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EMPOWERING THE UNDERDOG: SOFT POWER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BUSINESS MARKETS

ABSTRACT

This paper develops a soft power model to enable non-elite institutional entrepreneurs to fundamentally reshape their field. Based on a Judo strategy framework, this model integrates previously suggested soft power tactics into a coherent set of principles. More specifically, it explains how previous soft power insights adhere to underlying principles of movement, balance and leverage. Structured according to these principles, this paper theorizes how soft power strategies can be a sufficient condition to overcome the embedded agency and mobilization problems of collective institutional entrepreneurship. The applicability is furthermore illustrated with a case of an institutional entrepreneurship initiative in the Dutch electrotechnical installation industry. As such, the paper informs an undertheorized scenario of institutional entrepreneurship which we argue is more relevant for business markets than hard power approaches.

1. INTRODUCTION

“when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.” – Sun Tzu

Business markets frequently require change as they are exposed to technological developments and demand shifts. Yet, at the same time they are often marked by substantial power asymmetry (Turnbull, Ford, & Cunningham, 1996) or dominant logics and norms (Van Bockhaven, Matthyssens, & Vandenbempt, 2013). These block autopoietic change (O'Connor, 2008) in the field while embedded actors or external pressures might demand it (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). This explains why a recent business marketing executives' survey reported *“that the status quo in their industries or companies was not sustainable, which meant a need for transformational change”* (Wiersema, 2013, p. 472), while at the same time respondents were ambivalent about how to address this 'creative destruction' challenge.

Such a process would be a herculean feat of institutional entrepreneurship as actors reconfigure field structures that actually shape and embed them (Seo & Creed, 2002). Therefore, affecting an entire field becomes a collective endeavour (Weik, 2011). Collective institutional entrepreneurship (CIE) additionally implies an internal challenge to mobilize collective action, which has been addressed with hard power tactics by Wijen and Ansari (2007). Whereas their model applies to elites, there is less systematic theorizing of the power dynamics in CIE by peripheral actors which lack the position to impose hard power (Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004). This is peculiar as we will argue that this model is for many purposes and – especially business – contexts preferable over a dominance approach. Hence, this paper seeks to answer *what are alternative drivers of collective institutional entrepreneurship when initiating actors do not have clear dominance over others?*

Thus, we theorize an alternative 'soft power'-path enabling CIE by non-dominant yet nonetheless embedded actors. To this end, the literature review first explores why power is essential in CIE and what is known about power in different modes of CIE. Then we argue that the current emphasis on hard power creates problems of applicability, sustainability and incongruence which limit its relevance for the networked context of many business markets. We then put forward the *Judo strategy* framework (Yoffie & Cusumano, 1999) to connect extant soft power theorizing to the challenges associated with CIE. We illustrate this conceptually developed integrative framework's applicability with a case in the Dutch electro-technical installation (ETI) industry.

The paper contributes to extant literature in three ways. The framework extends power literature with drivers for transformational change that allow truly collaborative CIE. Based in non-mediated, non-

punitive¹ power (Ke, Liu, Wei, Gu, & Chen, 2009; Kumar, Scheer, & Steenkamp, 1998; Scheer & Stern, 1992), this process *aligns* rather than enforces interests and is hence more sustainable in business markets which thrive on trust and reciprocity. Such enquiry might expand the relevance of power to value co-creation literature which typically eschews power narratives. To the study of institutional entrepreneurship the paper contributes an approach for the simultaneous embedded agency and collective action challenges when boundaries are redefined by non-elites. Findings illustrate a combination of social capital, assimilation and ‘borrowed’ power in institutional work.

2. COLLECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: TOWARD A SOFT POWER FRAMEWORK

Institutional entrepreneurship targets entire fields, the overall network, cultural-cognitive systems, organizational archetypes and collective action repertoires of organizations which are in the aggregate involved in the production of similar products and services (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2008). Drenched in a boundary logic of power and conflict (Fligstein, 1997; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009), institutional entrepreneurship occurs in one of two paradoxical scenarios. Scenario 1 is initiated by elites with the power to do so, but who are deeply bound by cognitions, norms and regulations favouring existing institutions. The initiators have access to sources for direct control (Aplin & Hegarty, 1980) beforehand and need only apply them purposefully. Wijen and Ansari theorize this scenario via concentration and positional dominance “*to dictate the rules of the game and induce cooperation*” (2007, p. 1084). For a business example, one could think of how Microsoft and Intel have shaped the personal computer market. While clearly suggesting an effective approach to tackle the collective action problem, this scenario is restricted to elite institutional entrepreneurship in concentrated markets.

Scenario 2 is initiated by peripheral actors with the motivation, but not the power to enact change (Maguire et al., 2004). These actors by necessity act collectively. An example of this process is found in recent pushes for personalized medicine by interest groups representing the diagnostics industry, medical professionals and patient organizations. These disparate actors combine forces in a fragmented stakeholder environment to change bottom-up how health care is delivered and financed. Theorizing scenario 2 is more challenging from a power perspective as power first needs to be acquired and as initiators’ lack of dominance increases dependency on the actions of others. So section 2.1 details why power is essential in CIE to address the internal and external challenges of respectively mobilization and effectuating change in the field. The boundary conditions to dominance approaches, which motivate a softer approach, are derived in section 2.2. Section 2.3 builds on a *Judo strategy* framework (Yoffie & Cusumano, 1999) to integrate dispersed theorizing about non-aggressive power strategies from micro-economics (Gelman & Salop, 1983), strategic marketing (Drucker, 1985) and soft-power tactics (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). In concert, these insights enable challengers to secure a market position alongside incumbents “*who have size, strength and history on their side*” (Yoffie & Kwak, 2001). The final step in theorizing a holistic alternative to the elite CIE model (section 2.4) reviews how the framework addresses internal and external power needs over the collective action stages identified by Kim and Bearman (1997).

2.1. COLLECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEEDS FOR POWER

Reacting to the deterministic nature of ‘new’ institutional theory, neoinstitutionalists originally defined institutional entrepreneurship as institutional innovation by embedded actors with an interest and access to the – mainly social – resources to act (DiMaggio, 1988; Kim & Bearman, 1997). The concept tries to explain the structure-agency dynamics of change which transform a field’s practices and boundaries (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). This phenomenon has relevance beyond the confines of institutional theorizing, thus attracting scholarship from sociological, economic, management, law, organizational behaviour and information systems outlets to call a few. The concept’s wide diffusion, in combination with institutional theory’s limited facilities to explain the micro-level processes of institutional innovation (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996), led to a naïve focus on single entrepreneurs with tremendous causal

¹ Although there is debate as to whether (non-)punitive power includes reward power as well, here it is only used to emphasize that the challenger uses power (coercive merely as an inducement rather than a punishment).

powers (Weik, 2011). The literature overlooks the collective aspects and focuses on solving the embedded agency problem of changing a field while constrained and shaped by its deep structures (Scott, 2008; Seo & Creed, 2002). Non-elite actors' outside-track to institutional entrepreneurship would, however, be hard to theorize without collective agency. These actors unite in issue-based networks (Araujo & Brito, 1998) to tackle a complex problem which affects and is affected by various (business and other) stakeholders. Like a movement, this intermediate agency structure gathers resources and resonance (Benford & Snow, 2000) to pursue a collective goal. Given this growth-oriented purpose, the composition evolves from an initiating entity over a critical mass and eventually populates an emergent field (Kim & Bearman, 1997). Being a moving target, we further speak of 'the initiative' in the case, rather than of a static configuration at any of the three levels of magnitude above.

CIE, defined as "*the process of overcoming collective inaction and achieving sustained collaboration among numerous dispersed actors to create new institutions or transform existing ones*" (Wijen & Ansari, 2007, p. 1079), thus attempts to solve the collective action mobilization problem. Although collective action implies a shared interest (Oliver, 1993), it increases the difficulty of achieving market-level change. Not only would individuals be rationally inclined to withhold (Olson, 1965), change initiated outside the dominant coalition also causes additional conflict (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Hence, there is a salient need for power due to the embedded agency and the collective action problems. The former is outcome- and structure-related: how can actors achieve an innovation that disrupts the cognitive, normative and regulative schemata they are embedded in (Scott, 2008; Seo & Creed, 2002)? The latter relates to behaviour and social repertoires: motivating actors to look beyond short-term interests and develop collaborative rules and routines. So we consider these to be respectively external and internal challenges.

The external challenge involves constructing new boundaries to accommodate desired practices (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). The creation of these boundaries can be solved through both dominance (Dimaggio, 1988; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006) and soft power (Maguire et al., 2004; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). The internal challenge involves overcoming inaction, sustaining collaboration and creating new institutions. This has been approached by means of 'hard' power, wielded coercively via concentration to reduce diversity of opinions, via dominance to induce participation and via central network oversight to counter free-riding (Wijen & Ansari, 2007). In this elite model of collective action the initiators enforce their will through control over outcomes desired by others (Coleman, 1973). We argue that the collective action problem can also be solved through a soft power approach under conditions where hard power is inadvisable.

2.2. *HARD POWER IN MODELS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION: BOUNDARY CONDITIONS*

Extant models of collective action identify field *concentration* or *interdependence* as contraindications of Olson's (1965) logic of collective inaction (Oliver, 1993). In concentrated fields, a few actors may have sufficient scale to both substantially fund and benefit from industry-promoting actions. Severe power asymmetries explain how elites can either 'buy' or enforce compliance of those needed to reshape the industry. Concentration thus enables the use of Wijen and Ansari's (2007) dominance-based approach, except for:

- (1) peripheral actors: they are embedded, but lack centrality and dominance.
- (2) fragmented markets, concentration's counterfactual, makes the possibility of coercing or buying desirable behaviour from the mass of others less likely (Oliver, 1993).
- (3) high interdependence: collective action is facilitated when actors can expect reciprocity and are able to imagine the benefits of coordination among the interdependent collective (Marsden, 1983; Oliver, 1993). However, 'hard power' overrides, rather than stimulates willingness to collaborate (Nye, 2004) and therefore negatively impacts a relationship (Ke et al., 2009; Scheer & Stern, 1992). Coercion would thus result in negative reciprocation. Moreover, interdependence also implies that resources and power are more equally allocated (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974). Hence, as CIE implies sustained institutional work (Wijen & Ansari, 2007), the likelihood of enduring interaction becomes low.

So we identify (1), (2) and (3) as boundary conditions which make the use of ‘hard’ power unlikely and inadvisable. How they relate to business markets furthermore explains why theorizing in this context emphasizes strategizing based on influence rather than ‘hard’ positional power (Håkansson & Ford, 2002; Harrison & Prentker, 2009). Consequently, these boundary conditions imply three limitations to the hard power model of CIE, especially but not exclusively relevant to the context of most business markets:

First, as horizontal fragmentation into multiple value nets (Möller, Rajala, & Svahn, 2005) or interdependence (Håkansson & Snehota, 1990) characterize many business markets, there is a problem of limited *applicability*. Moreover, as in the remaining markets peripheral players are excluded from using it, the hard power model truly only applies to a ‘happy few’.

Second, *sustainability* of partnerships would be problematic as enforcing collaboration undermines network stability (Elg & Johansson, 1997). As business actors tend to interact in longstanding relationships (Håkansson & Snehota, 1990), the pervasive norms of reciprocity and trust deter enforcement. Moreover, dynamism in the end market’s demand for competences increases throughout the supply chain through a ‘bullwhip effect’ (Choi, Dooley, & Rungtusanatham, 2001). This main base of power and position in business is hence unstable. Thus business actors typically behave flexibly and mutually adapt, fostering a longer term perspective (Turnbull et al., 1996).

Third, we find a problem of *incongruity* in a dominance-based approach to CIE as a combination of embedded agency with collective action. If the collective action problem is solved through coercion, this is counterproductive for the innovation (Choi et al., 2001) and the restabilization implied by institutional change (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). These limitations warrant a ‘soft power’ model of CIE which eschews coercion to be relevant for many business markets.

2.3. SOFT POWER APPROACHES (JUDO, THE SOFT WAY)

In business, power, the potential ability to influence outcomes, behaviour or structures, is inherent to the recognition that organizations pursue interests (inter)dependently (Pfeffer, 1992). However widespread the former recognition (Håkansson & Snehota, 1990; Marsden, 1983; Turnbull et al., 1996), power is a somewhat orphaned concept in management studies. Moreover, within this limited coverage power is mostly considered in antagonistic and asymmetric yet stable relationships serving the interests of an exploitative elite (Hingley, 2005; Kumar et al., 1998; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974). This paper illuminates another face and explores power’s use and development by ‘weaker’ players to achieve collaboration and change to reduce rather than enlarge asymmetry. To this end, we distinguish soft from hard power. Soft power implies “*strategies of nuanced influence based on early timing, self-serving illusions, and exploitation of others’ tendencies*” (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009, p. 653). It is the ability to attract, persuade and co-opt others through positive, indirect strategies without resorting to coercion or financial inducement (Aplin & Hegarty, 1980; Nye, 2004). Accordingly, soft power draws from non-mediated bases of referent, information or expertise power rather than mediated bases like coercive, reward or legal power (Ke et al., 2009; Scheer & Stern, 1992)².

Extant literature describes different explicit or implicit soft power *tactics*, dispersed over different areas of research. This paper’s framework builds on the Judo strategy model (Yoffie & Cusumano, 1999) which, much like the sport, is an integrative system of soft power tactics. Judo, literally the soft or gentle way, is a pacified version of a martial arts branch intended to subdue opponents with as little force as possible. To do so, a vast repertoire of techniques counters attacks utilizing kinetic principles such as leverage, off-balancing and movement. These are employed to neutralize an opponent by using one’s force against oneself, rather than directly opposing it. Judo has been used as a metaphor for situations of new entry,

² In line with Blois and Hopkinson (2013), we do not employ the confusing coercive – non-coercive power dichotomy. Instead, we adopt the mediated – non-mediated classification. This is more relevant for our use to differentiate between dominant players who directly wield such mediating sources and others who only have power to the extent that it is granted by targets.

complementer strategies or entrepreneurship (Casadesus-Masanell & Yoffie, 2007; Gelman & Salop, 1983; Yoffie & Cusumano, 1999) where ‘weaker’ opponents defeat incumbents through skill rather than ex ante market power. In fact, as we will illustrate, the judo principles substantially overlap and extend Santos and Eisenhardt’s (2009) soft power principles for (individual) institutional entrepreneurship. Below, we first outline the principles of this framework before linking them to CIE and illustrating them with a case-study.

2.3.1. *Movement*

The principle of movement within judo relates to the use of rapid accelerations, to keeping distance and to evasive, multidirectional manoeuvring which guides rather than confront opponents’ momentum. The stratagem that smaller challengers likely act fast and innovate nimbly to neutralize a larger competitor’s resource advantages (Arrow, 1962) is well-established in business studies. Yoffie and Kwak’s (2001) Judo metaphor expands this notion of movement by combining ‘*fast follow through*’ with ‘*not inviting attack*’ and ‘*defining the competitive space*’. Speed to market is a hallmark of most agile strategy frameworks and is a primary characteristic of Drucker’s (1985) earliest mention of ‘entrepreneurial judo’. He illustrates this with the example of Sony moving into the US-developed transistor radio technology, creating and controlling a market for it more than a decade before the indigenous competitors would act. As the most obvious aspect of movement, speed needs little further elaboration. Except, perhaps, that it benefits from strategic agility (Sull, 2009), that is an acute sensitivity to strategic developments, leadership unity and the capability to rapidly adapt resources and capabilities (Doz & Kosonen, 2010).

Not inviting attack or the “puppy dog ploy” (Yoffie & Kwak, 2001) involves entering an inconspicuous niche outside the incumbent’s core business and emphasizing complementarity. This is for instance how Palm and later RIM entered the operating systems market in a niche and a way that was inconspicuous to the incumbent Microsoft. This tactic was the crux of the original judo economics model, which advises challengers to limit capacity to avoid attack (Gelman & Salop, 1983). The logic is that if an entrant credibly conveys a small niche focus, this reassures the incumbent who is incentivized to accommodate rather than react with an overall price reduction. This does not necessitate a real ambition to stay small, but to look unthreatening until one is able to defend a position, thus involving the soft power tactic of illusion to shield intentions (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). A last and related tactic is to *define the competitive space* by introducing different standards, templates or business models, hindering an entrenched incumbent to react (Yoffie & Kwak, 2001). Together with the previous tactics, through claiming and demarcating a market (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009), challengers move fast to carve out a new niche while shading its potential from incumbents’ attention through capacity limitation.

2.3.2. *Balance*

Balance builds on three related tactics (Yoffie & Kwak, 2002): ‘*gripping*’, ‘*avoiding tit-for-tat*’ and ‘*pushing when pulled*’. In the sport, balance is a continuous concern throughout the competitive game. Balancing starts as soon as a position is acquired through the first quick movement and stops being important only when the opponent is effectively subdued. The latter in business would imply that a new equilibrium has been found between incumbent and challenger. The first tactic, *gripping*, is the most visible in the sport as opponents try to secure a steady grip on the other’s revers. Despite being somewhat less obvious in business, this tactic is present even in the earliest mentions of judo strategy. Peter Drucker (1985) recounts Sony’s direct approach in securing a license to the transistor technology as a ‘beachhead’ into the US electronics market. Also referred to as foothold attacks (Humphreys, Loncar, Novicevic, & Roberts, 2013), this tactic is a natural extension of the movement principle. As the niche is claimed and demarcated, the challenger starts anchoring a position within this niche to sustain initial momentum. This competition-reducing tactic focuses on co-optation and alliance building, to turn players into customers or partners before they become competitors (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009; Yoffie & Kwak, 2002).

When *avoiding tit-for-tat*, the challenger focuses on the strengths of its own market concept, rather than dispersing attention and resources in reaction to incumbent attacks (Yoffie & Kwak, 2001). This implies carefully reading opponents’ moves to selectively respond to ideas that fit your strengths. For instance, in

eBay's early years, it was attacked by many, among which Amazon.com. Amazon, after rejecting an earlier attempt to ally, introduced a competing offer leveraging its huge customer base and marketing muscle. From the bombardment of promotions, price reduction and services, eBay only chose to respond to the upgraded payment system option as this played into its focus on premium service provision for every seller, small or large (Yoffie & Kwak, 2002). Another way to avoid being drawn into races to the bottom is the clever use of timing, by making asynchronous moves that either pre-empt or delay competition (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009).

Pushing when pulled means to simultaneously absorb and counter competitors' moves, disrupting their balance (*kusushi*) while remaining steady yourself. This tactic thus complements agility with a hard to combine capacity to absorb the initial impact (Sull, 2009). Successful execution hence relies on concerted whole-body moves (*tai sabaki*). These take you 'off the line' of attack and amplify the attacker's momentum toward a direction you desire. The main premise of this tactic translates quite easily to a business context: instead of matching a competitor's promotion campaign, using their marketing expenses by accepting their reduction coupons and leaflet promotions, or 'embracing and extending' their existing technology developments (Yoffie & Kwak, 2002). Further in line with this tactic is the use of feints to distract and off-balance opponents (Humphreys et al., 2013).

2.3.3. *Leverage*

A defining trait of the 'soft' martial arts branch is that offensive force is used in a focused and leveraged way. Judo strategy "*uses the weight and strategy of opponents against them*" (Yoffie & Cusumano, 1999) by exploiting pressure points, position and opponents' characteristics. Accordingly, soft power strategies exploit others' tendencies (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). The strengths which explain incumbents' success eventually make them predictable and rigid (Leonard-Barton, 1992). Examples include Apple's tendency to pioneer in the top segment with a limited assortment or Microsoft's to limit compatibility with prior or competing systems. They respectively leave Samsung and Netscape the opportunity to disrupt. Drucker (1985) lists a number of such 'bad habits' exploited by entrepreneurial judo, such as arrogance, creaming only the market's top-end, focusing on 'quality' instead of value or on the entire market instead of distinct customer segments. Leverage can also come from existing networks which expand the challenger's reach and compensate capability gaps to take on the incumbent. Even the incumbent's installed base can serve as an opportunity to simply offer add-ons which are compatible without needing to acquire new capabilities (Yoffie & Cusumano, 1999).

2.4. *CONNECTING THE JUDO FRAMEWORK TO THE NEEDS FOR POWER IN THE CIE PROCESS*

CIE's external and internal challenges imply distinct needs for power. Unlike Wijen and Ansari's (2007) drivers, the above judo mechanisms can be tied to CIE's needs for power in a teleological process. We argue that there is practical value in clarifying when a certain driver might act and that power bases and needs differ between phases. Previous literature suggests that the development of collective action initiatives evolves over different phases labeled 'pioneer', 'start-up' and 'insurgent' (Kim & Bearman, 1997). The demand for power related to the internal and external challenges in these phases of CIE development are derived below and summarized in Table 1.

The *pioneer* phase usually starts with a few frontrunners experimenting with new practices until a critical mass is reached (Marwell & Oliver, 1993). They make initial contributions to the development of the initiative's content and frame without certainty that these will get picked up. Internally, power is needed to overcome inaction of the critical mass (Wijen & Ansari, 2007) by compensating gaps in action capacity and connecting their independent technical experiments (Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). The pioneers start developing soft or 'non-mediated' bases of power such as referent, expertise and information power (Ke et al., 2009) through their experiments. The effectiveness of grass roots models in this stage is increased by the trustworthiness created by these capacities as well as by a history of networking and density (Oliver, 1993). Power is also demanded externally to support the initial activities as the dissatisfied initiators break away from prevailing institutions. By breaching boundaries and disrupting dominant practices, they provoke conflict (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Hence, the critical

mass engages in constitutive legitimation through claim-making and gaining cognitive recognition (Rao, 2004; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). Other movement tactics of speed and inconspicuousness (Yoffie & Kwak, 2001) are recommended to avoid incumbent attacks before such legitimacy is attained. Inconspicuousness through ambiguity in the framed mission furthermore provides soft power to the initiative by supporting multiple viewpoints, leaving options open and concealing specific plans (Davenport & Leitch, 2005). This way a broader following can be attracted while mitigating the change agenda to incumbents.

In the *start-up* phase, the critical mass is able to convince a crowd of followers to co-develop solutions for the joint problem and improve the group's efficacy (Oliver, 1993). Internally, power is needed in this stage to tackle inaction of followers and to develop a basis to sustain collaboration (Wijen & Ansari, 2007). This also means dealing with potentially arising issues of collective discipline (Lyon, 2006) as more actors with different interests join the initiative (Benford & Snow, 2000). Grass roots initiatives at this stage accordingly strive for formalization and socialization to derive power from 'organizational elements' (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Battilana & Dorado, 2010), improve leadership unity (Doz & Kosonen, 2010) and improve agility of operations (Sull, 2009). Agility also serves the external power demand in a situation where the initiative's inconspicuousness becomes increasingly harder to maintain as more followers are attracted and activities gain scale. Hence, fast movement allows to quickly achieve results which stress the pragmatic legitimacy and dominance of the new model (Greenwood et al., 2002; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). At the same time, innovations in practices and boundaries are being introduced and theorized in this stage (Hinings, Greenwood, Reay, & Suddaby, 2004; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). The external challenge demands that these innovations balance novelty with familiarity to offer meaning to mobilization targets (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Lacking a dominant coalition within the field, the initiators also mobilize mediating actors who extend access and trust (Lyon, 2006; Marsden, 1983). The resulting alliances provide boundary-bridging (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006) and 'grip' inside the field to pre-empt the likely external contestation that follows visible growth (Benford & Snow, 2000). Still highly vulnerable to attacks from incumbents, a judo strategy would position the initiative as small and non-threatening (Gelman & Salop, 1983), where the incumbent does not wish to be (Drucker, 1985) and avoid protracted conflicts. Other elements of balance – and leverage – become useful once an incumbent decides to contest.

The *insurgent* phase is where the initiative's following expands explosively as a mass of 'latecomers' adopts – and institutionalizes – the developed templates (Kim & Bearman, 1997). The initiative grows to full potential and starts (re)institutionalizing a field (Hinings et al., 2004) so that the internal and the external challenge eventually merge. The collective action striving for resonance and participation throughout the field (Benford & Snow, 2000) automatically implies that new templates become disseminated and (re)institutionalized. The internal demand for power here derives from having to convince the reluctant mass of latecomers. Addressing the collective action challenge by creating new institutions for internal socialization (Wijen & Ansari, 2007) hence also affects the external challenge. The external demand for power mainly revolves around restabilising the field around the new dominant model. This occurs mainly through processes of connecting and promoting (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). To validate a position within its niche, proponents will anchor the initiative by establishing ties with elites in other fields. This balance-tactic also tends to build on the leverage of high-level mediating actors (e.g. media, cross-field associations or government; Benford & Snow, 2000) for an increased reach across field boundaries. Promotion furthermore enables theorized practices to spread by optimizing, objectifying and eventually diffusing them (Greenwood et al., 2002; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Following a successful diffusion process, new practices and boundaries gain cognitive legitimacy, thus taken for granted (Greenwood et al., 2002). The initiative's claims and new institutions are amplified through advertising, gain legal recognition and become embedded in government relations (Rao, 2004).

Table 1: Power needs over the CIE development process

Challenge	Objective	Soft power mechanism
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Pioneer phase		
<i>Internal</i>	Overcoming initial inaction	<p><i>Movement:</i> early entry & learning through experiments; starting to claim to attract the interested</p> <p><i>Balance:</i> legitimacy and trust through useful knowledge & initiator trustworthiness; seeding soft power bases</p> <p><i>Leverage:</i> Weak ties for broad and diverse network to access experimentation opportunities</p>
<i>External</i>	Creating field practices & boundaries	<p><i>Movement:</i> Fast and stealthy experimenting; claiming new practices for positioning & legitimacy-building while retaining ambiguity</p> <p><i>Balance:</i> becoming the cognitive referent through technical experimentation & capacity-building</p>
Start-up phase		
<i>Internal</i>	Activating critical mass Sustaining collaboration	<p><i>Movement:</i> focus on niche; leadership unity for fast decision-making; operational agility</p> <p><i>Balance:</i> building up balance through boundary-bridging alliances & internal co-optation</p> <p><i>Leverage:</i> attraction of the dissatisfied & mediating actors for inter- and intrafield mobilization</p>
<i>External</i>	Breaching & disrupting Pragmatic legitimacy	<p><i>Movement:</i> Fast follow-through toward results; demarcation & puppy dog ploy; sensegiving through new practices & boundaries to become cognitive referent and stress ‘dominance’ of new model</p> <p><i>Balance:</i> delaying/neutralizing incumbents via co-opting; some familiarity to facilitate adoption of new practices; building theorization alliances intra- & interfield</p> <p><i>Leverage:</i> mediating actors for access across boundaries & results to show dominance (functional superiority)</p>
Insurgent phase		
	Creating new institutions Connecting & promoting Cognitive legitimacy	<p><i>Movement:</i> diffusion via promotion & objectification; institutionalizing the demarcated niche in relations & regulations;</p> <p><i>Balance:</i> convincing others of mutual interest; converging perspectives through hiring and socialization; bonding with elites; co-opting existing channels</p> <p><i>Leverage:</i> high-level mediating actors for upscaling; existing channels for promotion</p>

3. CASE DESCRIPTION

In what follows, we illustrate the Judo framework’s applicability to CIE. Illustrative cases customarily do not require elaborate methodology descriptions, yet for clarity’s sake and because the case is not widely known we first offer a short section on the data and the logic of the case. The case tells of a recently formed initiative in the Dutch electro-technical installation (ETI) industry. The issue-based network studied (KIEN, the node for innovation in electrotechnics Netherlands) aims to renew the way ETIs practice innovation together with the field(s) of suppliers, complementers, financiers, downstream and

other partners such as the technical university of Eindhoven. Doing so required collective action as the challenges aimed for required a field-level response.

3.1. CASE SELECTION, DATA AND FINALITY

Our interest in institutional agency by business collectives came from previous cases which pointed to the relevance of CIE for business actors in search of fundamental innovation. This drew our attention to effective network design for change in complex multi-stakeholder issues. Although this phenomenon is not new per se, it is only recently receiving systematic attention and even then case examples of the atypical 'outside track' are scarce. We identified such an institutional entrepreneurship network in the Dutch ETI industry. There, an emergent field was taking form, aiming to renew the innovation ecosystem. The case was attractive for two reasons. First, the change was initiated by actors outside the dominant industry association, yet viable because the initiators were nonetheless seasoned managers and entrepreneurs. This dominant association, renamed UV in this case, opposed. This created an interesting power dynamic for the study of non-elite CIE. Second, the case was revelatory as the authors were granted full access to the ongoing field regeneration attempt due to prior affiliations with key initiators. So, although the longitudinal case is still ongoing, we report findings stemming from a first round of interviews with the initiators, current management and management of the incumbent industry association (see

Appendix A for respondent codes). These interviews were moreover already informed by a preceding literature study of sector and trend reports, consulting studies and the initiative's formal and informal start-up documents.

This and other cases influenced the authors' thinking about the issue and on several occasions pointed toward relevant theories, but in the end the development of the framework was more a conceptual feat. The case merely illustrates this framework (Siggelkow, 2007), which relieves the evidence burden on the case and often dismisses the need for a methodology section altogether. The conceptual frame could stand on its own and is generalizable within the boundary conditions identified in §2.2, yet the illustration aids the contribution in two ways. First, it shows that the framework's mechanisms are not purely speculative and relevant to CIE practices. This is certainly not superfluous as the phenomenon explained is as improbable as David beating Goliath. Second, the case helps the reader to imagine how the mechanisms of this framework play out in a real-life example. This too is useful here as the concepts drawn together stem from different traditions, so their interrelations might require clarification.

3.2. CASE CONTEXT

The ETI innovation model had been predominantly upstream technology-driven by component and system suppliers and started to reach its limits. The major recent technological innovations in the industry such as home automation or smart grids were not being adopted by the market. The problem was not that these technologies were not valuable; they just did not provide the right value proposition to the right customer. The innovations were beyond what private customers were inclined to spend and the emphasized aspects of technological sophistication did not resonate with their needs. Applications where there was demand for these innovations focused on e.g. energy-efficiency, comfort and specialized care functionality and entailed complex, integrative projects. Optimal energy efficiency for instance depends mainly on the building's dimensions, materials used and the coordination with e.g. the climate control system and electrical apparel for intelligent use of power and the avoidance of peaks in consumption and generation.

These projects were unprecedented and put the ETI into unfamiliar roles and collaborations with new stakeholders. Visibly new, for instance, are research collaborations with Eindhoven's technical university for new technical concepts. Moreover, these roles went against the dominant logic and structure of the field. The traditional resident construction field is dominated by downstream actors such as contractors and architects. Installers typically come at the end of the process, in a subordinate relationship where communication is top-down. In this vertical chain model, contractors are central for their skill to translate technical demands from architects' building plans into specifications for the different technical service

providers. The latter would install the masonry, electrical, climate control, sanitary or decorative aspects. Specifications of the electrotechnical system have thus been decided for the installer, leaving no room to optimize the energy efficiency or the care-oriented functionality within the project. In the integrated model, the complexity of the electrotechnical subsystem outstrips the comprehension of most contractors and the holistic nature of the demand-side challenges also required earlier involvement in the planning process. Hence, new mental models and a fundamental reshaping of institutionalized practices and actor configurations are needed. These go against the interests of more central chain members. Hence, institutional entrepreneurship in an industry where approximately 4500 out of 5000 firms have less than 50 employees and only 39 have more than 250, would necessitate collective action.

Within the industry, the actor to facilitate such field-level action would be the field's professional association UV. In the past, the association had been validated and endorsed field-wide during the growth years (1945 -2001). As the market grew, the need for innovation shrank. From 2001 there was a lot more internal tension and from 2008 onwards the crisis hit hard. Internally, field members then saw that something had to change. Yet there was no consensus among the different groups then represented so UV's management did not take the lead. In 2002 the associations of the ETI and that of the hydrotechnical and climate control installers merged to combine into UV. The new association's mission was egalitarian and did not differentiate between these different types of members anymore, although in multiple senses this was not a marriage of equals. For one, the ETI operated in a more innovation-intensive business. The hydro- and climate control installers substantially outnumbered the ETI, thus capturing a larger share of director seats in the new federation. Especially the pioneers and early majority of ETI therefore soon became dissatisfied by the new association's lack of innovation stimuli. This motivated them to initiate an innovation and entrepreneurship focused network for the ETI industry, with the following mission:

...to involve the e-installers in innovation research and projects, and to continuously share the results with them. ...the expertise and experience of installers who have daily contact with users, are an important source of information for research and projects. Due to the focus on the e-installer and the end user, KIEN projects are concrete, practical and achievable.

Despite knowing that their activities would eventually cannibalize some of UV's innovation-related activities, the initiators positioned KIEN alongside UV, taking up a largely complementary activity focus. However, KIEN's mission implies promoting the ETI industry's interests regarding innovation, a responsibility UV also claimed. Moreover, the post-crisis economic pressures on professional associations made UV highly sensitive to impingements on its core activity of 'interest promotion'. So the initiators' plans were considered competition, even referred to as a 'second UV' as soon as UV became aware of them. So KIEN somehow needed to muster the power to defend its entry.

Despite the clear need for power associated with the ambition for independence, the network initiators did not want to engage in a war for members with UV either. Although the initiators soon controlled a sizable war chest, they wanted to eventually keep relationships with the existing association. Many initiators had interlocks with boards and commissions of UV and their companies made use of services offered by UV, indicating interdependence. Given the fragmentation of the ETI industry and given a lack of dominance in the installation field, KIEN was not in a position to enact a coercive approach either. As KIEN's interest to enact institutional innovation was not matched with adequate centrality in the current field, institutional entrepreneurship was initiated from a peripheral position. Thus deprived of symbolic or positional power, the initiative was forced to employ indirect influence tactics (Aplin & Hegarty, 1980; Maguire et al., 2004). In the following section, we illustrate how the judo framework captures the tactics followed by the initiative throughout its three development stages. The case illustrates how it enables non-elite SME's with a position, organization and resource disadvantage, to collectively act against vested elite interests.

4. JUDO PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

Below, we present the findings from the KIEN case, structured according to the Judo framework. Each of the main Judo principles is described in a structure that follows the three phases by Kim and Bearman

(1997). We describe how the specific tactics coalesced into a natural sequence of soft power moves over those phases. To clarify the fit with the case, a summarizing table (Table 2) recapitulates how the illustrative tactics appeared in KIEN's story.

4.1. MOVEMENT

4.1.1. *Speed as motivation and claiming for diffusion in the pioneer phase*

In the pioneer phase, especially fast follow through and claiming tactics were visible in the case. It stands to reason that the puppy dog ploy becomes more relevant after the initiative gets noticed and experiences a need to reduce perceived threat. Speed was perhaps the initiators' most deliberate tactic. Some initiators regard speed the initiative's distinctive advantage, and the primary focus for further improvement. Speed motivated the initiators to spend time and energy on an additional structure for the ETI industry. This motivation grew from a frustration about UV's policy to focus innovation efforts on technological knowledge dissemination by creating trade groups. That policy lacked speed, a cutting edge, market orientation, entrepreneurial initiative and eventually created a large legacy of interest groups.

"a specialty 10 years ago, is now common installation work and so you do not really need a trade group for it anymore. But of course there are always more new technologies - and then you make a new trade group... We found that all those concepts that we developed were being adopted more slowly by the members..." (R1)

Hence the initiators concluded that the industry needed brokerage for assimilation, transformation and immediate access to market opportunities, *"so not only telling that there was a new market, but we were also going to bring parties together"* (R1). The initiators' wide boundary-bridging networks and the deliberate boundarylessness in the diverse projects committed to further accelerated learning. This provided expertise that could get them past the door with new stakeholders and e.g. the contacts within the municipal administration that became the first zero emissions project's client.

Claiming appeared in early signs of identity development, where KIEN defined itself as the entrepreneurial complement of UV. A preselection favoring leadership unity and operational agility marked KIEN's development. Only like-minded, entrepreneurially thinking members were attracted who preferred fast execution over bureaucratic control. This divergence from typical professional association mentality caused an early *"palace revolution"* (R2), as the initiators overtook the resources and structure preceding KIEN. They replaced the former president who leaned toward embedding within UV or develop a competing interest group, rather than stimulating innovation. When asked what provided the first projects with participants and legitimacy, the director replied that it was about deciding *"we are going to take initiative together with these entrepreneurs"* and *"shouting that you will keep on sitting on that chair and that you are going to do it"*.

4.1.2. *Start-up phase: pre-emptive inconspicuousness, formalization and focus*

Consistent with the founders' initial motivation, fast innovation remained a key focus in the start-up phase as well. In start-up, much attention and resources were hence spent on developing 'innovation journeys' which systematized the innovation process method and that still remains KIEN's calling card. This surge for results came not only from the initial frustration, but also from a concern about needing to *"build up a track record... while flying under the radar"* (R1) and *"to bring in that speed"* (R3) to show the dominance of new methods and attract support:

"...if you look very closely at [UV] then, ... a commission 'electrical energy', ... have been figuring out for three years how they are going to give it substance and how do we embed that into our organization? And with only a half year with such a zero-energy tunnel and all, we've already advanced further than what they have been doing for three years now." (R3)

Besides process optimization, fast movement in this phase also rests on formalization of internal structures and focus in the portfolio. Internal formalization occurred notably in the management structure and in the integration with research and development partners. With the official founding act in 2011, the initiators

deliberately designed a two-tier management structure which centralized executive power with the director. He is controlled biannually by supervisory board members themselves responsible for different activity areas. He directly supervises operational project execution by 4 ‘theme coordinators’ who facilitate intra-project collaboration. Further integration with the university provides a direct line for research projects at undergraduate or PhD level. KIEN thus has an agile project structure that immediately composes task forces of ETI entrepreneurs and other stakeholders as soon as a market demand is received and project needs are assessed. Finally, besides in operations, agility in the project portfolio (Sull, 2009) also became salient during start-up. Initially projects were streamlined around one of two major trends relevant to ETI: zero energy or assisted ambulant living. Later on, however, the inflow of new projects, some not strictly fitting these two, created a perception that this came at the expense of momentum.

Not inviting attack, besides flying under the radar, also entailed diplomacy as KIEN moved to disseminate its activities. When trying to attract followers by advertising to UV’s membership, UV objected and threatened to cut them off. KIEN had to plea, bargain and appeal to influential members to convince UV top management of the mutual interest; that it was not an attack. This also translates into KIEN’s legal status as a foundation, which is not strictly competitive in terms of the association’s membership business model. Defining the competitive space likewise entailed more than building up a track record. Formalized within the project activities was a fundamental difference with whatever UV offered. The initiators were very outspoken that their initiative was more openly entrepreneurial, aiming to directly support entrepreneurs trying to innovate and obtain new business. This is what UV still reports staying away from, limiting their role to innovation ‘watchtower’:

“how to reach those views ... that is what UV will not do so fast ... we will not take the initiative quickly and be responsible for innovation projects ... that’s too great a risk ... the boundary between collective and entrepreneurship is for us a hard limit ...” (R2)

4.2. BALANCE

4.2.1. **Pioneer: Building the financial and brokerage foundations**

Balance in the pioneer phase was predominantly aimed at proactively reinforcing the strategic position. This involved gripping tactics of securing access and co-optation as well as pre-emptive tit-for-tat avoidance by focusing on own strengths. One resource that substantially facilitated the CIE initiative, was the “*Bag of money*” (R4) that was secured in the palace revolution. KIEN’s predecessor was a remnant from the old ETI association containing most of all financial resources that were separated from the merged entity. The ETI association was substantially richer than the merging counterparts in no small part because the industry’s innovation-oriented business strategy yielded higher margins and warranted higher investments in collective R&D. The preselection of the critical mass furthermore triggered co-optation and tit-for-tat avoidance mechanisms. What characterized the initiators and their early followers on one hand, was that these were prominent, influential people within the ETI industry and UV. Nearly all of them combined the role of entrepreneur in their own firm with a mandate in UV boards and commissions. This created interlocks with incumbent structures, hence importing structural centrality while sharing the (new) institutional logic of the initiators.

“Of course we all have our own network and that is used in this project .. of course this kind of thing does not work when you're a starting club that doesn't know anyone, two young monkeys .. No, you need the seniors, the gray hairs with the networks in there from the beginning, to build that credibility...” (R5)

On the other hand, because of their entrepreneurial orientation the initiators also shared a history of battling the post-merger dominant conservative and generalist forces within UV. By gathering these “*war buddies*” (R5), whose bond had been battle tested, the previous president of the old ETI association showed concern for sustaining the action early on. The co-opting strategy and the focus on own strengths also intertwined as both were in support of the initiative’s brokerage-oriented purpose. Although we are not certain that co-opting and the inside-out focus were deliberate, the focus on brokerage had been

explicitly central from the start. In fact, the concept inspired the initiative's logo, "a roundabout where a number of roads end up at one is for example our firm... and you see there the university and other research institutes all in their own little biotope, what we want is to connect all that with each other" (R3).

4.2.2. Start-up: branching out to support mediation & patiently co-opting the incumbent, while stressing independence

The start-up phase showed significant interplay between different balance tactics to improve internal efficacy which became notably more salient as a concern for contestation started to surface:

"KIEN is now starting to get a name. It is not really a reputed foundation yet, ... if we get that status with KIEN, then the opposing forces will really start to work .. in a lifetime, it is still an adolescent ... if ... you have a mature innovation center with a certain status; then you get these forces..." (R6)

In this phase, KIEN built further on the previous tactics of focusing on own strengths and co-optation to increase efficacy. In line with the former and enabled by the 3 million euro's secured earlier, the initiative invested heavily in the development of market-focused concepts, frames and solutions, as well as own channels and partners. This internal development was furthermore accompanied by a deliberate striving for self-directedness. This is captured in the starting claim of the founding manifest: "The future is not what will happen, but what we will do" (KIEN starting notes, 2009). This self-determination focus was crucial in KIEN's formalization and translated into a deliberately independent innovation focus on their own two "dots on the horizon" (R1). KIEN also wanted to communicate this independence as such by deliberately symbolizing it in the legal structure, logo and even the physical location:

"This independence is also outwardly reflected in KIEN's own location. This location is explicitly linked to the high-tech region of Eindhoven and not the administrative Western Netherlands." (KIEN summary)

Despite this independent course, the co-optation strategy to tie the incumbent UV was continued as the initiative formalized. In the definitive legal founding act in 2011, the initiators took caution to avoid hostile take-overs by UV, but :

"Still, on behalf of [UV] entrepreneurs will be sought to participate and have a seat in the governance of KIEN. Cooperation and coordination are still extremely important." (KIEN summary)

This tactic was extended toward other associations as well. One example is the recent letter of intent to cooperate on sustainable energy projects with the electrotechnical suppliers' association. By increasingly representing electrotechnical R&D, KIEN was treading on suppliers' territory. Hence, the director decided to turn them into allies before territorialism would arise. To this end, KIEN made use of an embrace and extend tactic. The suppliers' association was relatively young, yet firmly espoused the traditional association model, so KIEN used an assimilation logic by emphasizing the goals and routines that were traditional such as knowledge sharing and advice, while downplaying the direct entrepreneurship support.

Embracing and extending, as well as other push-when-pulled tactics were also exercised in the relationship with UV. When the latter provoked, ignored or even tried to strong-arm the initiators into handing over the resources, these offenses were patiently absorbed rather than reacted against. Later on, however, KIEN selectively extended those that had exposed liabilities for KIEN's autonomy. These risks were covered in the founding act through quota for board members and determinations of irreversibility in the statutes. These tactics supported the conflict avoiding tactic of asynchronous timing in this stage. The absorbing of and selective response to UV's offensive moves were part of a strategy to patiently court the incumbent. Counterintuitive to the tendency for fast movement in the projects, KIEN made sure not to let this show to outsiders, especially not to existing federations. While pushing hard for new projects and advancement of the existing ones, time was taken to patiently court the traditional federations and let awareness of the new model's added value grow. Towards federations representing different parts of the

construction chain, such as the contractors or architects, a similar tactic was followed, yet with a different aim. These parts had much less interest to participate in KIEN's integrative model and were not strictly necessary in it, so the courting was in fact a feint. KIEN's director approached them by "lobbying via the royal road" to instil the illusion of being able to control and delay the initiative.

"after I first tried to do it through the royal road, I actually skipped the whole column and started talking with the end clients..." (R1)

4.2.3. Insurgent: restabilizing into well-defined and functionally balanced roles

Towards the insurgent phase, the relationship with UV gradually started normalizing as the inclusive and complementary character of KIEN's projects was confirmed repeatedly and as emotions wore off.

Gripping in this stage involved supporting the incumbent's projects if they aligned with KIEN's interests and approaching the incumbent on a human level. Besides shifting awareness to a complementer rather than a competitor-mode, this went further to create and strengthen the relationship:

"that has purely been communication... explaining what we are doing, what we want ... we also ask their involvement, we also want that mutual cooperation ... that we are going to fund their projects, that they see that we are not threatening at one point .. and then you also notice when you get to know each other as human beings then the ice is broken soon, there is a certain trust and also as UV became aware that we were actually members of UV wanting to boost a particular innovation within KIEN then you notice that the purely human factors normalize the relationship..." (R6)

This way, a willingness grew to solve even the more heated discussions or the areas where interests were not aligned. A symbolic point of heated discussion had for instance been the use of UV's member database to communicate the workshops disseminating the insights and tools developed in the earlier projects. UV perceived this move as illegitimate and offensive.

"Until we explained that we do it for them ... that did last two years... the initial reaction was: it's not your business, those are our members ... luckily we have passed that period now..." (R3)

As both awareness and stronger ties were established, both the initiative and the incumbent are currently evolving towards formalizing collaborative routines. This implies explicit attention to balancing and integrating KIEN's autonomy within a broader system of ETI-related innovation stimulation.

"...innovation has a different dynamic than an association... so you just have to continue to keep managing it in a separate entity. ...electrotechnics no longer operates on its own... becomes part of a bigger picture ... and that is in fact also where cooperation with the hydro-fitters, plumbers pops up. ... if you look at the future, it's going to be important to bring the two initiatives of the electro and hydro industry to each other... to at least optimize ... that integration of techniques..." (R6)

Accordingly, several exploratory projects have been started in collaboration, the first of which are starting to deliver results. For instance, in one project on ambulant living solutions for the elderly, KIEN has funded and guided entrepreneurs in pilot projects, where UV develops and disseminates a 'quick guide' on the technical solutions. UV's affiliated education fund is developing workshops on these best practice cases. Hence, on the side of UV as well, an awareness is growing of a need to formalize some collaborative routines: "to formulate it much tighter, like these are our ways, this is how we operate with each other... and that is what is missing in my opinion"(R2). By defining roles for different collaboration scenarios, the actors aim to institutionalize the normalized relationships by "making good arrangements" (R7). This delineation and focus on own strengths finally implied adaptation and balancing with KIEN's striving for autonomy as well. In 2010 UV reinvigorated its innovation policy with strategic innovation spear points based on a comprehensive strategic industry study. This report was comprehensive in scale and coverage as well as high-level in terms of content and ambition. Hence, while seeking to re-establish a position as the industry's innovation advisory board, KIEN seized this opportunity to guide and position its own innovation expertise. Besides extending initiatives, however, a balance implied that KIEN would have to relinquish some autonomy as well:

"You should not completely let KIEN run its own course ... if UV is going to adopt KIEN as a full-fledged innovation institute for the industry, then UV will have to be able to give its input there, like we want to focus our priorities on that, based on research we see opportunities lying there, KIEN please look at what role you might play there in terms of innovation..." (R6)

4.3. LEVERAGE

4.3.1. **Pioneer: sowing the seeds for third-party mediation strategy**

The root of KIEN's leverage strategy took form in the pioneer stage. From the beginning, the initiators felt a need to develop integral concepts which play into broad market demands, societal issues even. This would be where KIEN could make a difference and give the ETI industry a prominent position in the fields that would emerge around these themes. Common in such themes is a need for an integral stakeholder approach, as the market concepts developed look beyond the mere technological system.

"if you install solar panels in one place and biofermentation in the other, then you also need to organize who will consume it, that it gets paid for, that it becomes a whole. That went beyond the university's skills and capacity, so then they said KIEN, we think this is something for you guys and that's how it started and how we began with these parties..." (R3)

So KIEN automatically branched out toward third parties beyond the typical supply chain and their first clients were instrumental enablers to this end. The market opportunities for the founding projects in both the ambulant care and the zero energy projects originated at municipal level. There, a retreating national government and projected cost increases due to population ageing created a need for smarter, cost-efficient solutions. Both themes appeared promising for cost reduction and fell within the scope of existing, underused technological capabilities such as home automation and smart grids. These market actors, the municipalities, were interesting targets to access funding channels and identify relevant stakeholders involved in the use and maintenance of the applications developed. Coupled with KIEN's connections on the production side, municipalities' centrality laid the basis for new alliance networks. These networks provided a 'full', boundary-bridging project composition to develop new market concepts, including mediating actors.

"And so you need to involve the necessary stakeholders in each theme that you pick up... that may be the manufacturers, the government ... and you need the customer ... and of course your own industry and then you can together tell what is possible today because you have oriented as a sector with the manufacturers .. " (R4)

4.3.2. **Start-up: intensifying 3rd-party mediation, stimulating grass roots and exploiting incumbents' creaming**

In the start-up phase the focus on branching out toward third parties intensified. One such actor was the Eindhoven Technical university (TU). TU offered knowledge and a capacity for concept development as well as symbolic legitimacy for KIEN as an innovation center. Moreover, this alliance also emphasized KIEN's unmistakable role in matching technological development capability with the market-focused implementation by ETI entrepreneurs.

"A university has lots of knowledge at its disposal, and can do a lot...in the very early development, ... who picks that up, disseminates it? a professional association will not do that... there, innovation is ... never in the coupling of the parties who could be involved ... " (R3)

Furthermore, municipalities' centrality provided access to other key project stakeholders. In both themes, for instance, the project developers and building owners were salient stakeholders. Both were interested as the projects provided a significantly better total cost of ownership and powerful because they carried much of the financing and owned the projects. In the home care projects, insurers were involved because they controlled reimbursement regimes and would gain the most from the reduced hospitalization rates with home care solutions. Other allies would also come from outside the construction chain. For instance, in this phase KIEN developed a deliberate strategy to open dialogues with potential complementers (e.g.

medical devices in the ambulatory care projects) through their representative professional associations. Associations offer access to a range of project partners and have a cooperative interest as KIEN ‘s innovation projects enhance their brokerage position to members. Other third parties providing such an extended range were quasi-governmental players, such as the network operator, who was “*a natural ally to KIEN*” (R1). The operator had a strategic interest in efficient smart grid solutions which KIEN sought to implement in various municipalities. For one, these could substantially reduce energy spikes in the network.

A final, truly essential, stakeholder in KIEN’s mediation strategy was the customer. KIEN aimed to position itself by looking for innovation with a clear customer finality. It thereby exploited ‘gaps’ in the market left by the creaming behaviour of incumbent associations. UV for one, had always been operating at an abstract level, so KIEN emphasized direct and concrete support:

“I still see that the interest promotion occurs at a relatively abstract level.. Consider when I as an installer need a certain support with UV ... then you notice that there is no real connection with the concrete problems you have...” (R6)

Likewise, other government-funded innovation associations tended to be very generalist in their approach. This resulted in a focus on technological development, rather than actual market solutions. The universality and subsidized business model also implied that intellectual property had to be shared. This was different with KIEN, which only exported technical concepts, business models and project methodologies. By targeting unaddressed end-user needs, KIEN was inherently able to attract all the necessary parties on the production side. Showing the concrete benefits of their innovation projects turned the members of UV and other associations into ambassadors. In UV this led to a noticeable shift in attitude that seems to pave the way to reconciliation. So in no small part the leverage strategy also exploited KIEN’s market-pull focus and business actors’ tendency to innovate in line with it.

4.3.3. **Insurgent: further stimulating third parties and grass roots**

KIEN finally also continued the third party leverage strategy going into the insurgent phase. For instance, its director is currently working on building relationships with national government agencies and political parties to institutionalize and scale up its model. He pronounced an explicit ambition to have KIEN become a sort of valorisation desk which would take up a rather permanent position in valorising technological knowledge broadly and systematically for all things electrotechnical. Third party leveraging is substantially supported by the recently received national innovation award for the developed multistakeholder strategic innovation ‘journeys’. Due to the coverage received, this award resonates with the target population, creating a more systematic pull effect and endorsing the dominance of the method.

“that we had set up that innovation journey with those municipalities and won that innovation award for it, is by now known in many other municipalities who say: you have done so successfully, you can also help us with it?” (R1)

Besides the third-party and the bottom-up market drivers of the leverage strategy, there is also an internal ETI industry-focused consolidation component to KIEN’s leverage strategy in this phase. Consistent with the formalization of collaborative routines, access to existing foundations is now also systematically being exploited. These partners are useful for their focus on ETI professional education, technical standards, as well as the generalist research funding agencies. First projects rapidly followed and are producing output. As these are current issues in KIEN’s strategy, however, it remains to be seen how both the formalization and for instance the leveraging at national level further evolves.

Table 2: Judo mechanisms in KIEN’s collective institutional entrepreneurship process

	Pioneer	Start-up	Insurgent
Movement			
<i>Fast follow</i>	Speed as initial	Optimizing process,	/

<i>through</i>	motivation; project acceleration through initiators' network	structure & portfolio	
<i>Not inviting attack</i>	/	Flying under the radar, diplomacy & underselling	/
<i>Defining competitive space</i>	Claiming new practice & 'entrepreneur' identity	Building a track record; non-membership business model;	Institutionalize demarcated boundaries
Balance			
<i>Gripping</i>	Securing access to finances, co-opting through interlocks & brokerage role	Branching out across & co-opting through board seats within industry association	Communicating on a human level & supporting projects to normalize relationship
<i>Avoid head on conflict</i>	Powerful, connected initiators; securing 'bag of money'	Building efficacy by investing in own concepts, frame & channels; self-determination;	Institutionalizing balance between autonomy and functional complementarity
<i>Push when pulled</i>	/	Assimilation toward traditional players; absorbing and selectively extending offenses	Assimilating shared 'spearpoints'
Leverage			
<i>Exploit bad habits</i>	/	Creaming of chain partners & existing associations;	/
		Unlocking and leveraging unanswered demand to stimulate grass roots	
<i>Using installed base</i>	Communicating to own professional association membership	Leveraging other associations' existing network	Existing foundations and knowledge institutes to disseminate knowledge
<i>Using 3rd parties</i>	Central clients jumpstart mediation strategy	Systematically branching out to varied stakeholder groups through their associations.	National level mediation, word-of-mouth & coverage

5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1. SUMMARY AND THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

This paper develops the judo framework as an effective integrative system of soft power tactics and illustrates how their interplay throughout different phases explains a CIE attempt. The importance of soft power tactics is largest while the initiator lacks ex ante power and legitimacy to push ideas through and when the initiative starts to become noticed. Hence, we predict that especially in the start-up phase all three Judo principles are salient to the successful development of CIE. Movement facilitates the fast positioning and build-up of a track record to secure a legitimate place in the perception of field members. Balance in the start-up phase provides the initiative goodwill from interconnected actors and allows them

to build up social capital while delaying competitive moves. Leverage of actors, templates and results is finally what sets the initiative on a path to growth and dominance. In the pioneer phase, the initiative benefits from not yet being substantially on the radar of incumbent organizations, so Judo tactics are perhaps not absolutely necessary to surviving this phase. They are however salient to sustain the initiative in start-up. The emphasis will thereby mostly lay on proactive use of movement-related tactics, as the initiative should quickly claim and demarcate its niche within the field. Balance naturally complements these early moves for the establishment and quick fortification of a foothold within that niche. In the insurgent phase, finally, the need for Judo tactics is correlated with the competitive pressures from incumbents in the field. This is hence mostly where the reactive balance and leverage tactics such as pushing when pulled or the exploitation of others' bad habits come in, triggered by these 'opponents' moves. Nonetheless balance in this phase also dictates that the initiative keeps focusing on its own strengths, notwithstanding the possibility of outside attacks. So consolidating the foothold and building up own formal power sources will be an important forward-looking balance strategy in this phase too.

The Judo soft power model extends institutional entrepreneurship process literature, which focuses mostly on the accomplishment of embedded agency (e.g. Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Seo & Creed, 2002). Although collective action is increasingly recognized as inherent to institutional entrepreneurship, few have attempted to theorize this additional challenge (Maguire et al., 2004; Weik, 2011). This study is the first attempt to theorize both challenges in an integrative CIE model. Moreover, unlike the hard power model (Wijen & Ansari, 2007), our framework embeds power dynamics in the CIE process for increased actionability. Whereas mainstream collective action explanations mostly hinge on initiators with control over outcomes, resources or favourable network positions (Coleman, 1988; Kim & Bearman, 1997; Marsden, 1983), this model moreover takes the undertheorized soft path (Maguire et al., 2004). Our soft power approach proposes three alternative keystones to enable CIE:

- (1) Judo tactics that draw on movement, balance and leverage to pre-empt and withstand contestation of more powerful incumbents. Together they enable an outcome that was not only beyond the scope of action of even the big ETI companies, but required players from other fields as well.
- (2) Redefining field boundaries to compensate low centrality within the traditional field with bridging ties in new customer solution focused areas outside it. In our illustrative case, legitimacy and dominance are partly established by 'borrowing' social capital from elite mediating actors and by building alliance networks with complementers and market actors. These are all non-traditional 'third parties' with an interest in the initiative's outcome.
- (3) Strategic duality in addressing both the internal and the external challenge. The former implied e.g. balancing novelty to attract new stakeholders with assimilation to appease the captive field. The latter entailed combining grass roots innovation projects for momentum with centralized path-clearing lobbying or relational work.

The Judo model combines the explanatory power of multiple perspectives and better fits many business markets and is therefore highly relevant. The explanation is powerful because it extends and connects disparate strands of soft-power theorizing and embeds them in the political process of CIE. Potency of the explanation of field redefining radical innovation is furthermore reinforced by coupling an institutional power logic with competence and identity logics (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). The Judo framework is more applicable, sustainable and internally congruent than the mainstream hard power approach. The model's boundary conditions of interdependence, fragmentation or a peripheral position are highly prevalent in business fields. Examples of such settings are distribution, installers, parts producers, and in general the middle of many industrial chains which are often delimited by powerful OEMs downstream and sometimes powerful producers or commodities suppliers upstream.

As the case illustrates, soft power CIE is relevant to innovation ecosystem development (Adner & Kapoor, 2010), with dispersed actors collaborating to create a new role for themselves within an entirely new, integrated innovation approach. More importantly, the case also describes an entirely new conception of professional associations' role which in some cases are known to help theorize change, but rather "*are*

commonly understood as agents of reproduction rather than of change” (Greenwood et al., 2002, p. 73). Organizations such as KIEN take up a hub role in innovation ecosystems, driving the emergence of new fields. Doing so requires that they combine the ‘interest promotion’ institutional logic of associations to support collective action with the speed and outcome focused entrepreneurship logic of the businesses to actually realize innovations. In the case we see that both logics potentially conflict and therefore add a challenge of hybridity (Battilana & Dorado, 2010). So future research would be warranted to investigate the use of soft power to overcome this challenge as well.

Moreover, the soft power CIE process forms a bridge between networks and organizations. The framework and illustrative case describe a process in which an issue-based network solidifies and gradually formalizes from the inside-out. On the outside it patiently courts incumbents and assimilates institutionalized design features to induce comprehensibility (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Meanwhile on the inside, there is a strong focus on e.g. high speed and pressure on projects and business development strategy, as well as on unity of vision and leadership to get their act together and “*reduce opinions*” (Wijen & Ansari, 2007). Soft on the outside and hard on the inside, the collective action network gradually becomes more tightly coupled and evolves towards vertical (but lean) partial organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). The process outlines an interplay between types of power in which actors without ex ante power make creative use of non-mediated (Ke et al., 2009) bases of information, expertise and referent power to achieve dominance. Through soft power tactics the underdogs strive to transform these informal sources into formal authority, ultimately providing them with coercive and legal means of power in the reinstitutionalized field. So although it eventually might lead to the attainment of an improved position in the field, the soft power process does so initially by use of a carrot – attraction of the frame – which, after galvanization into the agency and social capital from the network (Lyon, 2006), eventually provides the stick of partial organization. Rather than exploiting and negatively impacting relationships, soft power thickens them as parties learn to see each other from learning opportunities over competencies toward fellow human beings.

5.2. *MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS*

The framework in this paper has implications for managers, especially in business contexts. Although soft power might easily be mistaken for avoidance or flight, it is nonetheless an approach to achieve one’s interest in the longer term by means of power, albeit in a less directly aggressive way. Compared to ‘hard’ power, it trades off the speed to accomplish outcomes directly for the ability to achieve outcomes beyond one’s original means. As such, firms’ scope of action is expanded in the face of adaptive challenges. Soft power also offers them a way to realize interests which is more widely applicable to different business contexts, specifically those that are highly interdependent or fragmented. Soft power strategy is also well-suited to situations where the initiator has an interest to maintain sustainable relationships. Finally, the judo framework also empowers peripheral actors to press their interests even though their fields would not immediately accept it. Whereas most power models develop strategies pushing direct relations into desirable behaviour, ours does not require initiators to be big or strong.

Based in soft power, the judo framework potentially extends the application of power to value co-creation in innovation networks. This field views power as somewhat of a dirty word (Pfeffer, 1992), hence typically eschewing power narratives. As a soft power approach takes relational reciprocity into account, it may apply to value creating networks in at least three ways. First, these networks are empowered to increase their scope of action to achieve field-level outcomes. Second, soft power entails a pull-process, based on attraction toward a shared interest rather than being enforced to pursue an external interest. Like in our illustrative case, it is suited to a market-pull innovation process driven by unaddressed needs of end-market lead users. The framework could thus help implement lead user strategies for business firms, which typically have a limited view where end-users and certainly lead users are located. Thirdly, soft power provides means to ‘steer’ the network while remaining on an innovation course that is beyond the roadmap of one central actor. In industrial markets, innovation networks are a common vehicle for the development of new technologies, products and solutions. Such networks are often rather centrally

governed by a lead organization, mostly the brand owner. To be independent of this one player's interests and instead pursue a broader shared interest, the network can also be organized in a more egalitarian way, increasing the potential for collective inaction (Wijen & Ansari, 2007) and thus the need for organization. Such networks lack the unity of goals and command to reap the benefits of centralization to fully realize the collective potential of complementary resources & capabilities. To achieve coordinated action among disparate complementers the network can be governed by a central autonomous coordinating body (Provan & Kenis, 2008). As this administrative organization exists by the grace of the network's members, it is obliged to steer the network's development in a soft way. As such, our framework provides managers with a way to organize shared value creation (Porter & Kramer, 2011) in networks.

5.3. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This single case study illustration is mainly a conceptual development which of course warrants validation. The model itself is moreover confined to situations with high interdependence, fragmentation or simply where initiators lack positional dominance. By defining these boundary conditions, further research could test the comparative effectiveness of soft and hard power approaches within these conditions or explore alternative boundary conditions. A further limitation of the paper lies in dedicating limited attention to discursive tactics. As these imply powerful strategies to acquire dominance (Benjamin & Goclaw, 2005; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), it would be interesting to extend narrative aspects of Judo strategy. Moreover, the interplay of soft-power tactics when dominant players are also versed in them is also an interesting avenue for further research (Elg & Johansson, 1997). Besides a more fine-grained investigation of how different soft power tactics interplay in CIE processes, future studies might also test the impact of different types of reciprocity, which is a quite central variable in the boundary conditions to our explanation. Our exploration furthermore also points to the potential for research that connects frameworks of deliberate network development (Möller et al., 2005) with organization studies. For instance, it might be interesting to learn how at a certain moment in the development process the collective can slip from a network into an organizational mode, hence disposing of organizational levers of control (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). The process described here formalizes power from an episodic soft (manipulative) nature into a systemic one (Fleming & Spicer, 2014). The focus is on systemically dominating the innovation discourse in the field. Yet, future research might also explore how mechanisms of 'subjectification' are triggered which fundamentally reshape field members' sense of self. We see some evidence of this where the ETI gains a new sense of self-awareness as "*part of a bigger picture*" (R6) and KIEN proclaims an entrepreneurial identity. Yet, identity-formation was here a means, not an end.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Appendix A: Respondents

Respondent	Organization	Role
R1	KIEN	Director
R2	UV	Director innovation group UV and president group large members
R3	KIEN	President of the supervisory board; Top manager at large ETI firm
R4	KIEN	Previous president of the supervisory board; president of pre-merger ETI association
R5	External	Consultant of KIEN's initiators; co-writer of KIEN's statutes
R6	KIEN	Secretary of the supervisory board; owner-manager of mid-sized security application development & installation company
R7	Manufacturers' association	President