



How to Operate Beckert's (2010) Concept of the Power of Social Forces

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the concept of Beckert's Social Grid (2010) which emphasizes that the source of market field dynamics comes from the interrelation of the three strengths of the structure. Using the concept of field, is a social arena where structures are formed, changed, and in later reproduction Beckert explained that the interrelationship between the three types of social structures as a source of market field dynamics. This paper provides a way of operationalizing the concept of Beckert 2010 that can be used in analyzing a dynamic that occurs based on the concept of Beckert's social grid that focuses on actors who harness the power of the structure inherent in himself.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Beckert defines structure as a thing that leads to seeing a stratification in a field that positions strong or weak actors. Beckert further explains that at the same time, actors get resources from their positions that they can use to influence institutions, tissue structures, and cognitive frameworks. In that view, Sunley and Pinch (2014, p. 791) see that Beckert's (2010) structure does not directly determine real behavior, otherwise they are interpreted by actors and controversially enforced (Beckert 2010, p. 606) (Sunley and Pinch 2014, p. 791).

The social structure referred to Beckert (2010) namely institution, networks structure, and cognitive frame which Beckert then referred to these three social structures as social force. Further in Beckert's view (2010) that, the determination of field boundaries based on situational context (Scott 1994 p. 206). Therefore, according to Beckert that the idea of field provides a theoretical umbrella that allows in seeing agents entangled on the 'grid' of different social forces that put them in the social space, which provides resources to realize their goals as well as can also limit their opportunities (Beckert, 2010).

In Beckert's view, the notion of a field serves as a valuable theoretical construct that enables us to comprehend how individuals are interwoven within the intricate web of different social forces. This interplay places them within a specific social space, where they gain access to resources that can help them achieve their objectives. However, it's important to note that this same social space can also act as a constraining force, limiting the opportunities available to individuals (Beckert, 2010). In essence, Beckert's perspective underscores the intricate interplay between institutions, network structures, and cognitive frames, as well as their collective impact on individuals' social positioning and their ability to navigate within various fields of society. This framework offers a comprehensive lens through which to analyze and understand the complexities of social dynamics.

Beckert's (2010) perspective on social structures can be elaborated upon by delving deeper into his concept of social forces. He identifies three key components within this framework: institutions, network structures, and cognitive frames. These elements collectively shape the dynamics of society. Beckert argues that these social forces play a pivotal role in defining the boundaries of various fields.

Beckert explains that the relative strength of market actors is anchored in institutional regulatory rules that allow and support certain types of behavior while discouraging others. Although the consequences of institutional rules are also evident in the network structure in the market field, it remains an irreplaceable social force (Beckert 2010, p. 610). In Beckert's description (2010), he explained that being the company with the largest market share has very different implications for the company's strategic choices, for example depending on antitrust laws. If antitrust law stops dominant companies from conducting mergers and acquisitions that will further increase their market share, it affects the behavior of companies that have not been contained in the social structure of the field itself.

In Beckert's intricate analysis of social structures, he discerns three fundamental elements: institutions, network structures, and cognitive frames, which collectively constitute what he terms as social forces. Institutions are the bedrock of societal organization, encompassing entities like governments, legal systems, and educational institutions. These institutions wield the power to define rules, norms, and the broader structural framework that govern individual behavior and interactions within society. Moreover, institutions are not static entities; they can adapt and evolve in response to changing external circumstances or shifts in societal values, thereby exerting a profound influence on the dynamics of social forces.

Complementing the role of institutions are network structures, which Beckert underscores as pivotal in understanding social forces. Social networks represent the intricate web of relationships and connections that individuals establish with one another. These connections transcend mere

personal interactions; they serve as conduits for information, resources, and opportunities. Networks facilitate the diffusion of ideas, the flow of capital, and the dissemination of power, making them central to the functioning of society. Whether in the realm of business, politics, or culture, these networks form the connective tissue that binds individuals together, shaping the distribution of influence and access to resources.

Indeed, delving further into the significance of network structures in Beckert's framework, it becomes evident that these social networks play an instrumental role in shaping the dynamics of society. As Beckert underscores, social networks are not confined to personal interactions but instead function as intricate webs of relationships and connections that extend across various domains of human activity.

These networks act as conduits through which information, resources, and opportunities flow. They facilitate the rapid dissemination of ideas, enabling the spread of innovations, cultural trends, and social movements. In the world of business, for instance, well-established networks can be the difference between success and obscurity, as they offer access to crucial markets, partnerships, and knowledge sharing. In the realm of politics, influential networks can sway decisions, mobilize support, and determine the course of policymaking. And in the sphere of culture, networks can elevate artists, thinkers, and creators, shaping the cultural landscape of a society.

Furthermore, Beckert (2010) explained that the rules of import customs, subsidies, intellectual property rights, and labor laws are another example of institutional rules that affect competition in the market in a way that cannot be equated into network structures or reduced in the field. (Beckert 2010). In Beckert's view, he explains that cognitive frames are a way of organizing the mind in the social world to work, thus forming an order in the market field. Referring to Meyer and Rowan (1977) Beckert quoted (2010) that, cognitive frame reflects the existence of a script in controlling an action in the actor in the market field in an assessment derived from myths rationalized or in his language 'rationalized myths'. Furthermore, Beckert said that cognitive frames are part of a socially written structure of meaning that operates in a market field where companies and other actors in the field assess the situation and determine their responses. Institutions and social structures must be interpreted by actors to implicate their actions (Beckert 2010).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Structure concept framework based on Beckert's thinking

Based on what has been explained, the researchers created a concept framework in the form of a table so that it is easy to abstract so that it is easy to understand how the concept works in this study.

Table 1. Understanding the structure of how it works

Concept	Materials and Discussions	How It Works
<i>Institution</i>	Norms, values, rules that guide actors in acting	Institutions refer to governing rules, which allow and support some types of behavior and prevent others
<i>Network</i>	The relative size of a company, the reputational order, the position occupied by	Network refers to an actor's position in social relationships and attributes their relative status to other actors, providing opportunities and risks.
<i>Cognitive Frame</i>	The structure of meaning, mental mapping, which is the interpretation of actors that provide an understanding of themselves and their environment.	Cognitive frames refer to belief systems, heuristics, and scripts that form the understanding and understanding of the desire and suitability of actions.

Beckert explains that, the three social structures together form a '*social grid*' that forms positions and involves actors. The three structures Beckert calls '*social forces*', the concept of *social forces* provides the basis for investigating possible reactions of agents, because agents must synthesize their responses in demands derived from different social forces, thus opening up various ways to respond to situations and thus rearrange fields (Beckert 2010).

Beckert further said that the *Social forces are* analytically independent but closely intertwined empirically. The view also sees that networks, institutions, and cognitive frames can conflict with each other in the same field, so that it can cause conflicts because of differences in power between agents. Beckert said that changes to one structure affect other elements of the *field* structure that can create new opportunities and new obstacles, thus leading to a dynamic in the *field*. This is because all three forces, in fact, exercise their influence simultaneously (Beckert 2010).

3.2. Field concept and its development in Sociology

Field defined as a social relations network in seeing each of the actors involved in resource, betting, and access. The position of actors depends on the accumulation of capital they have, thus leading to the use of profitable strategies for them. On the other hand, there is a development of neo-institutionalism theory seen in the concept of '*Organizational Field*' developed by Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell (1983), which is used to demonstrate the phenomenon of institutional '*isomorphism*' between organizations in the same *field*. According to him, the tendency for similarity between organizations based on their level of dependence in the same field in a pattern of relationships or relationships (Sapiro, 2015). In line with this, what is common in organizational fields analysis is the desire to identify organizations, collectives, and individuals who interact with each other to produce some results, be it homogeneity or the development of mutual understanding (Wooten et al 2016).

Furthermore, the conception of '*Strategy Action Field*' (SAF) developed by Neil Fligstein and DougMcAdam (2011), the SAF concept combines a neo-institutionalist approach with the theory of collective action to consider reproduction and changes to the social order at the meso level. Fligstein and McAdam retain 's field-specific ideas regarding something at stake, the rules of the game, the unequal position of the agent and the relationship between this unequal position and the way the agent sees about the world (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011). However, SAF's nature may change at any time as SAF boundaries may shift depending on the definition of the situation and the issues at stake in the field (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011).

In economics in general the market is seen as a meeting place of demand and supply for a goods /services sold. More specifically, it is still according to economics that the market is a mechanism that brings buyers (consumers) together with sellers (producers) so that the two can interact to form a price agreement. While in sociological view, especially referring to Beckert's thinking (2010) which explains that actors have resources that can be used to reproduce the market (Sunley and Pinch 2014). Beckert sees the market as a cognitive achievement because coordination is achieved by reciprocal interactions of various actors (Sunley and Pinch 2014).

The actors in the market field are producers (companies) and consumers as well as medium-sized regulatory agencies ranging from countries to lobby groups, trade unions, advocacy groups, and social pressure groups (see DiMaggio and Powell 1983), so Beckert conceptualizes the idea of the market as a field, because the markets are formed and limited to each other by the reciprocal orientation of the actors, the orientation is organized by the identified social forces (institutions , tissues, and cognition). By understanding the market as a field, Beckert changed the emphasis of market analysis which was originally an exchange action, now a focus on the power of social structure (Beckert 2010). Based on this, the market can be understood as an arena of social interaction for the exchange of goods and services. The constitutional element of the market is competition, which indirectly leads to conflict between market participants. Following the idea of Fligstein (2001b: 108), the concept of field refers to the population of actors who form the social arena by directing their actions to each other, so Beckert conceptualizes the market as a field, since the market is formed and limited to each other by the reciprocal orientation of the actors, the orientation is organized by the identified social forces (institutions, networks, and cognition)

3.3. Dynamics in the market field

Beckert said that the many social forces that make up the market are a source of stability if different structures strengthen each other, but a source of instability in the market if changes in one of the structures have an impact on the strategies of the actors due to the emergence of a new profit opportunity, thus closing access to the previously existing profit opportunities (Beckert 2010). Furthermore, Beckert explains that opposition or in his language 'contradictions' can develop from changes in one structure so that it is a source of conflict, destabilizing existing structures by overhauling resources in the field and thus providing a new path to action for some actors while blocking others. The change threatens the position of actors who have a role in social composition in the current field and simultaneously provides opportunities for strategic intervention by companies looking to improve their positions (Beckert 2010).

As a result, according to Beckert, the actors are engaged in an ongoing struggle to change or maintain social forces operating in the field. One reason for the creativity of the actors in

their response to the social forces they encounter is the importance of improving their respective positions in the field (Beckert 2010).

Beckert cited White's research (1992) which discussed the mechanisms of actors who seek to form networks by engaging in 'control projects' and blocking the actions of other actors. Control of such measures to reconstruct rules of play that are beneficial to the company. As (2005) said that uneven distribution of capital has an impact on the dominance of companies to reproduce their positions (Beckert 2010). Beckert further explained that, when key players in the network go into a responsible position in institutional-development, it can take advantage of the channels available to them through their network of connections. It can therefore be learned that, the possibility of agencies changing market institutions itself is inherent in the structure of the network (Beckert 2010).

Beckert as showing the fact that paradigmatic ideas shape discourse by limiting the perception of the people involved in it and limiting what the perpetrators see and interpret 'as reasonable and appropriate behavior'. Therefore, the norms and regulatory rules created in the market originated from within the social belief system or in Meyer and Rowen language (1977) reflecting the 'rationalized script' thus forming a wish assessment and conformity to the new institutional form (Beckert 2010). Furthermore, Beckert said that the cognitive framework should not support institutional change in the market, as it may be a buffer for existing institutions. In this case Beckert refers to it as 'cognitive hegemony' initiated by institutional 'entrepreneurs'. Because, one of the main activities of institutional entrepreneurs is to provide and secure ideology by recommending institutional regulations which if appropriate to gain legitimacy, then it simply explains how cognitive frames work that reflect scripts that are taken for granted that apply in the institutional environment of actors (Beckert 2010).

The way cognitive works in giving its influence is by forming perception and legitimacy of institutional forms and tissue structures (Schilke & Rossman, 2018). Therefore, cognitive frames are part of the market field that must be explored how they interact with networks and institutions. In Beckert's view (2010) that institutional entrepreneurs are inherent in this social structure (Beckert 2010). Beckert explains that situational changes can affect network structure, this is seen through the construction of the rules of the game by preventing dominant players from implementing their strategies so that they will consider through which they reproduce their dominant position. This is because every actor and company try to maximize the profit derived from its relative position in the network, actors have different interests related to reproduction and changes in the structure of existing tissues (Beckert 2010). In the simplest of phrases, this is a struggle between 'incumbent' and 'challengers' as Fligstein thought (2001) quoted Beckert (2010).

Beckert then explains that changes in cognitive frameworks can affect network structures, by making market participants aware of profit opportunities they pay less attention to. When they realize it, it will attempt to align the actors in the joint activities that allow new control projects by overhauling the network structure either by bringing up new actors or eliminating actors who previously had dominant positions in the network (Beckert 2010). In line with this, Ronald Burt also understood the network as a can be formed by strategic actors. Beckert (2010) explained that normative and cognitive orientation in the market is the result of reproduction of the role of socialization and sanctions.

This can be explained by the behavior of actors who in the process of socializing them, they will internalize the prevailing norms, because violations of norms will be penalized while adherence to norms will be appreciated (Shannon, 2000). Therefore, the actors in the market field that because they are trying to comply with the norm, then they in that way cognitive

frame in reproduction (Beckert 2010). Based on this, Beckert explained that in relation to the coordination of their interactions, the perpetrators relied on 'accepted' orders and strongly opposed deviations from these things; if the rules are violated, the actor attempts to 'correct' this order by ignoring irregularities or correcting them (Beckert 2010).

An example of how institutions affect the cognitive frame that Beckert presents is through socialization institutions such as universities, business schools, and professional associations that form the cognitive framework of their members (Weidman, 1989). As well as the role business schools play in shaping their students' perceptions of the economy, it illustrates how these institutional influences shape the structure of meaning in the market. Changing institutions can certainly be a source for changing cognitive orientation (Beckert 2010).

In line with this, in order for cognitive to have an influence, basically cognitive frames should be 'well understood, expressed, recommended which certainly involve tactical and strategic aspects, and get ratified or legitimized'. In this sense, institutions stabilize cognitive orientation - what market participants see as appropriate, in part, is determined by existing institutions. Instead, it implies that changing institutions can be a source for changing cognitive orientation (Beckert 2010).

In Beckert's view, that individuals who have participated in collective experience develop different interpretations, so that they refine the meaning of the individual into collective interpretation through the process of discussion and argument which is a process that is covered by strength. Social networks play an important role in influencing this because it influences a stronger interpretation of collective events than individual actors (Beckert 2010).

It is further in Beckert's view that the discursive processes in the network formed as advocacy groups, intellectual groups, epistemic expert communities, or social movements turn general cognitive orientation into coherent and legitimate suggestions for institutional forms. It is through the network that ideas for institutional renewal are disseminated. The structure of social relationships and the position of actors within the network influence who new ideas and worldviews can reach (Beckert 2010). This can be traced Beckert (2010), in the postwar period a network of intellectuals had an important role in spreading neoliberal ideas to political and economic decision makers and thus influencing political decisions about institutional reform (Beckert 2010).

4. CONCLUSION

Beckert concluded that, an understanding of the reproduction of market fields and their dynamics is possible only if all three types of social structures, are simultaneously analyzed. The process of reproduction and changes in social structure is understood as a result of an agency process that itself is anchored in a social context, not from structural logic. By simultaneously bringing together social networks, institutions, and cognitive frameworks, we have the opportunity on the one hand to understand the mechanisms by which social structures strengthen each other. While on the other hand, it can also understand the mechanism by which actors use the resources gained from one of these structures to reconfigure other parts of the social structure in a way that benefits them as well. Friction between the three structures is a powerful source of change.

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