclusion of this study is that the effects of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra campaign did not directly impact the corporate sustainability practices of Taquaril Mineração S.A. (Tamisa), since the company did not actively engage in dialogue with the movement's organizers, seldom spoke out in the media, and when it did, it was to discredit the actions and information brought by the campaign. Despite this, the mining company's activity was severely affected by court decisions favoring the protection of Curral Mountain, which prevented the exploration of the site indefinitely. This reveals the importance of an organization considering the demands of all its stakeholders before commencing a new venture, as well as the political landscape and its possible transformations. More than just avoiding financial losses and damage to its reputation, considering the needs of groups affected by a venture is a way to act in accordance with business standards increasingly valued by companies, society, and investors [7].

By observing the impacts of a social mobilization campaign against a specific mining venture, the study contributed to identifying and understanding possible tools to influence the adoption of responsible corporate practices, capable of increasing attention and responsiveness to stakeholders affected by the sector. Furthermore, it also helps to discuss the topic of corporate sustainability in the mining sector within the Brazilian context and particularly in the state of Minas Gerais, which has experienced major tragedies related to mining activities.

This study has some practical and research implications. It may provide some useful insights to communities affected by corporate projects regarding possible tools capable of increasing the attention and responses of large corporations to the demands of stakeholders affected by their activities. Its contributions to the literature pertain to the insights from a developing country context it brings, which we deem relevant given the scarcity of Anglo-American literature addressing such context, as well as to the presentation of the views and initiatives of marginalized stakeholders that are frequently overlooked in the literature.

This study examines a case that has been selected for its unique features. This means that the conclusions reached are not generalizable to other similar situations. Notwithstanding, further research could focus on studying similar situations to identify whether different corporate and community behaviors and perceptions can be associated with different institutional and cultural contexts. Among the limitations of this study, those pertaining to the interview data are also worthy of note, given that not all possible perspectives are covered. As mentioned in the methodology section, although several attempts were made to contact organizers and supporters of the "Tira o Pé da Minha Serra" movement, including residents of affected communities, federal deputies and their aides, and members of government agencies such as the SEMAD. However, such interviews were rendered unfeasible due to the lack of responses or availability from these actors, resulting in the absence of groups such as

residents of the Quilombo Manzo, representatives of the COPAM, politicians who declared their support for the movement, and representatives of Tamisa. Although, in an ideal scenario, more people should have participated in the study to share their perceptions of the mining company's corporate sustainability, it was still possible to capture some opinions and perceptions through interviews, news articles, and social media posts.

As the case remains unresolved until the completion of this work, future studies could explore, with a broader perspective on the outcome of the Tira o Pé da Minha Serra campaign and even other movements against mining in the state of Minas Gerais, CSR from the perspective of stakeholders to understand what motivates the behaviors of organizations in the sector.

DATA AVAILABILITY

No data were generated from the study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

VdAA and MCB designed the study. VdAA collected the data with MCB's assistance. VdAA analyzed the data with input from MCB. VdAA wrote the paper with input from MCB.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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