Becoming an Institutional Entrepreneur: The Case of Swiss Spatial Planners' Life Journeys

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Acknowledgment

A journey is best measured in friends, rather than miles…… Tim Cahill

Doing a dissertation resembles a journey. It includes 46'684 words of writing. It also contains the words that are written beforehand as well as initial discussions, presentations, reflection, or experimentation. An essential part of such a journey are the people that one comes across and who accompany you. At this point, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those persons that became and were part throughout the five years of doing this dissertation.

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Summary

This dissertation addresses the question of how to become an entrepreneur. Its approach to this question is through the application of the theory of organizational new institutionalism. It refers to one of the theory's often-discussed concept – the institutional entrepreneur. Institutional entrepreneurs are agents that introduce change and innovation in different contexts, and thus they are able and willing to establish new and/or to change institutions (rules, norms, or cultural-cognitive beliefs within an organization and/or social field). The concept raises the so-called paradox of embedded agency, which states that actors in institutional theory are usually guided by macro-institutions and, therefore, are embedded in institutions. It remains unclear why institutional entrepreneurs act beyond institutions if their actions are restrained by institutions. To tackle this puzzle, the present dissertation targets the following question: *How does one become an institutional entrepreneur by complying with institutional theory's core notion of actors being embedded in institutions?* In answering this question, the dissertation focuses on the concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills. Institutional entrepreneurs apply these qualities to amend institutions during enabling situations for change such as institutional contradictions (incompatible institutional arrangements). The dissertation examines the formation process of these skills. Swiss spatial planning provides a suitable research context to study the development of these skills since Swiss spatial planners regularly confront stakeholders of different logic backgrounds, and thus situations of institutional contradictions. By investigating the biographies of shortlisted cantonal planners, the findings reveal that institutional entrepreneurs develop an identity with crucial key values that they relate to formative experienced contradictions from their distant past. Their established identity enables them to embrace further contradictions throughout their lives, whereby they develop skills to act as institutional entrepreneurs. They are additionally motivated to embrace these enabling situations for change as they interpret them as an opportunity to realize their own key values. The findings have a theoretical and a practical contribution. The theoretical contribution tackles the discussed paradox of embedded agency by highlighting external factors as a trigger for the development of institutional entrepreneurs. The practical contribution is the deduction of the theoretical findings for study programs that aim to teach their students how to become entrepreneurs.

Zusammenfassung

Die Dissertation untersucht den Entstehungsprozess von Entrepreneuren. Hierfür wird die Theorie des Neo-Institutionalismus sowie das oft diskutierte Konzept des Institutionellen Entrepreneurs verwendet. Institutionelle Entrepreneure sind Akteure, die Veränderungen und Innovationen in verschiedenen Bereichen initiieren. Sie können und wollen Institutionen (Regeln, Normen, kulturell-kognitive Überzeugungen in einer Organisation und/oder eines sozialen Feldes) erstellen bzw. verändern. Das Konzept führt zum sogenannten *Paradox of Embedded Agency* Problem, da der Neo-Institutionalismus Institutionelle Akteure als in Institutionen Eingebettete versteht. Es bleibt unklar, warum Institutionelle Entrepreneure Institutionen verändern, wenn ihr Handeln durch Institutionen beschränkt sein soll. Die vorliegende Dissertation befasst sich mit folgender Frage: *Wie wird man ein Institutioneller Entrepreneur unter Berücksichtigung der Grundannahme des Neo-Institutionalismus, dass Akteure in Institutionen eingebettet sind?* Um sich der Frage zu nähern, fokussiert die Dissertation auf Kompetenzen Institutioneller Entrepreneure. Diese Eigenschaften wenden Institutionelle Entrepreneure an, um Institutionen umzuwandeln während Chancen für Veränderungen (wie bei institutionellen Widersprüchen). Die Arbeit untersucht den Formierungsprozess dieser Kompetenzen, wobei die Schweizer Raumplanung einen passenden Forschungskontext bietet: Schweizer Raumplaner sind regelmäßig mit Stakeholdern unterschiedlicher Rationalitäten und somit mit Situationen von institutionellen Widersprüchen konfrontiert. Die Arbeit untersucht die Lebensläufe von ausgewählten Kantonsplanern. Es zeigt sich, dass Institutionelle Entrepreneure eine Identität mit zentralen Werten entwickeln, die sie auf relevante, erlebte Widersprüche aus ihrer Vergangenheit zurückführen. Ihre geformte Identität ermöglicht es ihnen weitere Widersprüche im Laufe des Lebens zu begegnen, wodurch sie Kompetenzen Institutioneller Entrepreneure entwickeln. Sie sind zudem motiviert, Chancen für Veränderungen zu nutzen, da sie darin Möglichkeiten erkennen, ihre eigenen Werte zu verwirklichen. Die Ergebnisse haben einen theoretischen und praktischen Nutzen. Der theoretische Nutzen antwortet auf das *Paradox of Embedded Agency* Problem, indem externe Faktoren als Auslöser für die Bildung von Institutionellen Entrepreneuren identifiziert werden. Der praktische Nutzen ist die Ableitung der theoretischen Erkenntnisse für Studiengänge, die ihre Studierenden zu Entrepreneuren ausbilden möchten.

1 Introduction

In this dissertation I address the question of how to become an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur – in its original meaning according to the *Dictionnaire universel de commerce* (Savary des Bruslons & Savary, 1748) – is a person who "under-takes" ("entre-prend") measures to ensure the success of a business, a trade, or a factory. Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter (1944) concretized an entrepreneur as a "creative destroyer" who replaces old products, processes, or services, whereby the term has been increasingly connoted with innovation. As a result, the term "entrepreneur" has spread beyond the business context as its different uses illustrate: social entrepreneurs (Sullivan Mort, Weerawardena & Carnegie, 2003), public entrepreneurs (Klein, Mahoney, McGahan & Pitelis, 2010), political entrepreneurs (Schneider & Teske, 1992), feminist entrepreneurs (Orser, Elliott & Leck, 2011), or rural entrepreneurs (Wortman Jr., 1990) – to mention only some examples. All these types of entrepreneurs are understood as actors that introduce innovation and change within their respective fields in some manner.

The literature on organizational new institutionalism (hereinafter institutional theory) has developed the concept of the institutional entrepreneur as an overall term to describe a change agent in any field (Eisenstadt, 1964, 1980; Hardy & Maguire, 2017). Institutional entrepreneurs are "organized actors with sufficient resources [who see] an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly" by establishing new institutions or by changing existing ones (DiMaggio, 1988, p. 14). Hence, institutional entrepreneurs introduce new "rules, norms, and cultural-cognitive beliefs" – thus institutions (Scott, 2014, p. 58) – within an organization and/or the respective social field. Institutional entrepreneurs are said to possess social skills (Fligstein, 1997, 2001) that they apply to introduce change (Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007). They usually act during enabling situations for change that emerge from specific field characteristics (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum, 2009). Institutional contradictions (incompatible institutional arrangements) are such enabling situations, as they are characterized by a clash of different institutional logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Seo & Creed, 2002), and thus by an ambiguity that provides room for new interpretations.

Beside this rich knowledge on institutional entrepreneurs, their existence causes a puzzle within institutional theory. By referring to its original works (DiMaggio & Powell,

1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977), the theory assumes that actors – organizations, individuals, groups of individuals, and so on (Hwang & Colyvas, 2019) – legitimize their actions vis-à-vis their core field (Suchman, 1995; Suddaby, Bitektine & Haack, 2017). In other words, the theory presumes that actors adopt the common institutions of their respective environment, leading to institutional isomorphism (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2017; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These considerations result in one of institutional theory's key notions – that actors are embedded in institutions (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011). However, this principle contradicts the concept of the institutional entrepreneur, as they act beyond given institutions. The resulting puzzle is defined as the "paradox of embedded agency" (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009) and is usually formulated as follows: "How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change?" (Holm, 1995, p. 398).

In order to tackle this puzzle, I place the concept of skills at the center of my research project. As discussed, institutional entrepreneurs are said to possess specific skills (Fligstein, 1997, 2001). However, existing research on institutional entrepreneurship has usually conceptualized these skills as given and necessary actors' characteristics to enable change (David, Sine & Haveman, 2013; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007; Suddaby, Viale & Gendron, 2016). Accordingly, institutional theorists have conceptualized skills as an *independent* variable that shapes the outcome of institutions. The definition of skills, nevertheless, implies that these qualities are acquired throughout time (Attewell, 1990) – in contrast to talents that are innate. Hence, skills can also be conceptualized as a *dependent* variable (Bryson, 2017). Through this approach, lived experiences of institutional entrepreneurs become the center of investigation. Accordingly, institutional entrepreneurs and their skills are understood as the outcome of specific experiences, an approach that complies with institutional theory's core notion of actors being the outcome of prevalent institutions. Hence, by studying the causes of the development of institutional entrepreneurs' skills, I aim to understand the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs.

The aim of the introductory chapter is to explain the structure and the underlying logic of my cumulative dissertation. The first article is a literature review of the applied skills of institutional entrepreneurs, whereby I develop the multi-dimensional concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills. The second article is a conceptual paper that builds a

theoretical framework to study the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs (and of other types of institutional actors). The third article is an empirical work in which I study the life journeys of shortlisted Swiss spatial planners in the context of them being institutional entrepreneurs. By introducing these three articles, I elaborate the relationships among them, and I discuss how the applied structure responds to the overall research question of this dissertation: *How does one become an institutional entrepreneur by complying with institutional theory's core notion of actors being embedded in institutions?*

The present dissertation consists of a theoretical and practical contribution. The theoretical contribution tackles the above-discussed paradox of embedded agency. By examining the specific circumstances in which institutional entrepreneurs have been embedded, I strive for a definition of institutional entrepreneurs that combats the current image of heroic agents who appear from nowhere to change the world (Powell & Rerup, 2017). The practical contribution is the deduction of these theoretical findings for educational matters. The findings can provide guidelines for study programs that aim to teach their students to become entrepreneurs who are capable of exploiting prevalent opportunities by facilitating change and innovation.

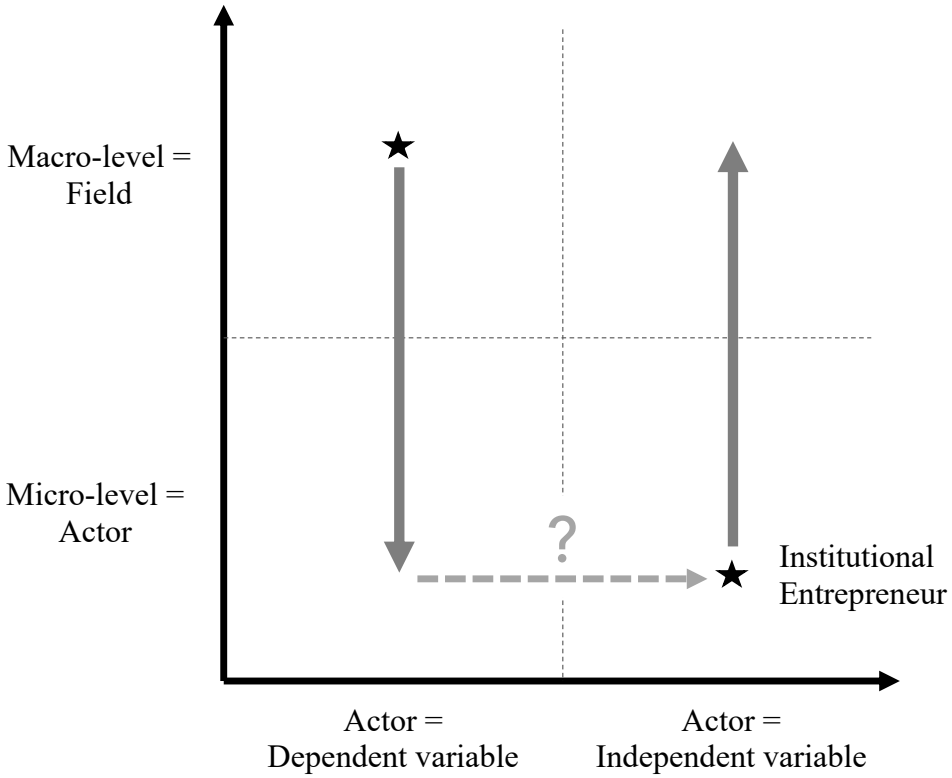
1.1 The Role of Actors in Institutional Theory

The shift in institutional theory towards considering the role of macro-conditions originates to three core works by Meyer and Rowan (1977), DiMaggio and Powell (1983), as well as Zucker (1977). These scholars consider existing social field's institutions as guiding factors of actors' behavior. Meyer and Rowan (1977), for instance, discovered that organizations do not develop their organizational structures out of rational considerations. Organizations establish their structures instead to resemble other organizations in the same environment. Thus, they strive for legitimacy within their field, whereby organizations become similar – a condition that DiMaggio and Powell (1983) defined as institutional isomorphism. Zucker (1977) proved in an experiment that individuals spread established institutions, leading to cultural persistence. Consequently, all three studies have in common that they understand individuals and organizations as passive actors that adopt given rules of organizations and/or social fields. From an institutional theory's perspective, actors are thus said to be embedded in institutions (Hwang and Colyvas, 2011).

This theoretical perspective, however, has raised criticism. Institutional theory is often said to be too rigid (Dacin, Goodstein & Scott, 2002). Particularly, as actors are said to adopt given rules within a social field, institutional theory is seen to implausibly explain institutional change (Kondra & Hinings, 1998). DiMaggio (1988) – one of institutional theory's founding fathers – responded quite early to these critics. He argued that certain actors with sufficient resources change institutions if they are interested in a potential upheaval. By referring to an existing concept by Eisenstadt (1964, 1980), DiMaggio (1988) defined these change agents as institutional entrepreneurs. Hence, institutional theory does not neglect the importance of actors in establishing institutions. On this basis, institutional theory has also created knowledge that emphasizes the active role of actors (see for instance Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Hargadon & Douglas, 2001; Højgaard Christiansen & Lounsbury, 2013). Certain actors are therefore said to create, maintain, and disrupt institutions; thus, being capable of institutional work (Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011).

The parallel existence of these two research streams in institutional theory, however, creates a puzzle that is defined as the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009). The *classical* stream that refers to the core works of institutional theory conceptualizes actors as the *dependent* variable of seemingly given institutions in social fields. Meanwhile, the *modern* stream acknowledges that actors can be the *independent* variable, and thus the cause of institutions. Hence, the *classical* stream understands actors as the outcome of prevalent macro structures that guide the actors' behavior, whereas the *modern* stream understands perceptible macro structures as the outcome of actors' behavior. Consequently, if both streams are considered as "true," we need to understand how and why certain actors, such as institutional entrepreneurs, can free themselves from dominant institutions and become seemingly disembedded actors that change institutions (Beckert, 1999) (see figure 1 for illustration of arguments).

Figure 1: Paradox of Embedded Agency



To tackle this prevalent paradox, I examine the biographies of institutional entrepreneurs. In this way, I can understand if their life journeys provide insights that can explain institutional entrepreneurs' divergent behavior from other institutional actors. This approach is also suggested by Lawrence and colleagues (2011). However, until the present moment, I know only of one research project that has examined an institutional entrepreneur's biography. Kisfalvi and Maguire (2011) studied the biography of Rachel Carson, who is considered as an institutional entrepreneur; she essentially influenced the environmental movement during the seventies, and thus initiated a relevant change process (Hoffman, 1999; Lear, 1997). Although this research provides initial crucial insights on institutional entrepreneurs' biographies, its findings are limited for two reasons. First, it considers only one case and cannot be compared with life journeys of actors who did not become institutional entrepreneurs. Second, the analyzed data do not include Rachel Carson's own reflections, as she had already passed away during the research project's realization. To counteract these drawbacks, I aim to apply another approach.

1.2 Skills of Institutional Entrepreneurs

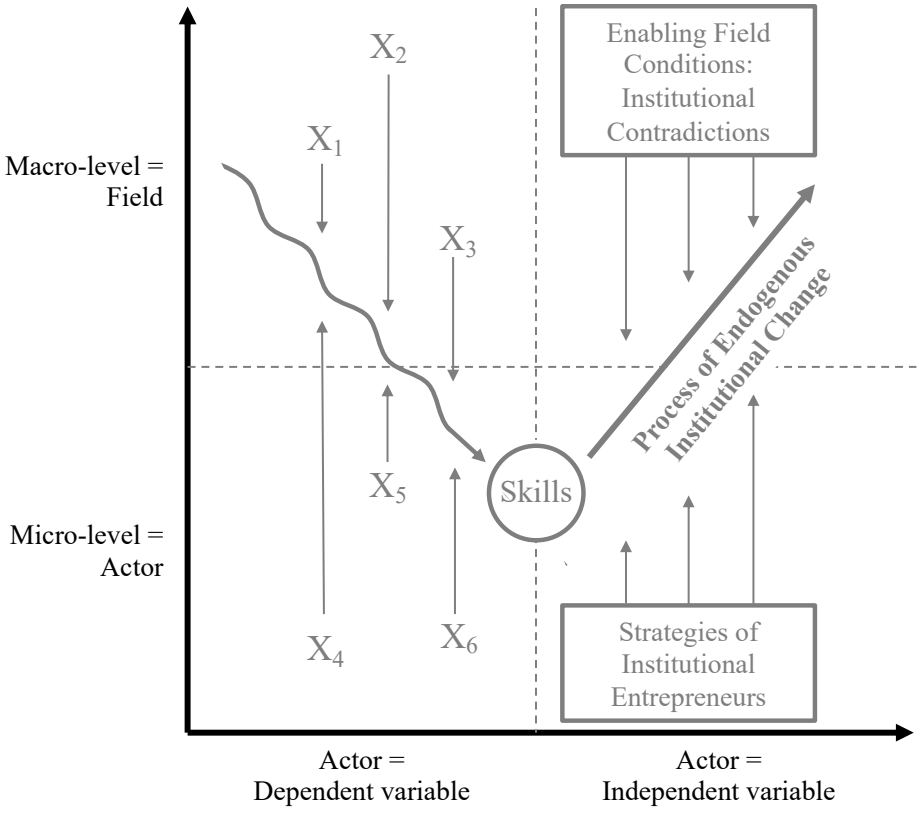
To study the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs, I place the concept of skills at the center of my research. I consider this approach as promising for two reasons. First, institutional entrepreneurs are known for possessing specific skills that enable them to initiate change. Fligstein (1997, 2001), inter alia, introduced the concept of social skills as an essential quality of institutional entrepreneurs. Several scholars have adopted this perspective and established it in institutional theory (Garud et al., 2002; Hardy & Maguire, 2017; Zilber, 2006). Accordingly, when applying the concept of skills, I can refer to the existing knowledge on institutional entrepreneurs' skills and build upon it. Second, placing skills at the core of my research is beneficial, as the concept can be understood as a *dependent* and an *independent* variable, according to a discipline's perspective (Bryson, 2017; Spenner, 1990). As a consequence, I can conceptualize institutional entrepreneurs as an *independent* as well as a *dependent* variable. If I embrace institutional entrepreneurs' skills as the *independent* variable, I focus on the application of these characteristics that foster the development of new macro-conditions. If I embrace institutional entrepreneurs' skills as the *dependent* variable, in turn, I emphasize on the learning processes behind the acquisition of these skills. Accordingly, I can unite the two current contradictory research streams – the classical and the modern one – by studying the development of skills that institutional entrepreneurs apply to change institutions.

Existing research on institutional entrepreneurs' skills, however, has usually conceptualized these qualities as the *independent* variable exclusively. This is related to the fact that most research on institutional entrepreneurship are single case studies, explaining an observed institutional change (Leca, Battilana & Boxenbaum, 2008). Accordingly, institutional theorists have discovered that institutional change can succeed when actors with specific skills apply these qualities to disrupt or create institutions (Hung & Whittington, 2011; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007). Furthermore, institutional theorists have identified that change agents use these skills during certain windows of opportunities that emerge from specific field characteristics (Battilana et al., 2009). Such field characteristics can be institutional contradictions (incompatible institutional arrangements) that evolve due to a clash of conflicting logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Seo & Creed, 2002). These contradictions can appear during institutional pluralism (Kraatz & Block, 2017),

institutional complexity (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta & Lounsbury 2011; Raynard, 2016), multirationality (Schedler & Rüegg-Stürm, 2014; Scherer & Zumbusch, 2014), or in hybrid organizations (Battilana, Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2017).

In contrast to existing research on institutional entrepreneurship, I embrace the concept of skills as the *dependent* variable. I, therefore, want to understand different causes for the development of skills that institutional entrepreneurs apply when changing institutions during institutional contradictions (see figure 2 for the illustration of arguments). Accordingly, I can compare observed actors' applied skills during institutional contradictions with skills that institutional entrepreneurs usually exert during such situations. By measuring actors' skills, I can then identify institutional entrepreneurs as well as actors that are not institutional entrepreneurs. On this basis, I can compare the life journeys of identified institutional entrepreneurs with the biographies of actors that are not institutional entrepreneurs. Hence, by studying institutional entrepreneurs' socialization and acquisition of skills (Clausen, 1968), I can disclose crucial experiences that trigger or hamper individuals/organizations in becoming institutional entrepreneurs.

Figure 2: Existing and Lacking Knowledge on Institutional Entrepreneurship



1.3 Research Context

To approach my research question, I apply the case of spatial planning in Switzerland. Spatial planning is an active influence of the spatial environment in order to change its social aspects (CEMAT, 1983). In Switzerland, it is a mutual task between the federal government, the cantons, the regions, and the municipalities (KPK, 2016). In a nutshell, Swiss spatial planners have to define if a certain plot of land within their territorial community can be used for construction, for agriculture, or whether it needs to be protected as a nature reserve (Gilgen, 2012). Thus, spatial planning ensures that land as a limited resource is used wisely in order to protect the natural habitat without hampering people's social, economic, and cultural life (RPG, 1979, Article 1). Hence, spatial planning is mainly a public task, as its actions concern almost anybody (Koll-Schretzenmayr, 2012).

Swiss spatial planning is an adequate research context for my dissertation since Swiss planners are often confronted with institutional contradictions. In line with the direct democratic and federal traditions of Switzerland, Swiss planners are obliged to integrate a variety of actors during a planning process (Gilgen, 2012; RPG, 1979, Article 4). This requirement has become even more relevant as the need to foster inner development (Innenentwicklung) has risen due to an increased urban sprawl in Switzerland (FSU, no date). Inner development requires planning upon existing settlements, whereby more stakeholders with diverging interests are involved in a planning process (Eisinger & Loepfe, 2014). Swiss spatial planners are, thus, exposed to situations that institutional theory defines as institutional contradictions since stakeholders usually possess different logic backgrounds. Hence, spatial planners confront situations that institutional theory foresees as opportunities for institutional entrepreneurship, whereby Swiss spatial planning provides an ideal research context to identify potential institutional entrepreneurs.

Swiss spatial planning is additionally an appropriate research context for studying institutional entrepreneurs' biographies, as Swiss planners usually acquire the skills of dealing with various stakeholders on the job. A benchmark study on different Swiss planning education programs identified a lack of study formats that train students in balancing diverging interests and guaranteeing general coordination (Pedrina, Delcourt & Pfister, 2014). Accordingly, the former director of the Swiss association for spatial planning (EspaceSuisse), Bühlmann (2015), argued that an interdisciplinary, university education for

spatial planning is missing in Switzerland. Hence, Swiss planning education programs do not adequately prepare students in developing skills that enable them to deal with institutional contradictions. Consequently, if Swiss planners possess such institutional entrepreneurs' skills, they most likely have acquired these qualities throughout their lived experiences. Thus, by studying Swiss spatial planners' career paths, I can adequately detect crucial experiences that foster or hamper actors in becoming institutional entrepreneurs.

To examine a comparable sample of Swiss spatial planners, the dissertation focuses on the 26 cantonal planners. Cantonal planners are the main responsible persons to develop a spatial strategy within their assigned cantons. In line with a new law on spatial planning (SRF, 2013), all cantonal planners reformed their cantonal structure plans – which defines a canton's spatial development for the next ten years – between 2014 and 2019 (RPG, 1979, Article 38a). This task required the involvement of various actors, as excluded parties could directly or indirectly scupper the reform by intervening through the cantonal parliaments and/or cantonal governments (KPK, 2017). Consequently, all cantonal planners were in similar positions to deal with similar situations of institutional contradictions; thus, it leads to situations that they could have exploited as institutional entrepreneurs. Hence, the reform process provides an ideal research context to identify the institutional entrepreneurs among the cantonal planners. On this basis, I can study the cantonal planners' biographies and their experiences that supported or hampered them in becoming institutional entrepreneurs.

1.4 Structure of the Dissertation

To study the lived experiences of cantonal planners that acted as institutional entrepreneurs, my dissertation is structured along three articles (see figure 3 for illustration). The first article is a literature review on institutional entrepreneurs' skills. The second article is a conceptual paper that defines a framework to study the emergence of institutional actors. The third article covers the empirical research in the context of Swiss cantonal planners' biographies. I briefly summarize each article's aim and I explain how they contribute to answering the overall research question of this dissertation:

> *How does one become an institutional entrepreneur by complying with institutional theory's core notion of actors being embedded in institutions?*

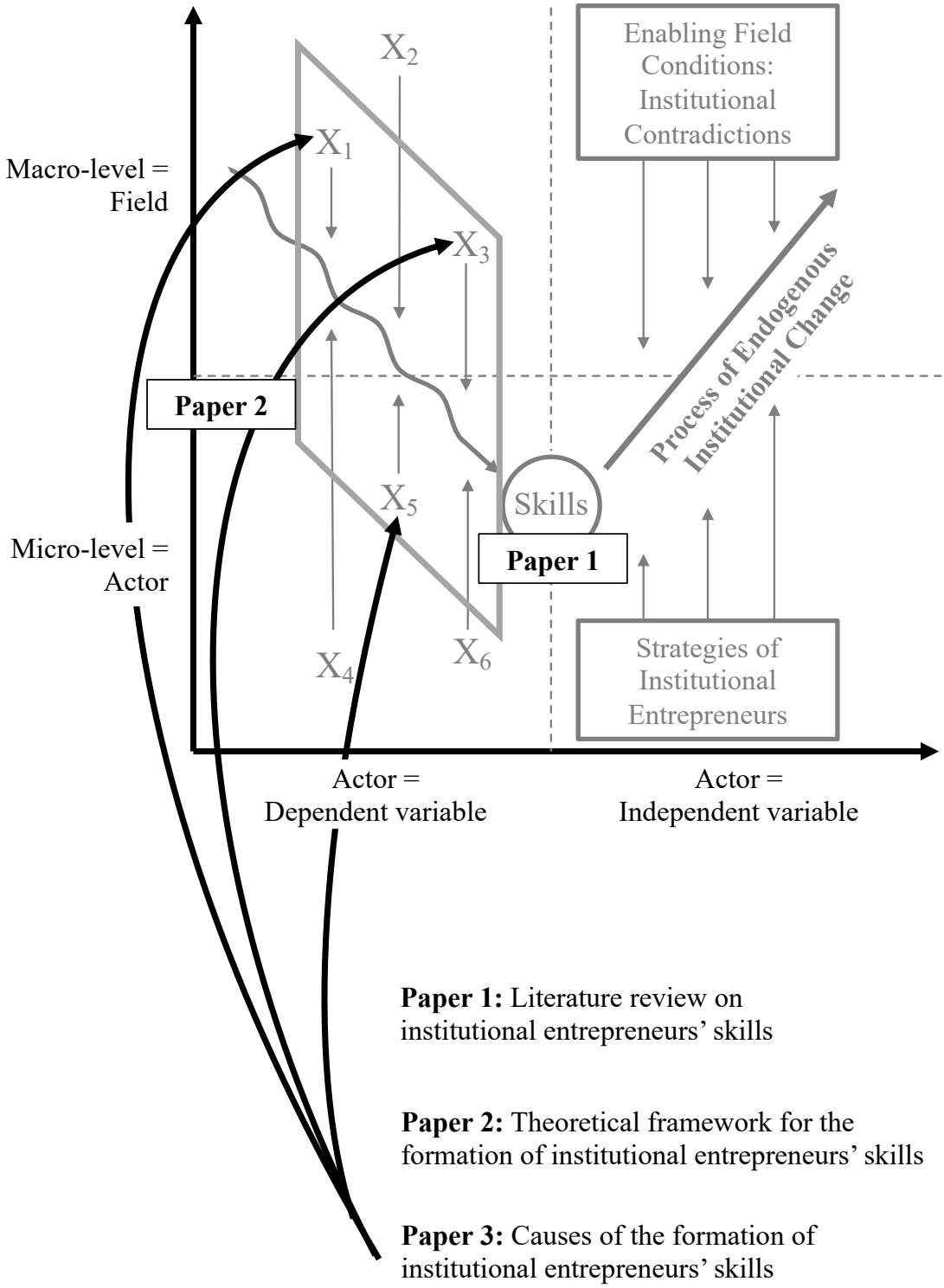
1.4.1 Article 1: Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills

In my first article, I define the specific skills that institutional entrepreneurs apply when initiating change. Fligstein (1997, 2001) has conceptualized these qualities as social skills and summarizes different aspects under this same term. Social skills, however, are multi-dimensional in nature (Riggio, 1986). Similar to baseball skills, which are classified as offensive and defensive (Curran & Mariotto, 1980), skills to enhance change can have active and passive characteristics. As I want to use this concept to detect institutional entrepreneurs by measuring actors' ability to initiate change, I require a clear understanding of all relevant dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills. For this reason, my first article is a literature review on the existing research on institutional entrepreneurship in order to precisely define the concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills. In total, I review 53 empirical articles on institutional entrepreneurship from which I derive all relevant skill dimensions. Having a clear picture of the concept, I can apply it to measure the cantonal planners' skills, and thus identify the institutional entrepreneurs among them.

1.4.2 Article 2: Institutional Actors

The second article is a conceptual paper that discusses the development of institutional entrepreneurs as well as of other institutional actors. The aim of the article is to develop a theoretical framework that outlines the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs while remaining faithful to institutional theory's core principle of actors being embedded in institutions. The conceptual paper intends to concretize potential causes of the development of institutional entrepreneurs from an institutional theory's perspective. In this way, the article develops initial propositions, while excluding causes that do not comply with institutional theory's core principles. For instance, a higher cognitive capacity could be another plausible cause for the development of institutional entrepreneurs' skills but is excluded, as institutional theory does not focus on actors' innate characteristics. Consequently, the second article predefines the research design of the empirical research project, as it develops a theoretical framework for institutional entrepreneurs' emergence.

Figure 3: Structure of the Dissertation



1.4.3 Article 3: Becoming an Institutional Entrepreneur

The third article tackles the research question by examining the lived experiences of the identified institutional entrepreneurs among the 26 cantonal planners. The final article, thus, builds upon the previous two articles. First, it complies with the developed propositions of article 2 by studying the biographies of the cantonal planners (and not measuring their cognitive capacities, for instance) to identify triggers for institutional entrepreneurs' development. Second, it builds upon article 1 as the concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills is applied to measure the cantonal planners' ability of fostering change in order to detect the institutional entrepreneurs among them. By this gradual approach, the final article searches for crucial experiences that trigger or hamper the development of actors and their skills in becoming institutional entrepreneurs.

1.5 Envisaged Contributions

The present dissertation strives for a theoretical and practical contribution. The theoretical contribution tackles the discussed paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009). Some scholars have criticized the concept of the institutional entrepreneur, as its existence contradicts institutional theory's core principle of actors being embedded in institutions. The following question arises: "How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change?" (Holm, 1995, p. 398). In line with this paradox, institutional entrepreneurs seem to appear from nowhere to change the world, by having almost implausible heroic attitudes with remarkable capacities (Levy & Scully, 2007; Micelotta, Lounsbury & Greenwood, 2017; Powell & Rerup, 2017). By studying their biographies, in turn, I can detect crucial experiences that have enabled them to initiate change. In other words, by the chosen approach, I can highlight that institutional entrepreneurs are also an outcome of certain external conditions (such as "ordinary" embedded actors), but of diverging conditions that have shaped them differently. The upcoming findings can, thus, contribute to the debate on the paradox of embedded agency.

The practical contribution results from the deduction of the theoretical findings for educational matters. As the dissertation discloses the development path of institutional entrepreneurs, study programs that strive to teach their students in becoming entrepreneurs

can gain insights from the established findings. On the one hand, spatial planning programs can translate the identified skills to deal with institutional contradictions (thus, with a variety of different stakeholders) as well as the circumstances that foster the development of these skills. Particularly, Swiss planning programs could take advantage, as certain experts claim that Swiss planners need to be better trained in “moderation than just planning,” whereby they require “less technique, but more social, economic, and juridical” competences (Zibell & Ramseier, 2013, p. 20). On the other hand, study programs of various disciplines can contextualize the findings for their respective field to prepare their students for future challenges. This task might become even more required these days as digitalization and artificial intelligence provide many new opportunities for change and innovation.

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2 Article 1: Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills

A Multi-Dimensional Concept

Abstract

Microfoundational research increasingly strives to examine the interlinkages between various higher- and lower-level structures. To better capture microfounded change processes, I develop the multi-dimensional concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills that defines actors' abilities to enhance institutional change. By a systematic literature review on institutional entrepreneurship, I identify seven institutional entrepreneurs' skill dimensions: (i) analytical skills, (ii) empathic skills, (iii) framing skills, (iv) translational skills, (v) organizational skills, (vi) tactical skills, and (vii) timing skills. The established concept provides opportunities for future microfoundational research by examining the formation and the application of the seven skill dimensions.

Keywords

Institutional change, institutional contradictions, institutional entrepreneurship, microfoundations of institutions, new institutional theory, social skills

Status

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Fohim, E. (2019). Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills: A Multi–Dimensional Concept. In P. Haack, J. Sieweke & L. Wessel (Eds.), *Microfoundations of Institutions (Research in the Sociology ofOrganizations, Volume 65B)* (pp. 169-192). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

2.1 Introduction

Scholars have increasingly applied a microfoundational approach to holistically understand institutional change processes (Chandler & Hwang, 2015; Creed, DeJordy & Lok, 2010; Furnari, 2014; Thornton, Ocasio & Lounsbury, 2012). Using a microfoundational approach, scholars seek reasons for macro outcomes at a lower level of analysis (Coleman, 1986). Hence, institutional theorists want to identify causes for institutional change by diving deeper into the micro level.

Current debates comprehend microfoundations of institutions as more than just a simple bottom-up approach such as methodological individualism (Felin, Foss & Ployhart, 2015; Harmon, Haack & Roulet, 2018). The researchers note that future research in microfoundations of institutions should instead address the "micro-macro challenge", meaning further examining the interlinkages between different concerned multiple levels of analysis (Haack, Sieweke & Wessel, 2019). In this regard, future approaches should overcome an exclusive two-level perspective (macro and micro) and expand the levels of analysis (such as on a meso-level). (Jepperson & Meyer, 2011; Harmon et al., forthcoming).

Considering such a multi-level approach, what should scholars envisage when diving deeper into examining causes of institutional change? Some scholars suggest focussing on micro processes to identify the influence of these processes on macro structures (Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Powell & Rerup, 2017; Smets, Morris & Greenwood, 2012). Other scholars propose investigating involved change agents and recommend studying these agents' responses to constraining, enabling, or even orienting macro conditions (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum, 2009; Cardinale, 2018). Nevertheless, both approaches do not fully address a multi-level approach in microfoundations of institutions; it remains vague how the concepts relate to multiple levels of analysis in addition to the examined macro structure.

To address a multi-level approach in microfoundations of institutions, I propose to develop a concept that is shaped by and shapes higher- and lower-level structures simultaneously. Specifically, I advocate delving into institutional entrepreneurs' skills when examining institutional change. Institutional entrepreneurs’ skills enable actors to advance institutional change processes. Skills are a suitable concept to capture microfounded processes, as skills are shaped by various higher- and lower-level conditions (Attewell,

1990; Bryson, 2017) and as the application of skills can simultaneously influence the outcome of institutional settings (Garud, Jain & Kumaraswami, 2002; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007).

In this essay, I concretize the concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills by a systematic literature review on institutional entrepreneurship. On this basis, I develop a three-phase model containing seven dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills. The identified skill dimensions are (i) analytical skills (the ability to perceive opportunities for change), (ii) empathic skills (the ability to put oneself into different positions), (iii) framing skills (the ability to design institutional projects in accordance with the audience's knowledge), (iv) translational skills (the ability to speak the language of diverse actors), (v) organizational skills (the ability to establish instruments that ensure the implementation of new practices and/or rules), (vi) tactical skills (the ability to counter power struggles), and (vii) timing skills (the ability to identify the proper moments to induce change).

2.2 A Concept for Microfoundational Research

As discussed in the introductory chapter of this volume, current debates suggest examining the interlinkages between different levels of analysis to enhance research on microfoundations of institutions (Haack et al., 2019). Therefore, institutional theorists should not only remain focused on micro-level studies. Instead, scholars should investigate how different levels of analysis are interrelated to each other and thus support or hamper each other (Harmon et al., forthcoming). Building on this assertion, future approaches in microfoundations of institutions should extend beyond a two-layer model that contains only the micro and the macro levels, as everything is connected to something on a higher- and lower-level structure (Harmon et al., forthcoming; Jepperson & Meyer, 2011). Thus, such a multi-level approach in microfoundations of institutions can better capture the complexity of institutional processes.

Using such a multi-level approach, what should scholars envisage at a lower-level of analysis when studying institutional change processes? I propose to seek institutional entrepreneurs' skills. As I will argue, these skills enable actors to advance institutional change processes. Consequently, the application of institutional entrepreneurs' skills can

be one relevant aspect – in addition to many others – that can influence the outcome of institutional settings.

Utilizing skills when applying a microfoundational approach is useful because skills are always caused by conditions that can be located both at higher- and lower-level structures. For instance, skills can be the outcome of previous socialization processes (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Bryson, 2017) – thus of a higher-level cause. However, one can also imagine that the formation of skills depends on specific brain activities – a lower-level cause. Additionally, skills can be consolidated when individuals join forces and establish a common interest group (Dorado, 2013) – a same-level cause. As skills are always triggered by various aspects and can impact different settings that are located at different levels of analysis (Attewell, 1990), institutional entrepreneurs' skills are a suitable concept for a multi-level approach in microfoundations of institutions.

To make the concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills for microfoundational research usable, I want to specify the term. Fligstein (1997, 2001) indeed defined specific skills that enable actors to initiate change. However, he groups these different abilities together under the concept of social skills. Nevertheless, skills are multi-dimensional in nature (Riggio, 1986). Similar to baseball skills that are both offensive and defensive (Curran & Mariotto, 1980), institutional entrepreneurs' skills range from passive to more active qualities. Hence, only with a precise definition of the concept's various facets can future scholars apply upon it a microfoundational approach. On this basis, these scholars can inquire about specific conditions that form certain institutional entrepreneurs' skill dimensions, or they can investigate how the application of specific skill dimensions influences an institutional outcome accordingly. In accordance with the call to clarify concepts in institutional theory (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018), I want to accurately define the various dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills.

2.3 Methodology

To determine relevant dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills, I undertook a systematic literature review on institutional entrepreneurship. Thus, I focused on studies that illustrate how so-called institutional entrepreneurs (DiMaggio, 1988) – individuals, groups, or organizations with resources and an interest to initiate change – had been capable

of altering institutions. Consequently, I developed essential dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills from the existing literature on institutional entrepreneurship.

In accordance with Webster and Watson's (2002) methodological guidelines, my review focused on top management peer-reviewed journals. I focused on the top 60 management journals according to Web of Science's Journal Citation Reports for 2018. Within these journals, I screened for papers that included the term *institutional entrepreneur** in the title, in the abstract, and/or among the keywords. I included papers from 1988 onwards, as current management literature on institutional entrepreneurship usually refers to DiMaggio's (1988) essay of that year. Additionally, I screened the fifty most cited publications (based on Web of Science's Science Citation Index for the year 2018) that contain the term *institutional entrepreneur** in the title, in the abstract, and/or among the keywords. Accordingly, I wanted to ensure a complete set of relevant literature on institutional entrepreneurship regardless of the respective journal.

Corresponding to this approach, I shortlisted 81 papers (28 theoretical papers, 53 empirical papers). The papers had been published in 23 different peer-reviewed journals. Among these journals were well-known management titles with frequent contributions to institutional theory such as *Journal of Management*, *Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Studies*, or *Organization Science.* The selection also included a wide range of management journals with specific research areas such as *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Research Policy*, or *Organization and Environment.* The additional applied selection procedure (based on a high citation rate) similarly ensured the inclusion of the relevant sociology paper *American Journal of Sociology.*

For the literature review, I exclusively analysed the 53 shortlisted empirical papers. I read all the papers. Subsequently, I established relevant dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills from the findings of each study by applying an abductive research approach – as proposed, inter alia, by Shepherd and Sutcliffe (2011).

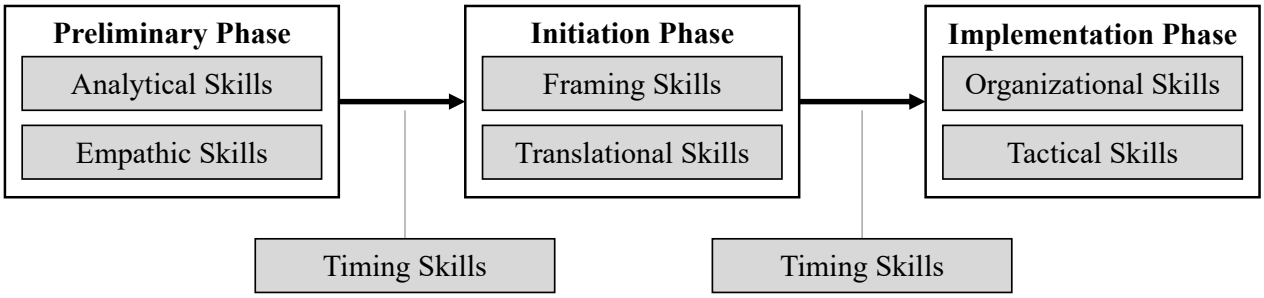
2.4 Unpacking Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills

Figure 4 combines the developed institutional entrepreneurs' skills (see Appendix A for the systematic derivation). I allocated the skill dimensions along three phases of an

institutional change process. In a *preliminary phase* – before a new institution has been established – I foresee the need of two skill dimensions to initiate change: *analytical skills* (the ability to perceive opportunities for change) and *empathic skills* (the ability to put oneself into different positions). During the actual phase of establishing an institution – the *initiation phase* – I argue that *framing skills* (the ability to design institutional projects in accordance with the audience's knowledge) and *translational skills* (the ability to speak the language of diverse actors) are necessary skill dimensions to advance change. During the final *implementation phase*, I presume that *organizational skills* (the ability to establish instruments that ensure the implementation of new practices and/or rules) and *tactical skills* (the ability to counter power struggles) are the most central skill dimensions to consolidate new institutions. Finally, I imply that *timing skills* (the ability to identify the proper moments to induce change) are another skill dimension to ensure the fluidity of an institutional change process.

I do not argue that all skill dimensions are equally required to advance institutional change. Instead, I assert that the respective context fosters some skill dimensions more than others – see discussion hereinafter. Correspondingly, I foresee that the various skill dimensions will not appear one after another as illustrated in this figure. The described phases of an institutional change process might overlap and/or iterate, which is why certain skill dimensions will most likely emerge as closely connected. Hence, the developed figure is to be understood as a panoply of institutional entrepreneurs' skill dimensions that actors can apply when advancing an institutional change process.

Figure 4: Dimensions of Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills



2.4.1 Analytical Skills

Research has shown that institutional entrepreneurs recognize windows of opportunities for change (Alexandrescu, Martinát, Klusácek & Bartke, 2014; Lawrence & Philipps, 2004; Mutch, 2007). Such opportunities emerge during ambiguous situations (Wallin & Fuglsang, 2017), which are caused, amongst others, by the clash of diverging logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991) – "socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules" (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). These situations raise so-called institutional contradictions, which are incompatible institutional arrangements (Seo & Creed, 2002). Actors can take advantage of these situations (Bartley, 2007; Tracey, Philipps & Jarvis, 2011) to modify or even change existing institutions (Battilana et al., 2009; Delbridge & Edwards, 2008; Hardy & Maguire, 2017).

To take advantage of such contradicting situations, actors must actually recognize these opportunities. Hence, these actors must be capable of perceiving institutional contradictions. Therefore, I argue that actors who initiate change require *analytical skills*. I assert that actors with such skills are able to actively notice contradicting circumstances that challenge previous institutions. Hence, I claim that actors with *analytical skills* will more likely advance an institutional change process to remedy the identified contradictions.

Mair and Marti (2009) discuss the importance of *analytical skills* in the example of the NGO BRAC that acted as an institutional entrepreneur by introducing a microfinance programme for ultra-poor in Bangladesh. The NGO realized that the initial implementation of a microfinance programme had failed, as the traditional institutional elements of rural Bangladesh clashed with the aligned market rules of the proposed microfinance programme. Only when the NGO realized these contradictions, which the scholars define as institutional voids, could it use them as an opportunity space. By acting as a bricoleur, while combining selected elements of the initially clashing institutions, the NGO could establish a successful microfinance programme that worked for the ultra-poor. Consequently, BRAC's *analytical skills* was an essential criterion to achieve the NGO's mission and thus to initiate institutional change.

2.4.2 Empathic Skills

Previous studies have identified that institutional entrepreneurs have wide networks of diverse actors (David, Sine & Haveman, 2013; Heinze & Weber, 2016; Hung & Whittington, 2011). Such networks function as valuable assets when attempting to gather allies behind new institutions (Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004; Qureshi, Kistruck & Bhatt, 2016); allies adopt and spread new institutions such that they become standard across a social field (Canales, 2016). Therefore, actors who want to change institutions depend on other actors to advance an institutional project.

To gather allies more easily, I argue that actors targeting initiating change need *empathic skills*. If potential allies feel seriously understood by upcoming institutional entrepreneurs, I assume that these allies will trust and thus support the entrepreneurs' innovative projects. I foresee that actors with truly *empathic skills* will thus more likely gather diverse allies behind a newly created vision for change.

For instance, in Argyris and Ransbotham's (2016) case study, we experience that the presented institutional entrepreneur, Victoria, had *empathic skills* that supported her in institutionalizing new wiki-based management practices in a media company. As the organization experienced a high employee turnover rate, Victoria developed a knowledge management system to allow newcomers an easy start in their work tasks. She easily found allies, as she could empathize with her colleagues: "We were all struggling with the same issues…" (ibid., p. 234). She could create a sense of togetherness, whereby she was able to easily build a core team that supported her idea. Thus, it is also thanks to her *empathic skills* that colleagues helped her in writing as well as in expanding the content for the suggested management tool, and thus in institutionalizing her project.

2.4.3 Framing Skills

Various studies have shown that institutional entrepreneurs frame an institutional project in accordance with the audience's knowledge to advance an innovative idea (Etzion & Ferraro, 2010; Durand & McGuire, 2005; Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007; Munir & Phillips, 2005). As institutional entrepreneurs depend on other actors' support, they attempt to illustrate the value of a potential innovation as well as possible (Benner & Ranganathan, 2017; King & Soule, 2007). This approach works best if a project has been designed with

features that are familiar to the targeted audience (Ahrens & Ferry, 2018; Lo, 2015). If the project has not, a new idea might appear overly alien for potential allies (Heusinkveld & Reijers, 2009; Van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman, 2011).

Actors who want to establish an innovative idea require skills that allow them to adequately conceptualize an institutional project. I argue that *framing skills* are such needed skills. Thanks to these skills, actors are able to mantle an institutional project that connects to the targeted audience's knowledge. Thus, actors with these skills will design an innovation in a manner that allows potential users to better anticipate its value. Consequently, I presume that actors with *framing skills* are more successful in launching a commonly accepted institutional change project.

The case study regarding Thomas Edison's introduction of the electric lighting system in New York demonstrates the relevance of *framing skills*. Edison, who can be understood as an institutional entrepreneur, used skeuomorphs to establish his project (Hargadon & Douglas, 2001). Skeuomorphs are design ornaments on a new product that refer to an old product but are of no direct benefit (Basalla, 1988). Thus, Edison designed the electric lighting system by introducing elements of the previous incumbent gas lighting system, although the new product thus became costlier. However, by this approach, people skipped more easily to Edison's innovative electric system as it appeared partly familiar to them. Thus, in addition, due to his *framing skills*, Edison was able to change New York's lighting system.

2.4.4 Translational Skills

Literature has revealed that institutional entrepreneurs can easily communicate with actors of different logic backgrounds (Déjean, Gond & Leca, 2004; Leca & Naccache, 2006; Newenham-Kahindi & Stevens, 2017). As institutional logics influence the manner in how actors speak and argue (Heinze & Weber, 2016; Maguire et al., 2004), potential institutional entrepreneurs adopt their language accordingly (McInerney, 2008). Thus, these entrepreneurs hope to unite a multitude of diverse actors behind a vision for change (Hung & Whittington, 2011).

On this basis, I argue that actors who want to initiate change require *translational skills.* Thanks to these skills, these actors are able to use specific terms that potential allies

understand more easily. Alternatively, these actors can render arguments as it is common among the addressed actors. Furthermore, these actors can pass messages from one group to another. Consequently, I presume that actors with such communicative skills will more likely gather allies behind a visionary project.

Czarniawska's (2009) research illustratively discloses how *translational skills* played a role when the institutional entrepreneurs Sidney and Beatrice Webb founded the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in 1885; this was a university that differentiated from other British universities of that time, as it was open to everyone. Webbs' idea was inspired by the École Libre des Sciences Politiques in Paris as well as by Columbia University in New York. The Webbs imported the idea of a social science university to London and were able to find supportive sponsors. As stated by Czarniawska (2009), the Webbs' ability to translate was essential to find these allies; they connected their idea to a current public concern, which said that Britain's international position in business and industry was at risk. Hence, the Webbs translated their proposed innovation into the interests and concerns and therefore the logic of potential supporters. In addition, as a result of the Webbs' *translational skills,* they were able to establish an innovative idea such as the LSE.

2.4.5 Organizational Skills

Existing research has discovered that institutional entrepreneurs take appropriate measures – such as practices and rules – to implement an institutional project (Child, Lu & Tsai, 2007; Garud et al., 2002; Wijen & Ansari, 2007). Such measures ensure that new institutions are respected by concerned actors (Murdoch & Geys, 2014; Olsen, 2017). Thus, new institutions shall be continuously reproduced through daily activities (Bisel, Kramer & Banas, 2017; Sharma, Lawrence & Lowe, 2010) and spread among social fields or organizations (Kukk, Moors & Hekkert, 2016; Rao, 1998; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007). Hence, new institutions become steadily institutionalized through the consideration of such measures.

To establish relevant measures, I claim that actors who want to change institutions necessitate *organizational skills.* These skills enable actors to formalize practices/rules in a meaningful manner such that these measures lead to the implementation of the envisaged

institution. Furthermore, thanks to these skills, upcoming change agents can wisely place actors as guardians of such new practices/rules to ensure their implementation. Consequently, I hypothesize that actors with *organizational skills* will more successfully implement new institutional projects.

Greenwood and Suddaby's (2006) study on the big five accounting firms (Arthur Andersen, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Ernst & Young, KPMG, and PricewaterhouseCoopers) is a suitable example of how actors' *organizational skills* enabled institutional change. The Big Five acted as institutional entrepreneurs because they changed their organizational strategy by adopting multidisciplinary practices; they began to deliver consulting services in addition to the traditional accounting activities. Once the Big Five had changed their strategy, they offered in-house training programmes to diffuse the new values throughout the dispersed company. Thus, the companies ensured that their employees became familiar with the new norms and began reproducing these new institutions. Therefore, the Big Five's *organizational skills* were an essential piece to foresee the necessity of developing an in-house training programme and thus to institutionalize new institutions.

2.4.6 Tactical Skills

The literature review has also revealed that institutional entrepreneurs perform tactical manoeuvres to consolidate new institutions (Dieleman & Sachs, 2008; Van Bockhaven, Matthyssens & Vandenbempt, 2015; Zilber, 2007). These steps might be necessary as institutional change processes can produce losers (Khan, Munir & Willmott, 2007), which likely mobilize their remaining power to combat such turnovers (Garud et al., 2002). Institutional entrepreneurs use tactics to circumvent or respond to such power battles (Maguire & Hardy, 2006; Van Dijk et al., 2011).

To successfully struggle along, I foresee that actors establishing new institutions require *tactical skills.* Such skills permit actors to take specific actions to gain advantage against potential opponents. Thus, the skills can help to overcome challengers' initial weaker positions that they might encounter as actors who contest the status quo. For instance, actors with such skills take measures to appear inconspicuous to potential opponents or actively denigrate opponents to weaken their position. Consequently, I imply

that actors with *tactical skills* are able to proficiently address such power games and will more likely implement new institutions.

For instance, Santos and Eisenhardt (2009), demonstrate the relevance of *tactical skills* throughout an institutional change process. The researchers disclose the tactics of five ventures acting as institutional entrepreneurs during the emergence of the US internet market in the mid-2000s. As small players within the business field, they formed alliances with larger partners from proximate markets. These players did so to provide a small segment of the opportunity to potential competitors and thus to deter them by winning their support. Thus, these players "created a demilitarized zone" that allowed the ventures' further growth. (ibid., p. 655). Once the ventures were established, the institutional entrepreneurs acquired smaller emerging firms with comparable business portfolios. The acquisitions were also a tactical manoeuvre to block entry by established firms, which may have purchased the rivals otherwise. Consequently, the ventures had to equally count on their *tactical skills* to establish a new organization within an emerging market and thus to implement new institutions.

2.4.7 Timing Skills

Finally, literature on institutional entrepreneurship has also discussed change agents' sense of time (DiVito, 2012; Henfridsson & Yoo, 2014; Hermes & Mainela, 2014). Institutional entrepreneurs refer to their temporal senses as better or worse moments exist to launch or implement new institutions (Canales, 2016; Heinze & Weber, 2016). Hence, institutional entrepreneurs are aware of appropriate moments to advance institutional change processes with as few disruptions as possible (Garud et al., 2002).

As such temporal aspects are relevant, I assume that actors require *timing skills* to advance institutional change processes. Thanks to these skills, actors are able to await the proper moment to move forward by establishing or implementing new institutions. Thus, the skills enable actors to early identify the missing pieces that are needed to advance institutional change processes. Hence, I predict that actors with *timing skills* will thrive more in executing institutional change.

Buhr's (2012) study on the implementation of an EU emission trading scheme describes the role of *timing skills* during a change process. The policy – aiming at reducing

greenhouse gas emissions – was introduced by various players such as by "the European aviation industry, NGOs, consultants and think thanks, and governmental representatives from European nation-states" (ibid., p. 1577). The players acted as institutional entrepreneurs as they collectively lobbied for the trading solution and rejected the other two alternatives (taxes and charges). The players succeeded by intentionally awaiting the UK six-month-long EU Presidency in 2005. The institutional entrepreneurs chose this moment as the British airlines supported the same solution. This support was linked to a parallel national debate on airport expansion, which is why the airlines required a green image that was not overly costly for them. Thus, the institutional entrepreneurs understood that the best moment to lobby for an emission trading scheme was the UK half year-long EU Presidency. Hence, the effective implementation of the EU emission trading scheme can also be traced to the involved institutional entrepreneurs' *timing skills.*

2.5 Implications

Upon these findings, future scholars can now develop tools to measure the concept. For instance, scholars can establish direct or indirect measuring methods such as observations techniques, interviews, or questionnaires to detect actors' possession of respective institutional entrepreneurs' skill dimensions. Subsequently, by contrasting different measured results, scholars can investigate the specific conditions that are responsible for the formation of particular skill dimensions. Furthermore, scholars can examine which essential situations trigger the emergence of decisive skill dimensions. Finally, scholars can inquire how the application of specific skill dimensions lead to respective institutional outcomes.

Consequently, as all potential causes and effects of institutional entrepreneurs' skills are located on higher- and/or lower-level structures, scholars can thus apply a multi-level approach in microfoundations of institutions. Therefore, future researchers can not only determine institutional change processes more accurately, institutional theorists can also overcome the image of the "heroic change agent", which is a conceptualization of institutional entrepreneurs that misleadingly portrays change agents as hyper muscular actors appearing from nowhere to transform the world (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). When using institutional entrepreneurs' skills at the centre of investigation, scholars can closely

explore why and when certain actors are able and willing to change institutions. Thus, scholars can provide answers to the often-discussed paradox of embedded agency: “How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and, rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change?” (Holm, 1995, p. 398).

2.6 Conclusion

To apply a microfoundational approach when studying institutional change processes, I have suggested defining relevant dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs’ skills. Therefore, I undertook a systematic literature review on institutional entrepreneurship. On this basis, I discovered seven dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs’ skills that actors can apply during an institutional change process. The findings shall enable future microfoundational research.

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2.8 Appendix A

Table 1: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Analytical Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified analytical skills of examined IE(s)
Alexandrescu, Martinát, Klusácek & Bartke, 2014	· Civil servants · EU-funded project · 2011-2014	IEs identify relevant causes of the problem to be solved.
Argyris & Ransbotham, 2016	· Victoria (individual) · NBC Universal, US · -	IE recognizes the need to develop a new tool within an organization.
Bartley, 2007	· NGOs · Transnational private regulations on social performance · 1987-2000	IEs understand that traditional arenas are hostile to developing transnational regulations, whereby they identify functioning alternatives.
Bisel, Kramer & Banas, 2017	· Alexis Reader (individual) · Elite gymnastics in the US · -	Institutional resistance is increased due to the IE's sensemaking process.
Child, Lu & Tsai, 2007	· Republic of China · Environmental Protection System in China · 1972-2001	IE understands the need to take actions due to environmental problems and international debates on the same problems.
Czarniawska, 2009	· Beatrice and Sidney Webb (individuals) · London School of Economics and Political Science, UK · 1895-1995	IEs notice the current zeitgeist that sets the basis to create new institutions.

Table 1: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified analytical skills of examined IE(s)
Delbridge & Edwards, 2008	· Jon Bannenberg (individual) · Superyacht industry · 1974-2004	IE uses changing consumer demands and newly available financial resources to create institutions according to his ideas.
Dieleman & Sachs, 2008	· Salim Group (organization) · Economy in Indonesia · 1938-2005	Due to an acute awareness of the institutional context, the IE adopts its business strategy accordingly.
Durand & McGuire, 2005	· AACSB (organization) · Accreditation system of international business schools · 1916-2001	IE recognize internal and external pressures that forces the modification of existing institutions.
Etzion & Ferraro, 2010	· CERES (organization) · Global Reporting Initiative · ~1995-2010	IE further develops newly established institutions by recognizing differences between the emergent institution and an analogical source.
Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006	· Firms · Accounting Industry · 1987-1999	IEs detect raising tensions when conforming to existing conventions, whereby they search for alternatives.
Henfridsson & Yoo, 2014	· Designers · CarCorp, Europe · 2002-2011	IEs develop innovations as they recognize an unsatisfactory performance of the current solution.

Table 1: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified analytical skills of examined IE(s)
Hermes & Mainela, 2014	· Representatives of (N)GOs · Humanitarian peace-building community · -	IEs rapidly adapt their behaviour to changing conditions.
Heusinkveld & Reijers, 2009	· Professor · Piece of Design Knowledge, Netherlands · -	IE identifies a knowledge gap at the intersection of two different fields on which he builds a new institution.
Lawrence & Phillips, 2004	· John Cyprus (individual) · Whale-watching in Canada · ~1979-1997	IE identifies clients' culturally conditioned changing attitudes as an opportunity for new institutions.
Leca & Naccache, 2006	· ARESE (organization) · Socially responsible investment industry in France · 1997-2002	IE recognize the opportunity for new institutions in combining two different institutional logics.
Mair & Marti, 2009	· BRAC (organization) · Development aid in Bangladesh · ~1999-2006	IE depicts institutional voids as opportunities to create new institutions.
McInerney, 2008	· Rob Stuart and Joan Fanning (individuals) · Nonprofit technology assistance in US · 1995-2000	IE senses that the opportunity of developing a new institution exists by combining different institutional logics.
Murdoch & Geys, 2014	· Civil servants · Recruitment Procedures of the European External Action Service · 2010-2012	IEs use the opportunity to interpret a vaguely formulated institution according to their advantage.

Table 1: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified analytical skills of examined IE(s)
Mutch, 2007	· Sir Andrew Barclay Walker (individual) · Public house management in Liverpool, UK · 1846-1914	IE identifies chance to import taken-for-granted practices from elsewhere to develop new institutions.
Newenham-Kahindi & Stevens, 2017	· Firms · Mining industry in Sub-Saharan Africa · ~2005-2015	IEs take a relational and holistic approach when interpreting given settings.
Olsen, 2017	· Associations · Microfinance industry in Brazil and Mexico · 1950-2000	IEs understand that the inaction of the state provides opportunities to take actions.
Rao, 1998	· Nonprofit consumer watchdog organizations · Consumption sector in US · 1906-1971	IEs realize that they must adopt institutions to ensure the political support of the state.
Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007	· Ferran Adrià (individual) · Haute cuisine in Spain · 1983-2006	IE projects new institutions by combining contradictory ingredients.
Tracey, Phillips & Jarvis, 2011	· Paul Harrod and Mark Richardson (individuals) · Social entrepreneurship sector in UK · ~1999-2008	IEs identify innovative opportunities to address a problem that they view from the lenses of two different institutional logics.
Van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman, 2011	· Research teams · PhemCO and OmegaSys, Europe · 1994-2006	IEs perceive ambiguity, heterogeneity, as well as multiplicity, whereby they initiate institutional change.

Table 1: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified analytical skills of examined IE(s)
Wallin & Fuglsang, 2017	· Ventures · Health care system in Europe · -	Confusing events are the starting point for IEs' sensemaking process.

Table 2: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Empathic Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified empathic skills of examined IE(s)
Alexandrescu, Martinát, Klusácek & Bartke, 2014	· Civil servants · EU-funded project · 2011-2014	IEs possess a wide network as a resource for implementing a new vision.
Argyris & Ransbotham, 2016	· Victoria (individual) · NBC Universal, US · -	IE shows an understanding with potential contributors' problem by empathizing with them.
Canales, 2016	· Diverse actors · SME financing in Mexico · 2000-2008	IEs is able to identify each other's dissenting but hidden beliefs.
David, Sine & Haveman, 2013	· Founders of first consulting firms · Management consulting industry · ~1919-1938	IEs have personal ties with relevant actors within and outside the emerging field.
Dieleman & Sachs, 2008	· Salim Group (organization) · Economy in Indonesia · 1938-2005	IE has close connections with representatives of the country's leading regime.

Table 2: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified empathic skills of examined IE(s)
Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006	· Firms · Accounting Industry · 1987-1999	IEs are located at boundary bridging positions, whereby they are connected with diverse actors.
Heinze & Weber, 2016	· Family Physicians · Health care system in US · 1998-2010	IEs have high status within and outside the traditional institutional field.
Hung & Whittington, 2011	· Firms · IT industry in Taiwan · 1980-2007	IEs are highly connected with other relevant actors within and outside the country.
Lawrence & Phillips, 2004	· John Cyprus (individual) · Whale-watching in Canada · ~1979-1997	IE cooperates with other upcoming organizations to establish a new institutional field.
Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004	· Roberts and Turner (individuals) · HIV / AIDS Treatment Advocacy in Canada · 1981-2000	IEs are highly respected by actors from diverse institutional fields.
Newenham-Kahindi & Stevens, 2017	· Firms · Mining industry in Sub-Saharan Africa · ~2005-2015	IEs collaborate with diverse actors to better understand the established institutional context.
Perkmann & Spicer, 2007	· Diverse actors · EUREGIOs, Europe · 1954-2004	IEs start cross-border cooperation.

Table 2: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified empathic skills of examined IE(s)
Qureshi, Kistruck & Bhatt, 2016	· Founders · Social enterprise sector in China · ~2012-2016	IEs have heterophilic, thus much more diverse ties.
Van Bockhaven, Matthyssens & Vandenbempt, 2015	· Founders · Dutch electro-technical installation industry · ~2000-2008	IEs are well connected within the industry.
Van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman, 2011	· Research teams · PhemCO and OmegaSys, Europe · 1994-2006	IEs have a boundary spanning position within the respective organizations.
Wijen and Ansari, 2007	· Delegates of nation states · Kyoto Protocol · 1988-1997	IEs are in solidarity with each other.

Table 3: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Framing Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified framing skills of examined IE(s)
Ahrens & Ferry, 2018	· Newcastle City Council · Public sector in UK · 2010-2014	IE refers to an organization's cultural memory to implement change.
Benner & Ranganathan, 2017	· Incumbent firms · Wireline telecommunication industry · 2002-2010	IEs introduce the need for a new strategy by framing it in accordance with another convincing institutional logic.

Table 3: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified framing skills of examined IE(s)
Bisel, Kramer & Banas, 2017	· Alexis Reader (individual) · Elite gymnastics in the US · -	IE convinces a potential collaborator by mantling the arguments with a universal institutional logic.
David, Sine & Haveman, 2013	· Founders of first consulting firms · Management consulting industry · ~1919-1938	IEs utilizes accepted expertise to develop a new institutional field.
Durand & McGuire, 2011	· AACSB (organization) · Accreditation system of international business schools · 1916-2001	The modification of existing institutions occurs by reinforcing perception of continuity and adherence.
Etzion & Ferraro, 2010	· CERES (organization) · Global Reporting Initiative · ~1995-2010	IE introduces a new institution by adapting it to the main institutional logic.
Hargadon & Douglas, 2001	· Thomas Edison (individual) · Electric lighting system in New York, US · 1878-1892	To establish a new innovation, IE designs it in accordance with established technical features.
Heusinkveld & Reijers, 2009	· Professor · Piece of Design Knowledge, Netherlands · -	IE fails as the newly proposed method does not fit with established institutional practices.
Hung & Whittington, 2011	· Firms · IT industry in Taiwan · 1980-2007	IEs justify a new institution with traditional narratives.

Table 3: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified framing skills of examined IE(s)
King & Soule, 2007	· Social movements · Economy in US · 1962-1990	IEs are most influential when they target issues that are relevant to potential collaborators.
Kukk, Moors & Hekkert, 2016	· Roche (organization) · Health care system in UK · 1999-2006	IE launches a new product by initially developing a scientific discourse.
Lo, 2015	· Applicants · Research on nanotechnology in US · 1976-2005	IEs are successful when they frame proposals in a manner that is familiar but that maintains a certain degree of novelty.
Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007	· Money management professionals · Mutual fund industry in US · 1924-1985	To establish an institutional field, IEs initially theorize the new practices.
Maguire & Hardy, 2006	· State and non-state actors · Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants · 1997-2004	IE refer to established institutions to underpin their arguments.
Mair & Marti, 2009	· BRAC (organization) · Development aid in Bangladesh · ~1999-2006	To introduce a new institution within an established institutional context, IE borrows practices from the respective context.
Munir & Phillips, 2005	· Kodak (organization) · Photography · 1882-1939	IE embeds new institution in existing practices.

Table 3: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified framing skills of examined IE(s)
Perkmann & Spicer, 2007	· Diverse actors · EUREGIOs, Europe · 1954-2004	IEs theorize new institutions by means of analytical reports.
Rao, 1998	· Nonprofit consumer watchdog organizations · Consumption sector in US · 1906-1971	IEs infuse prevalent cultural elements into the new organizational form.
Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009	· Ventures · Nascent IT industry in US · 1994-2000	IEs "adopt templates" to develop a unique identity while being familiar and understandable to their audience.
Tracey, Phillips & Jarvis, 2011	· Paul Harrod and Mark Richardson (individuals) · Social entrepreneurship sector in UK · ~1999-2008	IEs theorize the organizational template on the basis of multiple institutional logics.
Van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman, 2011	· Research teams · PhemCO and OmegaSys, Europe · 1994-2006	IEs adapt their innovations to conform with the established institutional logic.
Wallin & Fuglsang, 2017	· Ventures · Health care system in Europe · -	IEs present the advantages of a new product while referring to scientific theories.
Wijen and Ansari, 2007	· Delegates of nation states · Kyoto Protocol · 1988-1997	IEs develop a shared vision based on objective scientific evidence.

Table 3: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified framing skills of examined IE(s)
Zilber, 2007	· Professional service providers and venture capitalists · High-tech industry in Israel · 2000-2001	By means of stories, IE merge new narratives with old narratives to initiate institutional change.

Table 4: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Translational Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified translational skills of examined IE(s)
Czarniawska, 2009	· Beatrice and Sidney Webb (individuals) · London School of Economics and Political Science, UK · 1895-1995	IEs translate the envisaged institution into the current concerns of potential sponsors.
Déjean, Gond & Leca, 2004	· ARESE (organization) · Socially responsible investment industry in France · 1997-2002	IE presents a new institution that corresponds to the language of the professional standard of the targeted community.
Heinze & Weber, 2016	· Family Physicians · Health care system in US · 1998-2010	IEs establish platforms such that actors of diverse institutional backgrounds can increase mutual understanding.
Hung & Whittington, 2011	· Firms · IT industry in Taiwan · 1980-2007	IEs translate among actors of two different systems.

Table 4: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified translational skills of examined IE(s)
Leca & Naccache, 2006	· ARESE (organization) · Socially responsible investment industry in France · 1997-2002	IE presents a new institution that corresponds to the language of the professional standard of the targeted community.
Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004	· Roberts and Turner (individuals) · HIV / AIDS Treatment Advocacy in Canada · 1981-2000	IEs translate the interests of diverse stakeholders.
McInerney, 2008	· Rob Stuart and Joan Fanning (individuals) · Nonprofit technology assistance in US · 1995-2000	IEs adjust the narrative to the language of potential contributors.
Munir & Phillips, 2005	· Kodak (organization) · Photography · 1882-1939	IE presents a new institution from the perspective of particular actors.
Murdoch & Geys, 2014	· Civil servants · Recruitment Procedures of the European External Action Service · 2010-2012	IEs exchange ideas about new institutions in bilateral talks.
Newenham-Kahindi & Stevens, 2017	· Firms · Mining industry in Sub-Saharan Africa · ~2005-2015	IEs employ local individuals who translate among the firms and the host country.

Table 5: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Organizational Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified organizational skills of examined IE(s)
Argyris & Ransbotham, 2016	· Victoria (individual) · NBC Universal, US · -	IE ensures the routinization of new institutions by engaging key contributors who continuously apply new practices.
Bisel, Kramer & Banas, 2017	· Alexis Reader (individual) · Elite gymnastics in the US · -	Ies develops a new organizational philosophy with corresponding practices and rituals.
Canales, 2016	· Diverse actors · SME financing in Mexico · 2000-2008	Ies establish media-effective meetings to demonstrate the existence of new institutions.
Child, Lu & Tsai, 2007	· Republic of China · Environmental Protection System in China · 1972-2001	IE defines new legal frameworks as the basis for new institutions and develops a new organizational unit as guardian of these new rules.
Czarniawska, 2009	· Beatrice and Sidney Webb (individuals) · London School of Economics and Political Science, UK · 1895-1995	The new institution becomes a legal body, while Ies document established practices.
David, Sine & Haveman, 2013	· Founders of first consulting firms · Management consulting industry · ~1919-1938	Ies develop a social code that clearly defines the content of the new institution.
Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002	· Sun (organization) · IT industry in US · 1995-2000	IE creates control mechanisms to ensure the compliance of the new institution.

Table 5: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified organizational skills of examined IE(s)
Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006	· Firms · Accounting Industry · 1987-1999	Ies establish in-house training programmes to spread the new organizational identity.
Heinze & Weber, 2016	· Family Physicians · Health care system in US · 1998-2010	IEs cultivate a core group that undertakes the change efforts.
Hung & Whittington, 2011	· Firms · IT industry in Taiwan · 1980-2007	IEs become policy advisers to circulate the new institution.
Kukk, Moors & Hekkert, 2016	· Roche (organization) · Health care system in UK · 1999-2006	IE develops a supplier network that spreads the new institution.
Lawrence & Phillips, 2004	· John Cyprus (individual) · Whale-watching in Canada · ~1979-1997	IE creates field organizations to self-regulate the emerging field.
Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007	· Money management professionals · Mutual fund industry in US · 1924-1985	IEs establish a professional association that organizes training programmes to ensure the implementation of new institutions.
Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004	· Roberts and Turner (individuals) · HIV / AIDS Treatment Advocacy in Canada · 1981-2000	IEs institutionalize practices by attaching them to existing routines.
Munir & Phillips, 2005	· Kodak (organization) · Photography · 1882-1939	IE develops new products, which encourage the use of new institutions.

Table 5: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified organizational skills of examined IE(s)
Murdoch & Geys, 2014	· Civil servants · Recruitment Procedures of the European External Action Service · 2010-2012	Formal guidelines are adopted to confirm with IEs' modified practices.
Olsen, 2017	· Associations · Microfinance industry in Brazil and Mexico · 1950-2000	By means of a new law, newly developed practices become institutionalized.
Perkmann & Spicer, 2007	· Diverse actors · EUREGIOs, Europe · 1954-2004	IEs lobby to spread newly developed institutions.
Rao, 1998	· Nonprofit consumer watchdog organizations · Consumption sector in US · 1906-1971	IEs educate relevant stakeholders such that these stakeholders conform to newly developed institutions.
Sharma, Lawrence & Lowe, 2010	· Managing directors · Telecom organization in Fiji · ~1986-2007	IEs establish key teams that monitor the compliance of new institutions.
Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007	· Ferran Adrià (individual) · Haute cuisine in Spain · 1983-2006	IE spreads his work by publishing books and collaborating with media.
Tracey, Phillips & Jarvis, 2011	· Paul Harrod and Mark Richardson (individuals) · Social entrepreneurship sector in UK · ~1999-2008	IEs align with highly legitimate actors who enhance the distribution of the new institution.

Table 5: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified organizational skills of examined IE(s)
Van Bockhaven, Matthyssens & Vandenbempt, 2015	· Founders · Dutch electro-technical installation industry · ~2000-2008	IEs collaborate with new actors to obtain their symbolic legitimization.
Wallin & Fuglsang, 2017	· Ventures · Health care system in Europe · -	IEs form inter-organizational collaborations with powerful actors who diffuse newly developed institutions.
Wijen and Ansari, 2007	· Delegates of nation states · Kyoto Protocol · 1988-1997	IEs establish mechanisms that guarantee the implementation of new institution.

Table 6: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Tactical Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified tactical skills of examined IE(s)
Canales, 2016	· Diverse actors · SME financing in Mexico · 2000-2008	IEs hide institutional experiments to conceal initial mistakes.
Dieleman & Sachs, 2008	· Salim Group (organization) · Economy in Indonesia · 1938-2005	IE pursues a double strategy to be prepared for changing conditions.
Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002	· Sun (organization) · IT industry in US · 1995-2000	IE evokes the image of a common enemy to mobilize allies.

Table 6: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified tactical skills of examined IE(s)
Hermes & Mainela, 2014	· Representatives of (N)GOs · Humanitarian peace-building community · -	IEs offer free services to motivate collaboration.
Khan, Munir & Willmott, 2007	· NGOs · Soccer ball industry in Pakistan · 1995-2003	IEs develop new institutions that do not help local actors but calm Western consumers.
Kukk, Moors & Hekkert, 2016	· Roche (organization) · Health care system in UK · 1999-2006	By means of media reports, IEs pressure politicians to facilitate access to new institution.
Maguire & Hardy, 2006	· State and non-state actors · Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants · 1997-2004	IEs challenge the credibility of opponents' argumentation.
Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009	· Ventures · Nascent IT industry in US · 1994-2000	IEs collaborate with powerful actors and/or acquire ventures with similar business models to avoid attacks by potential rivals.
Van Bockhaven, Matthyssens & Vandenbempt, 2015	· Founders · Dutch electro-technical installation industry · ~2000-2008	IEs operate stealthily to avoid attention from competitors.
Van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman, 2011	· Research teams · PhemCO and OmegaSys, Europe · 1994-2006	IEs lowers research budget to avoid attention.

Table 6: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified tactical skills of examined IE(s)
Wijen and Ansari, 2007	· Delegates of nation states · Kyoto Protocol · 1988-1997	IEs leverage incentive instruments to establish cooperation.
Zilber, 2007	· Professional service providers and venture capitalists · High-tech industry in Israel · 2000-2001	IEs tell unofficial stories in which certain actors are blamed as a means to modify the existing institutional path.

Table 7: Derivation of Institutional Entrepreneurs' (IEs') Timing Skills

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified timing skills of examined IE(s)
Buhr, 2012	· Diverse actors · EU Emissions Trading Scheme · 1998-2008	IEs open a window of opportunity due to their time awareness.
Canales, 2016	· Diverse actors · SME financing in Mexico · 2000-2008	IEs craft organizational experiments to ensure new institutions' functionality before these institutions are publicly presented.
Dieleman & Sachs, 2008	· Salim Group (organization) · Economy in Indonesia · 1938-2005	IE remains in the shadow until conditions are less hostile.
DiVito, 2012	· Firms · Dutch and British biotech industry · 1992-2007	IEs initially gather financial resources before establishing new institutions.

Table 7: (Continued)

Author(s), publication year	Examined IE(s), empirical setting, time frame	Identified timing skills of examined IE(s)
Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002	· Sun (organization) · IT industry in US · 1995-2000	IE carefully chooses the right time to change the organization's strategy.
Heinze & Weber, 2016	· Family Physicians · Health care system in US · 1998-2010	IEs embed new institutional logic once new institutions have been carefully tested.
Henfridsson & Yoo, 2014	· Designers · CarCorp, Europe · 2002-2011	IE experiment to eliminate insufficient solutions until a new institution is mature.
Hermes & Mainela, 2014	· Representatives of (N)GOs · Humanitarian peace-building community · -	IEs show reticent behaviour to be perceived as a neutral actor.
Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009	· Ventures · Nascent IT industry in US · 1994-2000	IEs undertake proactively pre-emptive actions to thwart potential rivals.

3 Article 2: Institutional Actors

A Microfoundational and Temporal Definition

(Co-author: Patrick Haack, University of Lausanne)

Abstract

Institutional theory lacks a holistic theory of actorhood that is consistent with institutional theory's core notion that actors are embedded in institutions, yet behave differently in similar settings. To address this problem, we develop a microfoundational and temporal definition of actors that is based on two primary characteristics: skills and identity. We do not consider the actor as a concept in itself, and focus instead on the micro-level concepts of skills and identity. We clarify that both of these characteristics are crucially shaped by macro-conditions, such as stable social fields and/or institutional contradictions. Based on actors' past experiences with these macro-conditions, actors behave differently during similar situations in the present. We claim that actors that are socialized in institutional contradictions will be both able and motivated to change institutions during enabling situations for change. Actors that are mainly socialized in stable social fields, meanwhile, will not be able and/or motivated to change institutions. We thus recognize that actors legitimize their behavior vis-à-vis their distinct histories, which allows us to explain their dissimilar actions in similar situations.

Keywords

Actorhood, agency, identity, institutional change, institutional contradictions, institutional entrepreneurship, microfoundations of institutions, social skills

Status

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3.1 Introduction

The question of actorhood in institutional theory has been an important and controversial topic from the very beginning (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011; Hwang, Colyvas & Drori, 2019). Accordingly, Zucker's (1977) experiment on the link between actors' behavior and cultural persistence ranks amongst the most fundamental works in institutional theory. Lok (2020) illustrates the evolution of the actorhood concept throughout recent decades, demonstrating how its representation depends on the application of different types of institutional theory. Most striking is that some scholars have portrayed actors as compliers of given institutions, and thus as the dependent variable (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977), whereas others have considered actors as modifiers of institutions, and thus as the independent variable (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Hardy & Maguire, 2017; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). The former stream emphasizes actors' homogenous behavior (all behave according to the given rules), while the latter accepts heterogeneity (some overcome the given rules in order to change them) (Dacin, Goodstein & Scott, 2002).

Hwang and Colyvas (2019) developed a model to abstract actors along three elements: (i) level of society, (ii) degree of generality, and (iii) actors' ontology. The model aims to enable a uniform classification of the diverse types of actors. Hence, it seeks to conceptualize actors as explanandum and explanans simultaneously. It thus strives to connect the contradictory research streams in institutional theory: the actor-as-modifier approach, such as in the literature on institutional entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1988) or on institutional work (Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011), with the actor-as-complier approach, such as in the literature on isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977), or on practice-driven institutionalism (Barley, 2017; Smets, Aristidou & Whittington, 2017). A uniform definition of institutional actors, as suggested by Hwang and Colyvas (2019), is important to bring the different approaches under one roof, and thus to develop one coherent theory that can advance the cumulation of knowledge.

Although Hwang and Colyvas' (2019) is a promising attempt to uniformly conceptualize actors, it still fails to tackle the main problems of both the actor-as-modifier and the actor-as-complier approaches. These problems pertain to the fact that the actor-as-modifier approach does not accurately address issues of actors' embeddedness: This

research has often portrayed actors as seemingly disembedded (Beckert, 1999) and has thus violated one of institutional theory's core principle of actors being embedded in institutions (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011). This has raised the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009): "How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change?" (Holm, 1995, p. 398). The-actor-as-complier approach, on the other hand, lumps all actors together – in our opinion wrongly – as it perceives all actors as ordinary "practical people" that react homogenously to perceived situations (Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013, p. 1304). This approach has raised another puzzle in institutional theory: Why do "certain individuals […] identify social and institutional problems earlier than others and […] react to those problems more strongly?" (Tost, 2011, p. 706). Consequently, a uniform definition of institutional actors needs to convincingly tackle these two problems. Hence, how can we define actors by complying with institutional theory's core notion that actors are embedded in institutions, yet behave differently in similar settings?

We seek to cut this Gordian knot by applying a microfoundational approach combined with a temporal perspective for defining actorhood in institutional theory. We perceive microfoundations of institutions as multi-level in nature (Coleman, 1986) because "cognition, communication, and behavior at micro-levels affect and are affected by higher-level structures" (Haack, Sieweke & Wessel, 2020, p. 26). In combination with a temporal perspective, we portray actors as organizations, individuals, groups of individuals, social movements, etc., whose actions are influenced by past experiences. Precisely, we argue that macro-conditions, such as institutional contradictions (Seo & Creed, 2002) (incompatible institutional arrangements) and/or stable social fields (situations lacking such contradictions), shape actors' identities and skills (Suddaby, Viale & Gendron, 2016). These formed identities and skills, in turn, affect actors' behavior in the present moment. Hence, we understand actors as ever embedded not only in present situations, but also in past experiences. We thus acknowledge that past experiences influence actors' current behavior similar as Emirbayer and Mische (1998) as well as Cardinale (2018) do. However, we additionally specify the decisive experiences as well as the resulting behavior patterns.

Based on four identified actors' development paths, we develop a typology of actors' behavior during enabling situations for change in the present. We argue that up to four

different types of actor that are willing and/or able to change or maintain institutions are encountered in such ambiguous situations. Based on their identity and skills, we label them: (i) institutional custodians, (ii) institutional outsiders, (iii) institutional entrepreneurs, and (iv) institutional defenders. We claim that institutional custodians have been mainly socialized in stable social fields and will therefore not be able and willing to change institutions during enabling situations for change. Institutional outsiders have internalized institutional contradictions but are still socialized in stable social fields, which is why they are motivated to change institutions but unable to do so. Institutional entrepreneurs have been socialized in institutional contradictions, and are thus both able and motivated to change institutions. Institutional defenders have been mainly socialized in a stable social field that they had initiated as former institutional entrepreneurs, which is why they will sabotage an institutional change process if their own initiated institutions are jeopardized.

We thus define actors as socially constructed over time through their skills and their identity, whereby we do not perceive the actor as a concept in itself. This approach allows us to explain dissimilar behavior in similar settings without violating institutional theory's core principal of actors' embeddedness. We thus contribute to institutional theory in four ways: First, we contribute to the historical stream in institutional theory that emphasizes the outcome of institutions as a historical process (Suddaby, Foster & Mills, 2013). We build the foundation to study actors' life journeys as we demonstrate the development of skills and identities that guide actors' behavior to maintain or change institutions; Second, we tackle the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009). We reason that differences in actors' behavior exist because actors are not only embedded in present situations, but also in past experiences that influence their actions. Doing so allows us to reconcile the prevalent actor-as-modifier with the actor-as-complier approaches and thus develop one uniform definition of actorhood in institutional theory; Third, we explain institutional entrepreneurs' motivation to change institutions. We argue that change agents' developed identities are crucial to understanding their motivation to exploit an opportunity for change; Fourth, we pave the way for examining collective entrepreneurship. Based on the developed typology of institutional actors, future scholars can study linkages between the different kind of actor and trace shifts in these linkages in order to holistically understand observed field-level changes.

3.2 Towards a Revised Theory of Actorhood in Institutional Theory

Beside institutional theory's shift towards the role of macro-conditions and resulting isomorphism on institutions (Meyer and Rowan, 1977), scholars have always incorporated actors' behavior within their theoretical reasoning (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011; Hwang et al., 2019). Consequently, Zucker's (1977) experiment on actors' cultural persistence and the maintenance of institutions is the second founding work in institutional theory. Since then, scholars have conceptualized actors very differently. Based on a literature review, Lok (2020) has summarized five representations that he classifies according to different types of institutional theory. Scholars have portrayed actors as: (i) "mythical, rationalized subjects," (ii) as "structurally constrained responders," (iii) as "strategic, political activists," (iv) as "institutional bricoleurs," or as (v) "value rational affected, practitioners" (ibid., p. 31). Some of these conceptualizations stress actors as a homogenous group of passive rule takers and perceive actors as the dependent variable (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977). Other conceptualizations accept divergent behavior as certain actors are said to change institutions, and thus understand actors as the independent variable (DiMaggio, 1988; Hargadon & Douglas, 2001; Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004).

This diversity in the conceptualization of actorhood has raised a debate on adequately conceptualizing actors when describing institutional change processes. During the 90s, when scholars had started to study change (Dacin et al., 2002), institutional entrepreneurs were considered as its main drivers (DiMaggio, 1988). Institutional entrepreneurs have been said to possess both the necessary resources and an interest in changing institutions (Hardy & Maguire, 2017). On this basis, scholars have studied institutional entrepreneurs' skills (Fligstein, 1997, 2001), their social positions (Battilana, 2006), and their applied strategies (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007) in order to identify causes for their ability and willingness to initiate change. This actor-as-modifier approach, however, has raised criticism as it was said to excessively portray actors as hyper-muscular entrepreneurs who seem to be sole responsible for change (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Meyer, 2008).

In response to this approach, institutional theorists have proposed a return to an actor-as-complier approach (Powell & Rerup, 2017; Smets, Morris & Greenwood, 2012). Smets and colleagues (2017), inter alia, advocate a "practice-driven institutionalism." They

recommend studying mundane activities of practitioners and examine how these practices launch change. Furthermore, Barley (2017) sees potential for institutional theory in carefully studying everyday interactions and defines them as a coalface, where "plenty of coal [is] left to mine" (p. 358). Powell and Colyvas (2008) suggest linking micro-concepts like sensemaking with macro-processes of institutionalization. By these means, scholars should move away from a simple binary caricature of actors as "heroic change agents" versus "cultural dopes" (Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 315) and instead portray actors as ordinary "practical people" (Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013, p. 1304). Hence, actorhood should return once again to a conceptualization that emphasizes the homogeneity and reactivity of actors.

We criticize how scholars have conceptualized actors in both the actor-as-modifier and the actor-as-complier approaches. The actor-as-modifier approach offends a key principal of institutional theory, which upholds that actors are embedded in institutions (Meyer, 2006). Institutional theory is based on the assumption that actors seek legitimacy within their inhabited social field (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), which is why actors are said to be embedded within the respective field's institutions (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011). Consequently, it is unclear why institutional entrepreneurs act seemingly disembedded of institutions that should actually guide their behavior (Holm, 1995). This discrepancy has raised the often-discussed paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009), which remains beside many attempts that have not yet been fully solved (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum, 2009).

On the other hand, the actor-as-complier approach shortens the "gamut of human behaviour" (Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 315), which it actually attempts to expand. It lumps actors together by assuming that they are all "ordinary people" behaving homogenously (ibid., p. 315). This approach is problematic as it contrasts with observations of actors behaving unequally in identical situations (Tost, 2011). Voronov and Yorks (2015), for instance, identify three types of actors (socialized, self-authoring, and self-transforming actors) who perceive ambiguous situations differently, whereby some of these types are more likely to emerge as change agents. Mutch (2007) also establishes actors as diverse versions of reflexivity (autonomous, conversational, meta, and fractured reflexive) who react differently during situations that provide opportunities for change. Consequently,

assuming that all people behave homogenously – as is done by the actor-as-complier approach – prevents an explanation of dissimilar behavior in similar settings. For these discrepancies, we thus suggest defining actorhood in institutional theory through new means.

In order to cut this Gordian knot, we propose to apply a microfoundational and temporal perspective for the representation of actorhood in institutional theory. Using microfoundations of institutions is an approach designed to comprehensively understand institutional settings by integrating the micro-level into one's research (Coleman, 1986). In our understanding, microfoundations of institutions are multi-level in nature, meaning that "actions and decisions on the micro level affect and are affected by higher-level structures" (Haack et al., 2020). Hence, microfoundations of institutions surpass methodological individualism (Felin, Foss & Ployhart, 2015) by focusing on the "interrelationships across multiple levels of analysis" (Harmon, Haack & Roulet, 2019). Such an approach, combined with a temporal perspective on defining actorhood, considers actors as both shaped and shapers simultaneously. Hence, we define actors not only based on what they do by virtue of their properties, but also based on past experiences that have constituted these same actors' properties.

To sum up, by adopting a microfoundational and temporal perspective for a definition of institutional actors, we respond to the two discrepancies that the actor-as-modifier and actor-as-complier approaches provoke. First, we comply with institutional theory's key principal of the embedded actor: We understand actors as ever embedded, not only in present situations but also in past experiences. We thus argue that actors also legitimize their actions vis-à-vis their distinct histories. Second, we respect that actors react differently in identical situations without celebrating the disembedded heroic change-agent: We acknowledge that actors have contrasting backgrounds that influence their behavior, whereby they act differently at a certain point in time.

3.3 Components of a New Theory of Actorhood in Institutional Theory

In order to develop a new definition of actorhood in institutional theory, we build on two main characteristics of actors, which are skills and identity. In our context, we place these factors on the micro-level. The two concepts are useful for a microfoundational

representation of actorhood due to their innate two-sidedness. As Bryson (2017) describes, "skills" is a multidisciplinary concept that can be approached from two angles: A psychological perspective regards skills as independent variable and examines individual actions by virtue of these skills (Riggio, 1986); a sociological perspective, meanwhile, comprehends skills as a dependent variable and investigates social conditions that generate these skills (Attewell, 1990). In other words, skills are actors' properties that are simultaneously shaped by external conditions and shape individual actions. The same applies for identity. In reference to Mead (1934), Stryker and Burke (2000) state that "society shapes self shapes social behavior" (p. 285). Consequently, identity is a product of social conditions, but identity also guides actors' behavior (Glynn, 2017). Skills and identity are thus suitable concepts for a microfoundational definition of actorhood as their two-sidedness enables a multi-level approach that complies with our understanding of microfoundations of institutions.

Furthermore, skills and identity are useful concepts for a new definition of actorhood as they cover key drivers of actors' behavior: actors' ability and willingness to do something within an institutional setting. Fligstein (1997, 2001), for instance, elaborates how social skills are crucial for inducing change. Thanks to skills, actors can foster the cooperation of different groups toward a vision for divergent change (Battilana et al., 2009). By applying specific skills, actors are thus capable of influencing the design of lived institutions (Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Suddaby, Cooper & Greenwood, 2007; Zilber, 2006). Hence, skills are key indicators for measuring an actor's ability to do something. Identity, on the other hand, is a good indicator for measuring an actor's motivation for doing something. Research has shown that actors ascribe individual actions to their own identities (Choi & Gray, 2008; Weber, Heinze & DeSoucey, 2008; Wry & York, 2017). Cardon and colleagues (2009) thus conclude that actors "engage in *something* that relates to a meaningful and salient self-identity" (p. 516). Actors' behavior is therefore linked to an actor's identity, and consequently provides insights on that actor's motivation to take specific actions.

The relevant question is which macro-conditions shape the design of skills and identity. We argue that institutional contradictions or stable social fields constitute such crucial macro-conditions. Institutional contradictions are incompatible institutional

arrangements, which provide: (i) inefficiency, (ii) nonadoptability, (iii) incompatibilities, and/or (iv) misaligned interests for actors of an institutional setting (Seo & Creed, 2002). Friedland and Alford (1991) identify a clash of institutional logics as reason for the emergence of institutional contradictions, such as in situations of institutional pluralism (Kraatz & Block, 2017), institutional complexity (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta & Lounsbury, 2011; Raynard, 2016), or in hybrid organizations (Battilana, Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2017; Battilana & Dorado, 2010). On the other hand, stable social fields are situations that lack a conflict of logics. Raynard (2016) explains that different logics can be segregated or aligned in relation to each other, whereby a clash of logics diminishes. For instance, when logics are clearly separated within a certain system, or when two logics are compatible with each other, no conflict exists. Hence, in the absence of conflicting logics and thus of institutional contradictions, we define such situations as stable social fields.

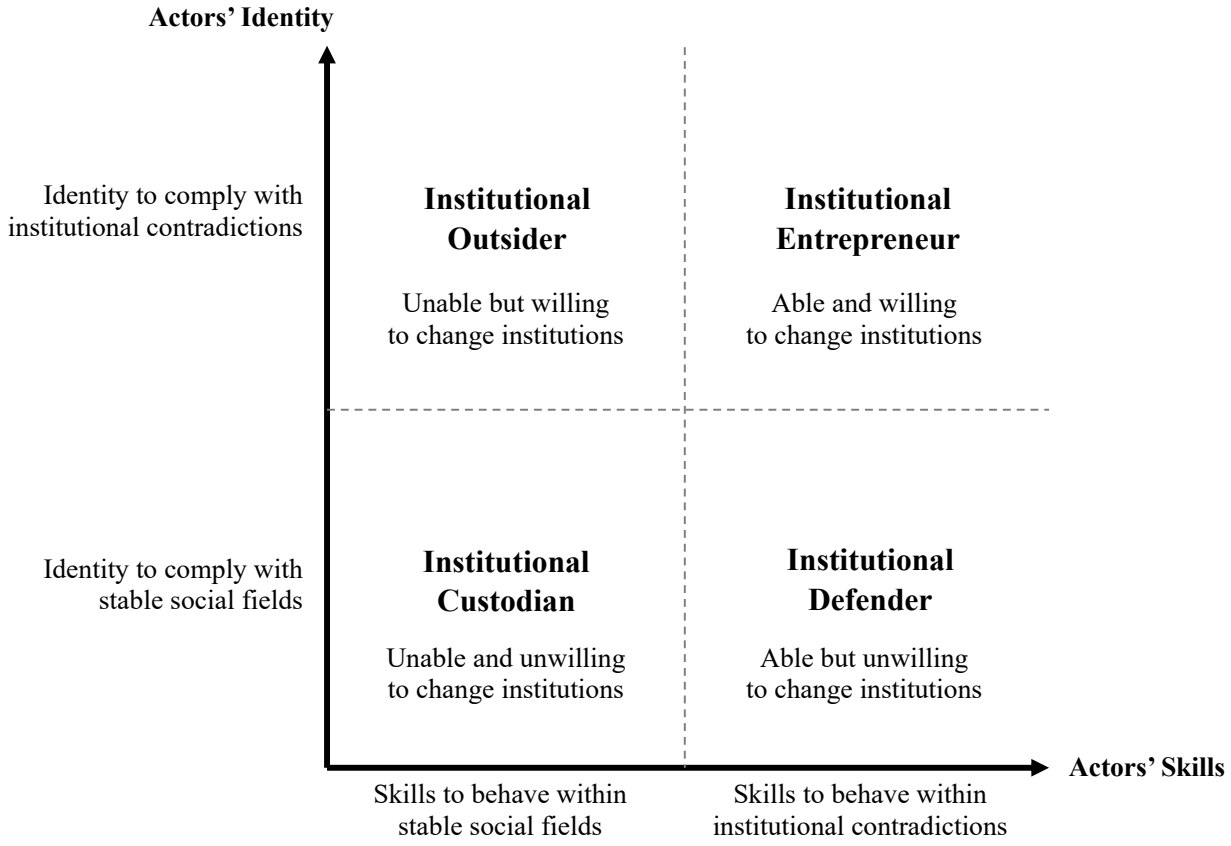
As we elaborate hereinafter, we assert that actors' skills and identities evolve differently, depending on an actors' previous exposure to institutional contradictions and/or stable social fields. Correspondingly, we understand the development of such skills and identities as an iterative, reflective, back-and-forth process that evolves over time (Bévort & Suddaby, 2016; Mutch, 2007; Schön, 1983; Voronov & Yorks, 2015). We thus imply that actors can change continuously. In addition, we consider that the formation of these characteristics does not occur simultaneously: Some actors might have aligned their identity to recently lived institutional contradictions, but (still) devote their skills to initially experienced stable social fields. This standpoint is the basis of the typology of institutional actors that we elaborate hereinafter.

3.4 A Typology of Institutional Actors

Building on the above, we divide institutional actors in four different types. Actors have established different skills and identities, depending on their previous experiences with stable social fields and/or institutional contradictions. Actors have either developed an identity that complies with a stable social field or one that complies with experienced institutional contradictions. As we will subsequently outline further, the first type of identity reflects a common role within a social system, while the second type is an individual response to previously experienced institutional contradictions. Furthermore,

actors have acquired skills in order to behave within stable social fields or skills to behave within institutional contradictions. The first type of skills corresponds to the expected rules of conduct within a social system, while the second type represents the ability to move between diverse social systems. Depending on the configuration of actors' skills and identities, we label them as: (i) institutional custodians, (ii) institutional outsiders, (iii) institutional entrepreneurs, or (iv) institutional defenders (see figure 5).

Figure 5: Typology of Institutional Actors

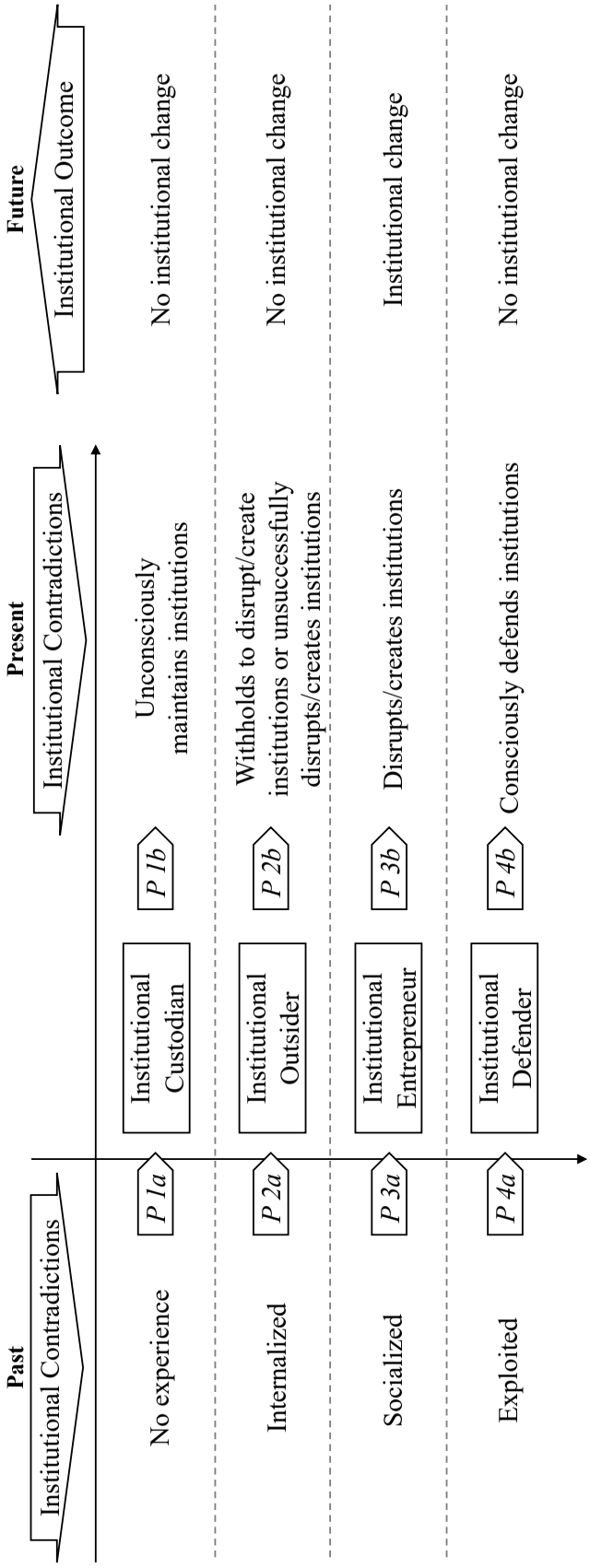


Although we affirm that actors can move between these different types, they still depend on the skills and identity that they have established up until a certain point in time. These differences become crucial during situations that provide opportunities for change. As previous research has demonstrated, situations in which institutional contradictions occur usually provide such windows of opportunity (David, Sine & Haveman, 2013; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). We thus understand institutional contradictions not only as a crucial macro-condition that forms actors' properties, but also as situations that certain

actors exploit in order to initiate change (Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003). Consequently, actors socialized in institutional contradictions will react differently than actors mainly socialized in stable social fields to such enabling circumstances. Consequently, each type of actor will behave dissimilarly in similar situations.

As figure 6 illustrates, we argue that institutional custodians have not been exposed to institutional contradictions in their past, whereby they won't immediately change their behavior once confronted with institutional contradictions in the present. Accordingly, we hypothesize that institutional custodians are not drivers of change. Institutional outsiders, on the other hand, have internalized institutional contradictions in their past, but have not acquired sufficient experiences yet in order develop the required skills to deal with such contradictions. Accordingly, institutional outsiders might be motivated to change institutions when being confronted with institutional contradictions in the present but will not be able to do so immediately. Furthermore, we argue that institutional entrepreneurs have been socialized in institutional contradictions in the past, whereby they have gathered experiences that have amended their identity and skills to deal with such situations. Accordingly, they exploit opportunities for change if they recognize in the current institutional contradictions a possibility to establish an institutional project that reflects their own identity. Institutional entrepreneurs are thus capable and possibly motivated to change institutions. Finally, institutional defenders have exploited institutional contradictions in their past, meaning that they earlier acted as institutional entrepreneurs. As they have acquired the identity and skills to deal with institutional contradictions, they will actively apply their capabilities to defend their previously established institutional project; provided that the current institutional contradictions threaten their project. Accordingly, institutional defenders might prevent institutional change.

Figure 6: Development Path and Behavior by Each Type of Institutional Actor



Hereinafter we introduce the four established types of institutional actors. We elaborate the respective macro-conditions that have shaped each type's characteristics using a microfoundational and temporal perspective, as well as mapping how these different development paths influence their behavior during an enabling situation for change – namely during institutional contradictions. We thus build propositions to resume each type's development path up until actors' confrontations with institutional contradictions. Furthermore, we predicate each type's expected behavior when being confronted with institutional contradictions.

3.4.1 Institutional Custodians

We define institutional custodians as actors who possess an identity designed to comply with a certain stable social field and have the skills to behave within the same stable social field. We argue that these actors have these properties because they have been mainly socialized in the respective stable social field. As a dominant logic with accordingly dominant institutions exist in such fields (Raynard, 2016), the embedded actors do not see any alternative behavior patterns. Accordingly, as actors seek legitimization within their field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977), actors internalize the common identities and skills that are applied by more experienced actors within that field (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Mead, 1934). Institutional custodians have thus adopted the common roles and practices of their field, which is why they have acquired properties to comply with and to behave within their field.

Members of an isolated indigenous tribe could have gone through a socialization process, as described above. If they are truly separated from the outside world, they will most likely have adopted one of the roles that this society already provides. As – from a new institutional perspective – the tribe members want to be part of the group, they have inherited the common identities and the skills of the tribe. Consequently, they identify themselves as members of the tribe. They also have the skills to behave "correctly" according to the rules of the tribe.

On this basis, we develop our first proposition with regard to institutional custodians' development path:

Proposition 1a: When actors have been exclusively socialized in stable social fields, they acquire the identity to comply with the same field and the skills to behave within this field; we label these actors as institutional custodians.

Our argumentation proceeds that institutional custodians behave in line with their undertaken socialization during a situation that provides opportunity for change. As institutional custodians adapt a social system's established roles along with the associated identities and corresponding skills, they behave by aligning with their internalized characteristics. Consequently, they reproduce the dominant institutions of the social field in which they are embedded by externalizing their inherited roles (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). In other words, they do what has been always done, whereby they reproduce existing institutions. When institutional custodians confront institutional contradictions for the first-time, they do not have any experiences to deal with these new situations. Consequently, we argue that institutional custodians will maintain and not alter institutions during a first encounter with institutional contradictions.

Referring to the above example of indigenous tribes, we thus argue that members of such an isolated social system unconsciously replicate established institutions. As these members externalize established roles, they apply the associated identities and required skills needed to integrate themselves within the system. Consequently, they ensure that established rules and norms are passed down from generation to generation. For this reason, they prevent institutional change by doing the same thing as always. For example, if they got in contact with the outside world for the first time, they would most likely stick to their usual behavior as a first reaction. They do not know (yet) how to react differently.

Based on this reasoning, our second proposition on institutional custodians is as follows:

Proposition 1b: When institutional custodians encounter institutional contradictions for the first time, they will maintain their established institutions and will thus not initiate institutional change.

3.4.2 Institutional Outsiders

We define institutional outsiders as actors who possess an identity designed to comply with institutional contradictions and the skills to behave within a familiar stable social field. They are thus outsiders, as their personal identity no longer fits into any established social field. However, they behave "correctly" according to the rules of a social setting, which is why others might not identify them as alien. We claim that institutional outsiders have developed these characteristics as a reaction to their lived experiences with institutional contradictions in the past. They might have been exposed to institutional contradictions during their primary socialization (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), or they might have experienced a major jolt (illness, unemployment etc.) that has "alter[ed] [their] individual position and perspective on an institutional field" (Tost, 2011, p. 701). In both cases, institutional outsiders have been forced to reflect on their identity and define it in a way that responds to their challenging experience. However, they still apply the skills of the stable social field in which they have been initially socialized. They do so as they still seek legitimization (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977) but they do not know (yet) any alternative behavioral strategies in order to achieve this goal.

Creed and colleagues' (2010) study on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) priests is a good example of how an actor's identity is formed as a response to experienced institutional contradictions (they are gay in an environment that usually forbids same sex love). The scholars demonstrate that the examined priests respond to institutional contradictions by identity work. As a response, they initially internalize the present institutional contradictions, they accept these discrepancies, and finally develop a new identity to deal with the exposed contradictions. Similarly, Kodeih and Greenwood (2014) detect how organizations tackle institutional complexity by developing an aspired identity, which reflects an envisaged and wishful image of themselves. Furthermore, Bévort and Suddaby (2016) detect that individuals make sense of contradictory institutional logics by adopting their identity script. Our argument proceeds that a first encounter with institutional contradictions can alter an actor's identity but not their skills (yet). As we will argue later, skill formation is a process that is followed by an amended identity.

Accordingly, we develop our first proposition on institutional outsiders:

Proposition 2a: When actors have been socialized in stable social fields, but exposed to institutional contradictions, they develop an identity to comply with the lived institutional contradictions but initially maintain the skills to behave within a previously socialized stable social field; we label these actors as institutional outsiders.

We argue that institutional outsiders do not initiate institutional change during a situation that provides an opportunity for change. We predicate this behavior because institutional outsiders do not possess (yet) any skills to behave within institutional contradictions. Due to their current skills, they mainly move within their initially socialized stable social field. As they are not able to move between different social settings, they cannot unite diverse allies behind a new vision for change (Battilana et al., 2009), a required skill for initiating institutional change (Fligstein, 1997, 2001). Nevertheless, institutional outsiders are motivated to disrupt previous institutions as their identity does not fit anymore in their previously socialized stable field. Consequently, institutional outsiders will either withhold to disrupt and create institutions during an enabling situation for change as they are aware of their missing skills, or they will unsuccessfully try to disrupt and create institutions if they are unaware of the need to gather diverse allies behind a divergent vision. In both cases, institutional outsiders won't initiate institutional change during enabling situations for change.

To our knowledge, there is not much research on institutional outsiders' behavior. However, we can identify good examples of such behavior when studying the early phase of institutional entrepreneurship. Canales' (2016) study on the establishment of a new finance solution for small businesses in Mexico provides insights on institutional outsiders' actions. He describes how emerging institutional entrepreneurs secretly conduct institutional experiments in order to avoid visibility in the early phase of a change process. Hargadon and Douglas' (2001) research on Thomas Edison's development of the electric lighting system, on the other hand, underlines the process of trial-and-error during early phases of institutional entrepreneurship. Both of these studies thus illustrate that emerging institutional entrepreneurs are initially lacking the skills required to initiate institutional

change. We define this type of actor as institutional outsiders, which is why they have acted accordingly (avoided visibility or made repetitive mistakes).

On this basis, we develop the second proposition on institutional outsiders:

Proposition 2b: When institutional outsiders encounter institutional contradictions, they will either withhold changing institutions or will unsuccessfully disrupt and create institutions, and will thus not initiate institutional change.

3.4.3 Institutional Entrepreneurs

As with other literature on institutional entrepreneurship, we perceive institutional entrepreneurs as leaders during an institutional change process (Battilana et al., 2009; DiMaggio, 1988), but conceptualize these actors differently. We define institutional entrepreneurs as actors that possess an identity to comply with institutional contradictions and have the skills to behave within institutional contradictions. We argue that institutional entrepreneurs have acquired these characteristics as they have been *socialized* in situations of institutional contradictions. We thus emphasize that institutional entrepreneurs have not only internalized institutional contradictions – as institutional outsiders have done – but have become familiar dealing with such situations over a long period of time. Much like institutional outsiders, institutional entrepreneurs have thus confronted institutional contradictions that have changed their identity. However, we claim that institutional entrepreneurs have also moved in diverse social settings due to their altered identity: As their identity no longer fit within the initially socialized stable field, we argue that they have been eager to look for other fields. We predicate this behavior because such actors are still looking for legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977), but want to be legitimized by a field that corresponds to their newly developed identity. By reaching out to different social fields, institutional entrepreneurs thus acquire the skills to behave within multiple social settings. They have therefore learnt how people communicate or exchange in different social settings. For this reason, they have developed the skills needed to behave within institutional contradictions.

Qureshi and colleagues' (2016) study on Chinese social entrepreneurs, for instance, discloses the impact of actors' initial attitudes on their capability to move between different

social settings – and thus to acquire the skills needed to behave in diverse social contexts. They discovered that emerging social entrepreneurs with heterophilic ties had regular contacts with diverse actors (actors from the private sector as well as from the NGO sector). In this way, they received valuable information on different institutional settings. As they exchanged with these diverse actors, they acquired the skills required to behave in different social settings. These characteristics helped them to initiate change at a later stage. Hence, thanks to their identities that allowed them to comply with institutional contradictions, they finally acquired the skills needed to behave within institutional contradictions.

From this reasoning, we establish the first proposition on institutional entrepreneurs:

Proposition 3a: When actors have been socialized in institutional contradictions, they develop an identity to comply with institutional contradictions and skills to behave within institutional contradictions; we label these actors as institutional entrepreneurs.

We argue that institutional entrepreneurs exploit an opportunity for change due to their constructed identity and skills. We foresee that institutional entrepreneurs have the ability to initiate institutional change due to their skills in order to behave within institutional contradictions. As they can move in multiple institutional contexts, they can more easily identify "structural holes and good ideas" (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Burt, 2004), which is the starting point for a divergent vision. Furthermore, thanks to their skills, they can also more easily gather diverse allies behind a vision for change (Battilana et al., 2009; Fligstein, 2001): For example, they can adopt their "language" according to the audience and can thus better unite different actors behind a new idea (Fohim, 2019). Furthermore, we predicate that institutional entrepreneurs are motivated to change institutions as they can step out from their outsider role if their projected institutional idea succeeds. As their "bricoleur" identity does not fit in any stable social field (Lok, 2020), we assert that they are thus eager to change institutions in order to design their environment in a way that fits with their own identity (Mutch, 2007). Hence, if institutional entrepreneurs identify themselves with an institutional idea that they project upon institutional

contradictions (Suddaby, Bruton & Si 2015), we foresee that institutional entrepreneurs are both able and motivated to initiate institutional change during such situations.

Research on Rachel Carson's biography offers a good example of how an established identity influences an institutional actor's motivation to change institutions. As the author of *Silent Spring*, which essentially influenced the environmental movement during the seventies, Rachel Carson is generally considered to be an institutional entrepreneur (Hoffman, 1999; Lear, 1997). Kisfalvi and Maguire (2011) examine how Carson's relatively unusual early life, due to "the special relationship with her mother, Rachel's need for solitude, [or] the family's poverty" shaped her identity. Being exposed to these familiar institutional contradictions, she developed a "passion for nature" and a "passion for writing" (Kisfalvi & Maguire, 2011, p. 157). When she was later exposed to institutional contradictions (environmentally unfriendly farming practices), she projected a potential solution upon it. She thus initiated change by writing *Silent Spring.* She was thus motivated to do so as it complied with beliefs that were linked to her established identity. We would add to these findings that she was also able to do it as she had developed the required power of persuasion during her previous experiences.

From these arguments, we develop our second proposition on institutional entrepreneurs:

> *Proposition 3b: When institutional entrepreneurs encounter institutional contradictions upon which they project an institutional idea that reflects their identity, they are able and motivated to initiate institutional change.*

3.4.4 Institutional Defenders

We define institutional defenders as actors who comply with a stable social field and possess the skills needed to behave within institutional contradictions. We argue that institutional defenders have developed these properties as they are former institutional entrepreneurs who protect their previously established institutional project(s). They have thus undergone a similar socialization process as institutional entrepreneurs, but have tightened their identity in line with their successfully institutionalized change project. Hence, institutional defenders have also been socialized in situations in which there are

institutional contradictions. For this reason, institutional defenders have initially internalized these ambiguous situations and thus established an identity to deal with it. On this basis, they have also embraced contradictory institutional contexts and have thus acquired social skills by interacting with actors from these diverse contexts. Institutional defenders have then successfully implemented an institutional vision by means of their characteristics. As this institutional project has succeeded, and has therefore amended or even established an institutional field, we claim that institutional defenders internalize the emerging roles of this new field. In other words, we assert that their individual identity retroacts on them once it is has become generalized and institutionalized (Ashforth, Rogers & Corley, 2011). However, we foresee that they maintain their skills to behave within institutional contradictions as they do not unlearn these previously established characteristics.

Drori's and colleagues' (2009) ethnographic study on the computer-graphic start-up *Art* illustrates nicely how a founder's individual identity shapes a company's identity, as well as how it retroactively impacts the founder at a later stage of the company's life cycle. The scholars elaborate how the identity of *Art*'s founder is characterized by values of creativity and innovation. As the start-up grows, these entrepreneurial values are transmitted to the company's new employees. In the course of the time, once institutions have hardened, the initially individual identity became an intersubjective identity up to a seemingly objective and exterior reality. This newly established general identity finally retroactively acts on the identities of the employees, including on the founder himself. From our reasoning, we claim the founder's identity was no longer shaped by the previously experienced institutional contradictions, but by his own objectified institutions. However, we would add to these findings that the founder did not unlearn the skills to behave within institutional contradictions.

Based on this reasoning, we develop our first proposition on institutional defenders:

Proposition 4a: When actors have been socialized in institutional contradictions and in their own established social field, they develop an identity to comply with the same social field and acquire skills to behave within institutional contradictions; we label these actors as institutional defenders.

Based on institutional defenders' characteristics, we assert that they sabotage change processes if an enabling opportunity for change threatens their own institutional project. We come to this conclusion as we foresee that institutional defenders want to maintain their own established institutional field. They do so because they have internalized their established institutional context, within which they strongly identify themselves. However, as they do not forget the skills needed to behave within institutional contradictions, they still possess the ability to identify early opportunities for change (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Burt, 2004) and to gather diverse allies behind a vision (Battilana et al., 2009; Fligstein, 2001). Consequently, if they identify an enabling opportunity for change as a potential threat to their established institutions, they will use their skills to defend their work. For this reason, we argue that institutional defenders might sabotage an upcoming institutional change process during institutional contradictions.

Schilke's (2018) experiment on internal organizational processes demonstrates how organizational identification can increase resistance to environmental pressures. He argues that a strong organizational identification strengthens actors' certainty. This effect is particularly powerful if the respective identity is normative (vs. utilitarian). A normative identity is comparable to a "church- or family-like identity" (ibid., p. 1439). Actors perceive it as authentic, meaning they want to uphold and thus defend it. Referring to the above, we thus agree with these findings and add that institutional defenders are actors with a normative identity towards their established institutional project. Furthermore, institutional defenders also apply their skills for behaving within institutional contradictions in order to gather allies behind a vision for stability.

On this basis, we develop our second proposition on institutional defenders:

Proposition 4b: When institutional defenders encounter institutional contradictions that threaten their established institutional project, they will sabotage an upcoming institutional change process and will thus block institutional change.

3.5 Discussion and Implications

Although actors have always played a central part in institutional theory, the actorhood concept has remained contested. On the one hand, actors have been

conceptualized as passive rule takers that behave homogeneously according to the dominant institutions of a field. On the other hand, certain actors have been described as active challengers that act differently in order to explain institutional change. So far, a uniform definition of actorhood that is able to combine the actor-as-modifier and the actor-as-complier approaches has not been developed yet. For this reason, we called for a new definition of actorhood in institutional theory. We propose a microfoundational and temporal definition of institutional actors. More precisely, we define actors as socially constructed through their skills and their identity and claim that the configuration of these two concepts depends on actors' past and current experiences with stable social fields and/or institutional contradictions. On this basis, we have developed four types of institutional actors that we predicate to encounter during enabling situations for change.

Based on our definition of actorhood in institutional theory, we thus claim that the concept of an actor does not exist in itself. Taking them as a concept implies that they exist independently from their environment. However, this argument violates one of institutional theory's core assumptions: actors are embedded in objectified macro-conditions because they seek legitimacy within their environment. Hence, we understand actors and their behavior as a product of influencing macro-conditions (from the past and from the present). Accordingly, we thus suggest focusing on concepts that result from influencing macro-conditions in order to define institutional actors. For this reason, our definition of actorhood is based on the two concepts of identity and skills. The concepts emerge from the internalization and socialization of crucial macro-conditions. However, at the same time, they also provide insights on actors' motivation and ability to act at a certain point in time. For this reason, we do not understand actors as a concept that exist in itself, but instead define actors as ambassadors of their past experiences that introduce these experiences through their identity and their skills into the present moment.

Naturally, scholars can challenge that our definition of institutional actors should include other concepts. In particular, resources (Misangyi, Weaver & Elms, 2008), social positions (Battilana, 2006), or emotions (Voronov & Vince, 2012) are also said to influence actors' ability and motivation to change or maintain institutions. We agree that these factors influence actors' ability and motivation to do something. However, we believe that these concepts work rather as mediators. We claim that they depend on actors' respective skills

and/or identity and mediate their ability and/or motivation to change or maintain institutions. For instance, the ability to receive resources or a good social position depends often on actors' skills to behave within institutional contradictions: In an increasingly complex world, it is particularly advantageous to move between different worlds, whereby opportunities for acquiring resources and gaining higher social positions may increase. Additionally, other actors can challenge established actors' resources and social positions by possessing more diverse skills. The rise of young internet companies is a good example of actors with skills for behaving in unexplored worlds that challenge established firms (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). Emotions, on the other hand, are from our understanding related with actors' identity. As actors identify themselves with a specific project based on how they portray themselves, their passion for an idea depends on their identity (Cardon, Wincent, Singh & Drnovsek, 2009). Consequently, we believe that emotions, as well as resources and social positions, work mainly as crucial mediators. On this basis, our definition of institutional actors builds exclusively on the two concepts of identity and skills as indicators for their motivation and ability, while not neglecting other mediating factors.

Such a definition of institutional actors thus implies that an actor can be all of the four elaborated types at the same time, depending on a given institutional context. For instance, an individual might be a father who lives happily within a traditional family life. At work, however, he might question many evolved working practices, while still behaving according to the given rules. Meanwhile, as a volunteer, he might introduce an innovation at his leisure club. Hence, he would be an institutional custodian, an institutional outsider, and an institutional entrepreneur simultaneously. His past experiences thus determine if he is able and/or willing to change or to maintain institutions during an encountered situation in the present. To be precise, it depends on an actor's respective past and present context, as well as the respective linkages between these experiences, that causes the emergence of one specific type of institutional actor.

Furthermore, our definition of institutional actors implies that actors can move from one type to another. In particular, experience with institutional contradictions enables institutional custodians to become institutional outsiders, and later maybe even institutional entrepreneurs or institutional defenders. As our definition of actors results from past/current macro-conditions, and as such macro-conditions steadily change, the configuration of

actors' identities and skills will thus change too. Additionally, actors' characteristics can alter too if different actors join forces. For instance, when several individuals who are institutional outsiders with one common belief form a group, they can become one skillful institutional entrepreneur (Dorado, 2013). In any case, our definition of actorhood implies that the configuration of the four presented types of institutional actor will rarely remain stable because actors can move between these types.

Additionally, a microfoundational and temporal definition of actorhood makes the classification of actors into different social levels redundant. Hwang and Colyvas (2019), for instance, discuss how actors can be conceptualized by assigning them to three different levels of society: individual, organizational, and societal. However, our definition does not take the actor per se on the micro-level, but the concepts of identity and skills instead. These concepts can be attached to individuals, organizations, social movements, and many other versions of actors. More relevant are the macro-conditions that have formed actors' properties. Hence, such an approach can also classify actors that cannot be clearly categorized into one of the three social levels, such as multi-level governance structures or decentralized peer-to-peer networks (as a virtual "central bank" behind blockchain). This approach thus enlarges the spectrum of actors and keeps up with the steadily changing macro-conditions.

3.6 Contributions

We recognize four contributions for institutional theory from our definition of institutional actors, as well as from the four established types of actor.

First, it contributes to the upcoming debate on historical institutionalism within institutional theory (Suddaby et al., 2013). The debate aims to highlight that institutions have been socially constructed in the past (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), which is why it calls for studying the underlying historical processes. A microfoundational and temporal definition of actorhood opens the path to additionally studying the history of actors that are responsible for the development or maintenance of institutions. It thus also enables us to meet the demand of examining institutional entrepreneurs' biographies (Lawrence et al., 2011; Suddaby, 2010; Suddaby et al., 2016), as we understand actors' development paths, which have been triggered by institutional contradictions. Scholars can thus examine

actors' internalization and socialization processes regarding institutional contradictions in order to better understand the emergence of actors that do not comply with established rules (Micelotta, Lounsbury & Greenwood, 2017). Such an approach also allows us to identify additional supporting or hampering factors for the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs. For example, learning from other success stories could be a supporting mediator (Chandler & Hwang, 2015), whereas fear could be a hampering one (Voronov & Weber, 2016). Hence, by examining the emergence of actors' identities and skills that are triggered by institutional contradictions or stable social fields, scholars can return to the genesis of institutions.

Second, by using a microfoundatinal and temporal definition of actorhood, we tackle the often-discussed paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009). Previous research has often portrayed institutional entrepreneurs as disembedded actors who are thus capable of thinking and acting beyond the capabilities of normal actors (Beckert, 1999). This approach has led to a steady criticism of the concept of institutional entrepreneurship because it has raised a crucial question: "How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change?" (Holm, 1995, p. 398). In line with our definition of actorhood, we consider institutional actors as ever embedded, but as embedded in past experiences that shape their behavior in the present. Consequently, we reason that certain actors can change institutions as their actions, intentions, and rationalities are not necessarily shaped by the institution they want to change, but instead by previously experienced macro-conditions.

Third, our reasoning provides insights on actors' motivations to change institutions. Most research on institutional entrepreneurship has focused on actors' ability to initiate change (Buhr, 2012; Maguire et al., 2004; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007). However, the motivation of institutional entrepreneurs has been rarely examined, although it is an integral part of the concept's core definition: they are "organized actors with sufficient resources" that change institutions if they see "*in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly*" (DiMaggio, 1988, p. 14). Some have argued that actors at the periphery of a field are more eager to change institutions as they can expect a gain in power by envisioned upheavals (Garud et al., 2002; Kraatz & Zajac, 1996; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). However, various studies have shown that central actors change institutions too (Argyris &

Ransbotham, 2016; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). We conclude that the motivation to change institutions depends on actors' identification with a potential institutional project, whereas this identification can be traced back to their past experiences. Hence, we identify actors' past stories as the impact on actors' entrepreneurial passion (Cardon et al., 2009), and thus on their motivation to change institutions.

Fourth, based on the established typology of institutional actors, we open the path to studying collective entrepreneurship in further detail. Studies on institutional change have been criticized because they focus only on the institutional entrepreneur and neglect other involved actors during the process. We share this criticism as we neither understand the institutional entrepreneur as being solely responsible for change. In our typology, institutional entrepreneurs are actors that are able and willing to gather allies in order to implement new institutions. However, these established institutions can live a niche existence within a field. We thus understand institutional entrepreneurs not as being solely responsible for broader field-level changes. We also recognize the need to examine the interaction between different actors in order to decode broader field-level changes. Based on the established typology of institutional actors, scholars can study how these different types of actor interact with each other, as well as how a shift of these linkages can lead to broader field-level changes. What is particularly interesting is the interplay between institutional entrepreneurs and institutional defenders. Future scholars can study how institutional entrepreneurs try to unite loose institutional outsiders in order to create a social movement and to overcome established institutional defenders. Furthermore, scholars can also focus on how institutional defenders try to prevent the emergence of institutional outsiders and institutional entrepreneurs by impeding institutional custodians being exposed to institutional contradictions. Studying the interplay between these different types of institutional actors could thus provide insights on the complex processes behind collective entrepreneurship, which can cause or prevent broader field-level changes.

3.7 Conclusion

Our aim was to develop a new definition of institutional actorhood that combines the prevalent contradicting actor-as-modifier and actor-as-complier approaches. So far research has identified dissimilar actors' behavior in similar institutional settings without

explaining how this observation complies institutional theory's key principal on actors' embeddedness. We thus developed a microfoundational and temporal definition of institutional actors to argue that actors' motivations and abilities to change or maintain institutions depends on their experiences with stable social fields and/or institutional contradictions that have formed their identities and skills accordingly. We then developed four different types of institutional actor. Some of them are able and/or motivated to change institutions, whereas others are able and/or motivated to maintain institutions. We aim to cut the Gordian knot outlined above, as we don't understand actors as a concept in itself but as the result of previously experienced macro-conditions that guide actors' behavior in the present.

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4 Article 3: Becoming an Institutional Entrepreneur

How Formed Identities Shape Actors' Ability and Motivation to Initiate Change During Institutional Contradictions

Abstract

Institutional entrepreneurs are actors who play a leading role in establishing or changing institutions. They gather support for a vision of change when ambiguous field characteristics are prevalent, such as during institutional contradictions. Existing research conceptualizes institutional entrepreneurs as heroes who appear from nowhere to change the world, and sheds little light on the formative factors in their identity. Therefore, I applied a phenomenological methodology to study the experiences of select institutional entrepreneurs and compared these with that of actors who did not act as institutional entrepreneurs in similar situations. I found that institutional entrepreneurs had developed an identity with corresponding values that they relate to crucial experiences from their distant past. In line with their values, they had embraced various institutional contradictions throughout their professional lives and thus developed skills that enabled them to initiate institutional entrepreneurship. Additionally, their established identities influenced their motivation to respond to prevalent institutional contradictions by realizing their key values during opportunities for change. The findings reveal that institutional entrepreneurs are disembedded actors only when seen from the outside: from their own perspective, they legitimize their behavior vis-à-vis their past experiences. This insight contributes to the debate on the paradox of embedded agency.

Keywords

Identity, institutional change, contradictions, institutional entrepreneurship, social skills

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4.1 Introduction

According to a report by the Institute for the Future (IFTF), 85% of the jobs that would exist in 2030 do not yet exist (IFTF, 2018). As automatization and artificial intelligence will gain in importance, IFTF predicts a fundamental revolution of labor: Today's learners will have to constantly identify promising opportunities that evolve due to the emergence of new technologies. Exploiting these opportunities through innovation and creativity will thus be a core success factor in the future. Therefore, the crucial question is as follows: What shall we teach our children today if we cannot foresee the skills needed for tomorrow?

One way to meet these challenges is to teach our children to become institutional entrepreneurs. Institutional entrepreneurs are actors who have the ability and willingness to contribute in changing institutions and/or establishing new ones (DiMaggio, 1988). For instance, institutional entrepreneurs are said to develop new professions (David, Sine & Haveman, 2013), to establish new organizations (Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004), to modify traditional organizations (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006), to construct new markets (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009), or even to develop new technologies (Hargadon & Douglas, 2001). Therefore, institutional entrepreneurs possess qualities that today's learners require for tomorrow's work life as predicted by the IFTF report. It seems possible to teach our children the skills of an institutional entrepreneur. However, how does somebody become an institutional entrepreneur?

Existing research on institutional entrepreneurship has revealed that institutional entrepreneurs contribute in creating visions for divergent change and take a leading role in mobilizing allies to establish new institutions (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum, 2009). Studies have shown that institutional entrepreneurs require social skills to successfully undergo such transformation processes (Fligstein, 2001; Mair & Marti, 2009; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007). Furthermore, scholars have identified that institutional entrepreneurs appear during specific and enabling field characteristics (Battilana et al., 2009). Particularly, institutional contradictions – which are incompatible institutional arrangements (Seo & Creed, 2002) – are situations that institutional entrepreneurs recognize as opportunities for change (David et al. 2013; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Hardy & Maguire, 2017; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). However, besides this rich knowledge on institutional

entrepreneurship, we lack a comprehensive understanding of the factors that enable the formation of these actors.

To tackle this gap, I apply a phenomenological methodology to study the biographies of actors who initiated institutional entrepreneurship during institutional contradictions – thus, during opportunities for change. Phenomenology is based on Heidegger's (1988) philosophy that past experiences influence an individual's interpretation of current experiences. A phenomenological methodology that is applied to examine individuals' experiences (Gill, 2014; Seidman, 2013) can thus provide insights on why institutional entrepreneurs initiate change during institutional contradictions, whereas other actors do not the same (Voronov & Yorks, 2015). I use this approach in the context of shortlisted cantonal planners from Switzerland (public officials who are responsible for establishing a spatial/urban strategy for their assigned canton). Due to the federal and direct democratic tradition of Switzerland, they frequently deal with diverse stakeholders of different logic backgrounds and thus with institutional contradictions. I investigate the biographies of five cantonal planners who behaved as institutional entrepreneurs during comparable institutional contradictions (a reform of the cantonal structure plan in their respective cantons between 2014 and 2019). To detect enabling and hampering factors for the formation of institutional entrepreneurs, I finally compare the findings with biographies of three cantonal planners who did not act as institutional entrepreneurs during the same contradictions.

I find that the institutional entrepreneurs' identity influenced their ability and motivation to establish institutions throughout the reform. Institutional entrepreneurs have established an identity with strong values that they relate to experienced contractions from their distant past. I term these issues *institutional contradictions as personal jolts.* On this basis, the examined institutional entrepreneurs developed key values such as equally respecting the interests of all players, fighting for social justice, or consistently challenging the status quo. Due to their established identity, the examined institutional entrepreneurs openly embraced complex situations and broad topics during their later professional life. They thus faced further *institutional contradictions as learning experiences*. Through these experiences, they acquired valuable skills that they applied during the examined *institutional contradictions as opportunities for change* (the reform of the cantonal structure

plan). In this way, they were able to act as institutional entrepreneurs during encountered situations of institutional contradictions. Additionally, they were willing to do so as they identified opportunities to realize their own key values by acting on these situations.

These findings make four contributions. First, they demonstrate the formative elements of institutional entrepreneurs and identify their underlying motivation to change institutions, which are both neglected issues in the institutional entrepreneurship literature. Second, the findings contribute to the debate on the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009), which underlines the discrepancy of seemingly disembedded actors from institutions contrasting with institutional theory's core notion of actors being embedded. The insights of this study reveal that institutional entrepreneurs remain embedded, but in personal past experiences that affect their further life journeys rather than in present socially established institutions. Third, the findings call for an adjustment of the social skills concept. Thus far, research has interpreted social skills as a necessary quality that enables actors to transform institutions (Fligstein, 2001). My claim is that social skills are also an expression of actors' identity and the corresponding values. Fourth, the findings provide guidelines for study programs that aim to prepare students for a future work life that increasingly demands creative adaptation.

4.2 Institutional Entrepreneurship and Institutional Contradictions

The concept of the institutional entrepreneur was a reaction to reintroducing agency into new institutional theory. As new institutional theory initially focused on the creation of isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977) and actors' role in the maintenance of institutions (Zucker, 1977), institutional theorists have defined actors as embedded in institutions (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011). Because this approach can hardly explain the causes of change (Amenta & Ramsey, 2010), DiMaggio (1988) emphasized the relevance of so-called institutional entrepreneurs as one responsible factor (beside others) for transformations. Having the resources and the interest, institutional entrepreneurs are said to be able and willing to contribute in modifying institutions according to their interests (Hardy & Maguire, 2017). Since then, various scholars have examined why and how institutional entrepreneurs initiate change by complying with institutional theory's key

principal of actors being embedded (Maguire et al., 2004; Munir & Philipps, 2005; Rao, 1998; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009).

Institutional theorists have discovered that enabling field characteristics, such as institutional contradictions, foster institutional entrepreneurship (Battilana et al., 2009; David et al., 2013; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Hardy & Maguire, 2017). Institutional contradictions are incompatible institutional arrangements that cause inefficiency, nonadaptability, interinstitutional incompatibilities, and/or misaligned interests (Seo & Creed, 2002). They are caused by a clash of logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991) and can appear during institutional pluralism (Kraatz & Block, 2017), during institutional complexity (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta & Lounsbury, 2011; Raynard, 2016), or in hybrid organizations (Battilana, Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2017; Battilana & Dorado, 2010). Institutional entrepreneurs respond to such uncertainties by gathering allies behind a vision for change (Battilana et al., 2009). To do so, they rely on social skills that institutional entrepreneurs are said to possess and to apply (Fligstein, 2001; Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007).

However, extant research has not been able to explain why some actors engage as institutional entrepreneurs during institutional contradictions, while others do not. Voronov and Yorks (2015), for instance, elaborate that some actors feel threatened by institutional contradictions whereas others embrace it for self-learning. Mutch (2007) argues that some actors' ability for reflection varies, whereby actors behave dissimilarly in similar institutional settings. As differences in the reaction to institutional contradictions exist, the paradox of embedded agency remains (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Holm 1995): Why do actors respond differently to institutional problems (Tost, 2011), although they are supposed to be uniformly embedded in institutions (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011)?

To tackle this research puzzle, I study the biography of actors who have reacted differently to comparable situations of institutional contradictions. My dependent variable is thus not a changed institutional outcome as in most research on institutional entrepreneurship (Leca, Battilana & Boxenbaum, 2008) but their actual institutional entrepreneurial behavior or non-behavior during an enabling situation for institutional change. As this approach is rare and few studies on institutional biographies exist – Kisfalvi and Maguire's (2011) research on the life of Rachel Carson being one exception – I hope

to gain new insights on the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs. In line with Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca's (2011) suggestion of studying institutional entrepreneurs' biographies, I thus hope to understand if these actors have been change-makers throughout their lives or if certain situations have made them the way they are today.

To identify the institutional entrepreneurs from among various actors, I measure their social skills or the skills that institutional entrepreneurs apply to change institutions (Fligstein, 2001; Zilber, 2006). In line with Fohim's (2019) literature review on institutional entrepreneurs' skills, I examine actors' behavior along the following seven skill dimensions: (i) Analytical skills (the ability to perceive institutional contradictions), (ii) empathic skills (the ability to put oneself mentally into different positions), (iii) framing skills (the ability to frame institutional projects in line with the audience's knowledge), (iv) translational skills (the ability to speak the language of diverse actors), (v) organizational skills (the ability to establish instruments that ensure the implementation of new institutions), (vi) tactical skills (the ability to counter power struggles), and (vii) timing skills (the ability to identify the right moment to induce change). Depending on their average performance, I divide the examined actors into two groups: Actors who can be clearly defined as institutional entrepreneurs and those who clearly are not. On this basis, I study and compare both groups' biographies.

The following research question is posed, based on this approach: *How does actors' biography influence their ability and willingness to exploit institutional contradictions as an opportunity to change institutions and thus to act as institutional entrepreneurs?*

4.3 Methodology

To study the biography of the investigated actors, I used a phenomenological methodology. This methodology aims to study the lived experiences of people and the interpretation of their experiences (Seidman, 2013). The primary data are interviews with a small number of participants to capture the rich details of actors' experiences (Suddaby, 2006). It is a good approach to return to the "phenomenological roots" of institutional theory that some scholars criticize of having been forgotten (Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen & Smith-Crowe, 2014, p. 275). In line with these arguments, Voronov and Yorks (2015), for instance, suggest a phenomenological methodology to study actors' experience of

institutional contradictions. Recognizing the different typologies of phenomenological methodologies (Gill, 2014), I chose Smith's (2004) interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is an appropriate means to examine participants' sensemaking of their social world.

To identify the institutional entrepreneurs among various actors, I initially measured actors' social skills (Fligstein, 2001), or their institutional entrepreneurs' skills (Fohim, 2019). To do so, I applied Spitzberg's (2003) methods of interpersonal skill assessment. The methodology proposes specific approaches to skill measurements to ensure external, internal, and observer generalization. In other words, by following Spitzberg's (2003) guidelines, I ensured that the measurement is valuable beyond the specific research context, targets the right concept, and produces results that are shared by different observers. On this basis, I could clearly divide the cantonal planners into two groups: one of actors that did behave as institutional entrepreneurs and one of actors that did not do so.

4.3.1 Research Context

I interviewed all 26 cantonal planners of Switzerland. Cantonal planners are the main officials responsible for developing a long-term spatial strategy for their respective cantons. They define, for instance, the location of new streets, hospitals, or schools, or which land can be used for constructions or must be protected for agriculture. Particularly, they must establish a cantonal structure plan, which defines the canton's spatial development for the next ten years. This is a binding document for all public organizations of a canton and its influence touches almost any natural person or legal entity of a canton. Hence, any amendment of the cantonal structure plan naturally reflects an institutional change and touches various social fields of one canton.

All cantonal planners had to amend their cantonal structure plans between 2014 and 2019 as the Swiss population voted in March 2013 for a new law on Spatial Planning (SRF, 2013). The cantonal planners needed to ensure that their cantons meet the new national standards, such as the facilitation of denser construction and the concentration of housing and working zones (RPG, 1979) to provide measures to conserve green land despite demographic development. Although this reform involves only the drawing of a new plan, the underlying process is more complex. By virtue of the federal and direct democratic

tradition of Switzerland, the cantonal planners had to include diverse actors such as municipalities, politicians, environmentalists, animal protectionists, car lobbyists, or companies throughout the reform process (Gilgen, 2012). If some of these actors felt that their interests were being neglected, they could directly or indirectly scupper the reform by intervening through the cantonal parliaments and/or cantonal governments (KPK, 2017).

Due to the necessity of including such diverse actors and due to the paradigmatic nature of the reform, all 26 cantonal planners thus faced comparable situations of institutional contradictions. They had to deal with actors of different logics and had to establish a new spatial vision to unite these diverse actors. Hence, the reform process was a situation that theory identifies as an opportunity to engage as an institutional entrepreneur. Consequently, the examined reform process was an ideal opportunity to study the cantonal planners' responses to institutional contradictions and, on this basis, to detect the institutional entrepreneurs among the cantonal planners. Based on the results, I could thus study the different biographies of the detected institutional entrepreneurs and compare them with the biographies of the planners that did not act as institutional entrepreneurs.

4.3.2 Data Collection

For the first phase (the identification of institutional entrepreneurs) I collected data in line with Spitzberg's (2003) method to measure interpersonal skills. Spitzberg (2003) summarizes different methods to determine interpersonal skills: direct methods such as observations or indirect ones such as questionnaires or interviews. He emphasizes the need to include different approaches when measuring the same skills to compensate for the drawbacks of each method. Based on this and within constraints of feasibility, I applied three different indirect approaches to measure the cantonal planners' institutional entrepreneurs' skills.

Specifically, I collected diverse data about the cantonal planners' ability to enhance change during situations of institutional contradictions. First, I undertook a semi-structured interview with all 26 cantonal planners about their applied strategies to reform their respective cantonal structure plans. I asked specific questions to cover the seven dimensions of institutional entrepreneurs' skills (Fohim, 2019). I interviewed them in their mother tongues, either German or French, at their respective workplaces. To triangulate the data, I

studied available documents about each cantonal reform process, such as cantonal and federal reports as well as media articles. Second, I interviewed well-connected field experts on their impressions of the cantonal planners' ability to act as institutional entrepreneurs during institutional contradictions. Third, I asked the cantonal planners to complete the self-evaluation questionnaire *Political Skills Inventory* (Ferris et al., 2005). The questionnaire includes items on the respondent's ability to mobilize actors and thus served as a good proxy to measure the planners' institutional entrepreneurs' skills and allowed the inclusion of the planners' own perspectives on their ability to be a change-maker.

For the second phase (the studying of the cantonal planners' biography), I undertook phenomenological interviews in line with Seidman's (2013) guidelines. As this methodology aims to examine actors' lived experiences and the interpretation of these experiences (Tomkins & Eatough, 2013), Seidman (2013) proposes a specific procedure to undertake such interviews. He recommends conducting three interviews with different topics: One about persons' daily activities, one about their biography, and a final one about interviewees' reflections on these experiences. This three-stage approach should increase intersubjective validation, meaning that the subjective interpretation of lived experiences shall be transmitted to the researchers as authentically as possible (Høffding & Martiny, 2016).

To meet these guidelines, I conducted two additional interviews with eight shortlisted cantonal planners. I chose a small number of participants for the second research phase to comply with the methodological guidelines in order to investigate their lived experiences in greater depth. I selected the five cantonal planners who had the highest scores for their institutional entrepreneurs' skills and three who had the lowest score on their institutional entrepreneurs' skills. In this way, I sought to compare biographies across two strongly different groups regarding their ability to initiate change.

During the first additional interview with the shortlisted cantonal planners, I asked them to openly talk about their professional career paths. I interviewed them, for instance, about their courses of study, their career choices, or relevant work projects. To triangulate these data, I referred to available documents about their life journeys, such as CVs, LinkedIn or Facebook profiles, or academic works that they had written. In addition, I interviewed two persons who knew the shortlisted cantonal planners for many years (such

as family members, friends, and/or current/former work colleagues) and I asked them about their perspectives on the respective cantonal planner's life journey. For the final interviews with the shortlisted cantonal planners, I interrogated them to reflect on their previous experiences and the influence of these experiences on current tasks such as reforming the cantonal structure plan. I recorded all conducted interviews for further processing. Table 8 summarizes the collected data during the first and second research phase.

Table 8: Overview of Data

Type of data	**Phase 1 (Identification of institutional entrepreneurs)**	**Phase 2 (Biography of institutional entrepreneurs)**
Interviews	1 semi-structured interview with each of the 26 cantonal planners	3 interviews (2 open-ended interviews plus the semi-structured interview of phase 1) with each of the eight shortlisted cantonal planners
Third-party perspectives	3 interviews with field experts on each cantonal planner's performance to deal with institutional contradictions	2 interviews with longstanding acquaintances of each shortlisted cantonal planner (family members, friends, and/or current/former work colleagues) on each examined life journey
Documents	2 to 5 official documents and/or newspaper articles about each cantonal reform process	Available CVs, LinkedIn-profiles, Facebook-profiles, and self-authored articles of each shortlisted cantonal planner
Survey	Results of Political Skills Inventory for each cantonal planner as proxy to measure their institutional entrepreneurs' skills	-

4.3.3 Data Analysis

To analyze the data of the first research phase (the identification of institutional entrepreneurs) I referred again to Spitzberg's (2003) method of measuring interpersonal skills to comply with three layers of generalization: external, internal, and observer. External generalization ensures that the measured skills can be generalized beyond a specific project. Internal generalization guarantees that the measurement validity is met. Observer generalization aims to assure that different observers obtain the same results. As Spitzberg (2003) proposes the application of various measurement methods parallelly, all methods used should match these different layers of generalization as closely as possible.

To meet external generalization for the first round of interviews with all cantonal planners, I allowed them to refer to other examples if the examined project (reform of the cantonal structure plan) did not permit the application of a discussed skill dimension. Additionally, the interviews with the field experts (on the cantonal planners' performance) complied with the external generalization as I asked them about the general performance of the cantonal planners to act as institutional entrepreneurs (beyond the reform process). Finally, the self-evaluation questionnaire also complied with external generalization as it included general statements independent of any project.

Internal generalization was also met for each applied measurement method. The semi-structured interviews with the cantonal planners were initially tested with other persons and subsequently modified to ensure that the questions were understood correctly. Internal generalization for the field experts' interviews was ensured as I initially defined and discussed the concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills with the interviewees. Finally, the self-evaluation questionnaire complied with internal generalization as it had been initially tested by its inventors (Ferris et al., 2005).

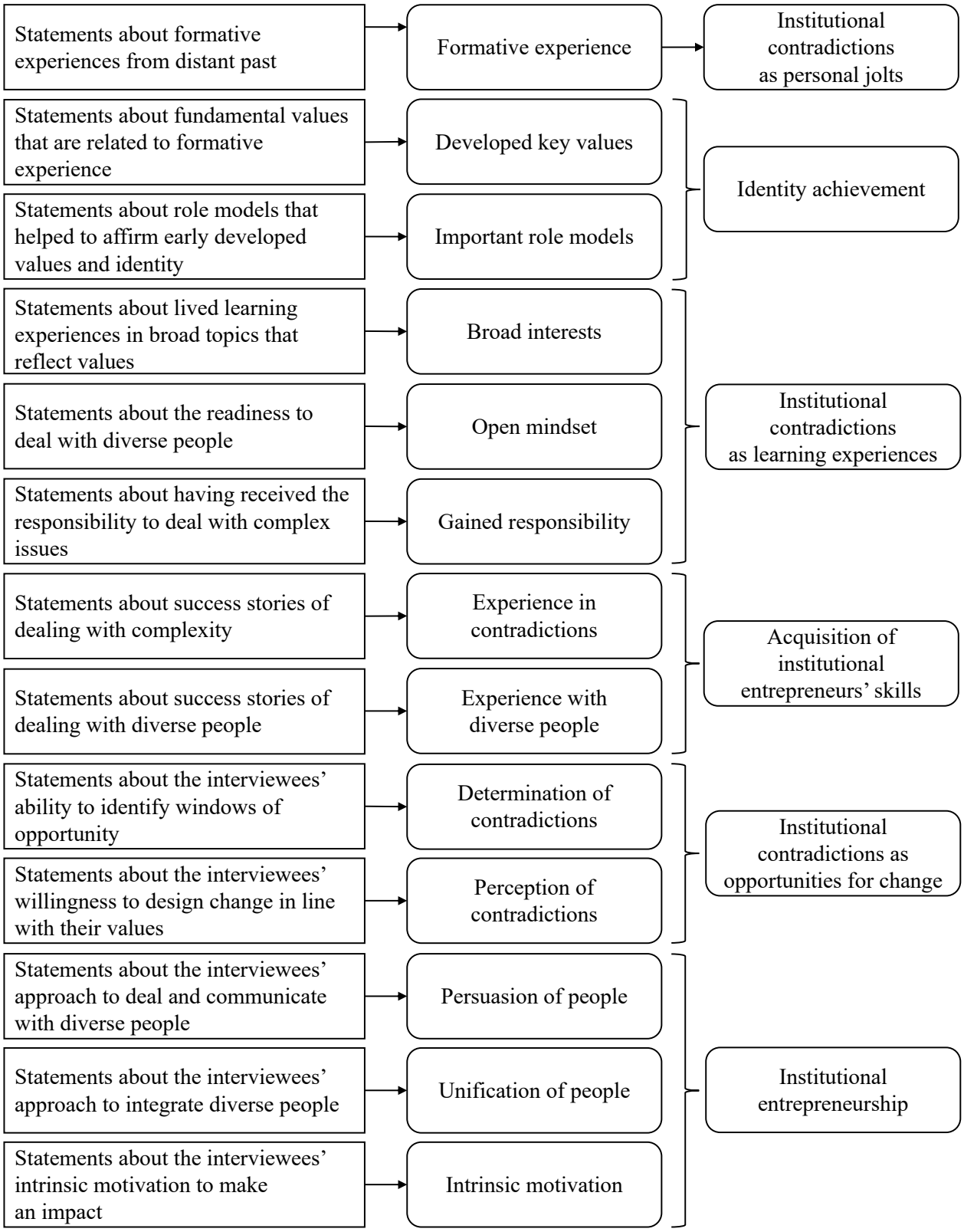
To ensure the generalizability beyond observer, I established rankings based on the different applied measurement methods and I compared them. I thus established a ranking based on the semi-structured interviews with all 26 cantonal planners. I ensured that my own ranking was done in the most transparent way possible. For this purpose, I audio-coded decisive sentences that indicated the possession or non-possession of one of the seven institutional entrepreneurs' skill dimensions. I collected these sentences and compared

them separately across all cantonal planners for each skill dimension. On this basis, I ranked and
graded the degree of each skill dimension for each cantonal planner (1 = low possession of respective skill dimension; 5 = high possession of respective skill dimension). Based on these results, I developed an average value of institutional entrepreneurs' skills for each cantonal planner and a ranking of all 26 cantonal planners (Appendix B, Table 9). I compared this ranking with that of the field experts and the ranking calculated from the applied questionnaire. As these rankings largely coincided with my own, I was confident to have identified the institutional entrepreneurs among the cantonal planners as well as the cantonal planners that are not perceived as institutional entrepreneurs.

To process the phenomenological interviews, I applied Smith's (2004) interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is a useful tool to understand interviewees' sensemaking of their social world (Gill, 2014). Although the process of generalization from phenomenological interviews is contested (Gill, 2015), other approaches acknowledge the identification of general patterns among the selected interviewees (Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999). However, it is important to derive general findings from the raw data without introducing theory at too early a stage during IPA (Eathough & Smith, 2017). I thus adopted this approach to identify overall patterns among the different cantonal planners' life journeys.

Following Smith and colleagues' (1999) guidelines, I transcribed all interviews with the shortlisted cantonal planners alongside those with their lifelong acquaintances. I finally possessed five transcribed interviews for each shortlisted cantonal planner. Throughout the transcripts, I looked for themes in each biography that best summarized statements about their essential lived experiences and interpretations of these experiences. I undertook this procedure for all cantonal planners. In the next step, I tried to identify shared themes among the cantonal planners' biographies. I could particularly identify these among the life journeys of the entrepreneurial planners. Having established some initial shared themes, I reexamined the interview data to specify the themes and to summarize them in Table 10 (Appendix C). Additionally, I tried to identify patterns and connections among the identified shared themes and generalized the shared themes into superordinate themes (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Superordinate Themes of Institutional Entrepreneurs' Life Journeys



4.4 Examples of Cantonal Planners' Life Journeys

As mentioned above, the interviews reveal shared themes among the cantonal planners who acted as institutional entrepreneurs. To better illustrate these findings, I present here the life journeys of two entrepreneurial planners (cantonal planners A and C). The life journeys of the cantonal planners who did not act as institutional entrepreneurs (cantonal planners V, X, and Z), meanwhile, differed in certain aspects. I summarize their life journeys as well, to highlight the decisive differences.

4.4.1 Cantonal Planner A

Planner A is one of the few female cantonal planners among the 26 public officials. She has been working for 15 years for the canton that she represents today and has been the head of the department and thus the cantonal planner for six years. She could have worked in this position even earlier but rejected previous offers. Although she had started to study history and the Spanish language, she realized that her true preference was for geography, particularly spatial planning. She realized that spatial planning is a task that would allow her to do something that complied with her own values. As a team player in nature (in work as well as in sport), she wants to contribute to the public interest. She understands that the public interest is a balancing of diverse private interests. According to her, not all interests can always be fulfilled as they often contradict each other. However, it is very important for her that all involved interests are considered and respected as much as possible.

> I think it is related with my perspective of working for the community. It might be related with my values. One aspect that is very important to me is the principle of equal treatment. It is possible to make different decisions [that favor some more than others]. But it is important to justify why we take such decisions, and we always must apply the same principles to derive to these decisions.

As she elaborated, she developed very strong values for the consideration of equal interests in her childhood. As a daughter of a Portuguese father, she often experienced that her brother received more opportunities than she did. However, her Swiss mother argued

with her father to ensure that all children received the same rights. This experience, she said, was essential to have established the values that guided her throughout her life:

> I would always hear my mother saying: 'It is important to treat all people in the same way. It is important to respect everybody in the same manner.'

As she strove for equal treatment of all interests, she expanded her professional knowledge in line with her values to better meet her inner convictions. For instance, she took various advanced training courses about participatory processes in spatial planning through which she improved her capabilities to better understand and communicate with diverse actors. Further, during previous projects, she actively sought opinions from different actors within and outside the department to better understand their viewpoints. All these experiences helped her acquire skills that she could use when reforming the cantonal structure plan.

During the reform, she was thus prepared to deal with the prevalent contradictions. She knew that she had to involve diverse actors and she had the experience to deal with them. But at the same time, she was also motivated to integrate many diverse actors as it was an opportunity to realize her own key values.

> Due to my values, I want to ensure the well-being of a maximum of people. I don't want to favor certain groups or individuals. […] The most difficult task is to explain to the people when a certain project cannot be completed. I must explain that it isn't against their project. But if all similar projects would be accepted, then it would violate the interest of the entire society.

To summarize, cantonal planner A had established values of equality that she related to decisive distant past experiences. Based on these values, throughout her professional life, she intentionally approached various stakeholders and took relevant training courses to be better capable of integrating involved actors' interests. These professional experiences helped her throughout the reform process as the task demanded an intensive dialogue with

different stakeholders. Furthermore, she was motivated to undertake the reform as she recognized an opportunity to realize her own key values by leading the process.

4.4.2 Cantonal Planner C

Cantonal planner C has been working for the canton that he represents today for twelve years. He studied botany as the protection of nature was very important to him. However, he realized that botany would not allow him to have a big impact on nature. Therefore, he started to work for a municipal nature-protection authority where he became familiar with spatial planning. Based on this experience, he pursued a continuing education in spatial planning that allowed him to start his career as a planner. After various working experiences in different cantons, he finally became the planner for the canton C. During the years he worked in his current canton, he introduced many innovative projects. For instance, he implemented many legal requirements within his assigned canton before the national law even existed. In line with these actions, he wants the canton to be innovative and self-critical.

> We need to have the courage to try out things. Of course, this is difficult in public administration. But we should still try and see how it works. And if we realize "Oh, no! It didn't work," then we have to try out something else. Trial and error. […] But that's how planning is working. Anybody who says otherwise else isn't being honest. Because an absolute truth doesn't exist.

These strong values in favor of being innovative and of challenging the status quo seems to relate to a conflict he had with his father during his youth. His father, being a member of a conservative political party, had the exact opposite attitude and sought to defend traditions. He noted he would often argue with his father.

> Finally, I moved out from home when I was 17 or 18. […] My mother couldn't bear it anymore… all these discussions. My father was strongly connected to a conservative political party, and I came home with all these left-wing stories.

This attitude of challenging the status quo appears throughout his life. It enabled him to openly embrace different disciplines. He studied botany, but also geography and German philology. Further, when he began studying spatial planning, he chose a topic for his final thesis that did not relate to anything he did before, a decision that surprised all his supervisors at the time. For the same reason, he also likes to receive the perspectives of different people that challenge his own worldview. In this regard, he remains critical of his own work.

> I am not a dogmatist. I don't believe that somebody knows what is best for the humanity. Maybe we need some people who believe what is best in order to advance. [Environmental protection] is important to me. But so is economic development. The whole society is important. And for society [or for some people of the society], environmental protection is not always the most important topic … I just believe that we must bear in mind that things can change. Social values and social rules can change, which is why we as spatial planners cannot provide the perfect solution.

Due to his critical mindset, he has had diverse experiences and was thus much better prepared to deal with the contradictions that he confronted during the cantonal reform process. For instance, when dealing with the head of another department, he could refer to one of his past experiences.

> I studied botany as well as geography. My diploma work was about the sediments of a certain lake. And when I talked with the head of the department of environmental protection, I realized that I must change my language. So, I referred to my work and explored the similarities between the lake that I studied and the lake here in Canton C. And I think this is the most important thing [when working as a spatial planner]: You must understand and speak the language of others.

To summarize, cantonal planner C sought life experiences in line with his own values of challenging the status quo. These values seemed to be related with decisive distant past experiences. In line with his values, he made broad experiences in different disciplines

and contexts, whereby he established skills to deal with diverse stakeholders. He was thus skilled in conducting the reform process. Additionally, he was motivated to undertake the reform as it was another opportunity to comply with his key values.

4.4.3 Cantonal Planners That Did Not Act as Institutional Entrepreneurs

Whereas the life journeys of the identified entrepreneurial planners displayed similarities, the biographies of those three planners that did not act as institutional entrepreneurs did not reveal a common pattern. Each of their biographies differed in diverse aspects from that of their entrepreneurial colleagues. In this section, I summarize these biographies, highlighting the crucial differences identified.

Cantonal planner V. Cantonal planner V has been cantonal planner for 16 years. Despite his many years of working experience, he was only partly able to address the encountered contradictions. Particularly, he could not integrate all relevant affected actors during the reform process as it could be confirmed by different sources. When studying his biography, one essential difference to the entrepreneurial cantonal planners' life journeys emerged: Cantonal planner V did not mention any formative experience beside having explicitly asked for this point during the final interview. Therefore, he didn't express specific values that he related to formative experiences. His career choices were mainly guided by finding a safe position that is reasonably paid. His life path was quite straightforward and did not include the embracing of many diverse topics or viewpoints as the entrepreneurial planners reproduced. When undertaking a continuing education, the underlying motivation was rather to improve the competencies required to obtain a better position. His main network comprised other spatial planners whom he considered a source of inspiration. However, he did not actively embrace diverse actors to integrate their perspectives. Consequently, he was less trained in dealing with and integrating the diverse affected actors of the reform process. Furthermore, he did not express a specific underlying motivation to realize a certain value when establishing the new plan. He embraced the reform rather as an obligatory task to be fulfilled.

Cantonal planner Z. Cantonal planner Z has been working for 17 years as a cantonal planner. He seems to have identified the prevalent contradictions that evolved during the reform. However, he did not guide the situation towards certain values as his entrepreneurial colleagues did. When asked about his biography, he also mentioned challenging past experiences as the entrepreneurial planners did. They emerged as his parents had specific job expectations on him. Due to this experience, he underwent quite an unusual life course to finally find a job that suited him better. However, whereas all entrepreneurial planners could clearly express some values that are important to them, he could not do so:

> This is a difficult question. I cannot answer this question spontaneously. I am a bit overstrained with this question.

Pursuant to this indecisiveness, he seemed to have been troubled by the prevalent contradictions during the reform process. Whereas the entrepreneurial planners responded to this ambiguity by realizing their own key values, he transferred this task to the cantonal government. He didn't want to make any strategic decisions on his own and asked the government to do so. However, the government criticized him for continuously demanding such "political decisions." Consequently, in line with the many comments he made, the reform process turned out to be quite an exhausting task for him: He recognized the contradictions but was unable to respond to them.

Cantonal planner X. Cantonal planner X has represented his canton for 20 years. It seemed that cantonal planner X was unable to communicate with the diverse actors involved and thus integrate them. It was a surprising assessment as he has a background in journalism. The additional interviews revealed that he had developed – similarly as the entrepreneurial planners – specific key values based on crucial lived experiences. He established the conviction that people are enlightened human beings who should do what they believe is best for themselves. Accordingly, he wrote a series of articles in which he argued that media studies wrongly conceptualize humans as easily influenceable; a perception – as he states – that contradicts the principles of enlightenment. He has lived

this strong liberal attitude throughout his life by embracing many diverse job opportunities free from any social expectations. He thus stated, “If an 80-year-old person has the desire to write a doctoral thesis, he/she should just do it.”

This attitude seems to have influenced his perception of the ongoing reform process. He interpreted the reform rather as a violation of his own values: He did not agree that a hierarchically higher institution such as a canton defines the binding spatial guidelines for their municipalities. Consequently, he did not want to apply certain communication techniques to convince the involved actors as he believed that the municipalities should define what is best for themselves. However, he successfully developed a side-project that would enable the municipalities to better introduce their opinions during similar reforms in the future. Hence, he established a project that correlated much better with his own values. Consequently, the reason that he did not act as an institutional entrepreneur during the reform process was not primarily a question of ability but rather of willingness.

4.5 Identity Formation and Institutional Entrepreneurship

The analysis reveals that the formed identity of the shortlisted planners influenced their ability and motivation to act as institutional entrepreneurs during the examined reform. The institutional entrepreneurs among the cantonal planners displayed a strong identity with accompanying key values. They related the establishment of their identities to formative experiences from their distant past. In line with their achieved identities, they faced broad experiences throughout their professional career; experiences that helped them in successfully undertaking the reform process. In contrast, cantonal planner V, who did not refer to any formative experience, was unable to entirely recognize the prevalent institutional contradictions created by the reform. Cantonal planner Z, who referred to challenging experiences from his past, but who did not develop specific values based on them, meanwhile, was overwhelmed by the prevalent contradictions. Finally, cantonal planner X, who did express a strong identity with corresponding key values, did not want to act as an institutional entrepreneur as he perceived a violation of his key values in the reform. The analysis thus illustrates that actors’ formed identities, which they usually relate to distant past experiences, influence their ability and willingness to transform institutions during institutional contradictions. I will elaborate this point in further depth hereinafter.

The analysis further indicates that their life journeys explain why some of the shortlisted planners were more able and willing to act as institutional entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurial planners had had broad experiences in diverse settings throughout their professional career in line with their *achieved identity* and had thus acquired valuable skills that they could apply throughout the reform process. Cantonal planner V, contrastingly, underwent a more straightforward life journey in line with a *foreclosed identity*. He did not embrace many diverse experiences and related mainly to a professional network; he was not equally capable of identifying the existing institutional contradictions and thus of acting as an institutional entrepreneur. Cantonal planner Z, finally, also had diverse life experiences, as his entrepreneurial colleagues did. However, he experienced these as a phase of self-discovery. He partly remained in a status of *identity moratorium* as he was vague about specific key values. Consequently, he could not properly classify the prevalent contradictory situation and felt overburdened by it.

In the following section, I discuss the different steps of the entrepreneurial planners' life journeys to explain how their experiences influenced their ability and willingness to exploit institutional contradictions during a certain point in time. Additionally, I compare their journeys with the planners that did not act as entrepreneurial planners to identify the differences and to explain why some actors seem to be unable and/or unwilling to act as institutional entrepreneurs during specific institutional contradictions.

4.5.1 Institutional Contradictions as Personal Jolts and Identity Achievement

All entrepreneurial planners mentioned specific experiences from their distant past as crucial events during their lives. These could be more severe experiences as in the case of cantonal planner A, who faced equality issues in her parental home, or as in the case of cantonal planner D, who had to deal with his parents' divorce. These moments could also arise from a parent's history, as in the case of cantonal planner B, whose father's war experiences significantly influenced their father–son relationship. Less severe but still significant events were also mentioned in the case of cantonal planner C who was in steady confrontation with his father or in the case of cantonal planner E who needed to find his role in the family as the last among three brothers. All were very diverse experiences but were from the interviewees' perspective formative events during their lives. I label them

institutional contradictions as personal jolts because the planners related their identity and corresponding key values to these distant past experiences.

Cantonal planner A established strong values to sustain equal interests, cantonal planner B developed values in favor of social justice, cantonal planner C developed values to consistently question the status quo, cantonal planner D created an almost spiritual conviction that all humans are connected to each other and to their environment, and cantonal planner E understood himself as a bridge builder. They all connected these values in relation to their experienced contradictions. Hence, having developed these values, they tried to resolve the initially experienced contradictions by establishing an achieved identity.

These findings thus confirm existing research on how identity work relates to experienced institutional contradictions. Creed, DeJordy, and Lok (2010), for instance, demonstrate how homosexual priests established new roles to address the lived contradictions of being homosexual within an environment that usually does not accept same-sex love. In addition to these findings, however, the analysis suggests that not everybody automatically resolves such contradictions. In the present case, for instance, cantonal planner Z also experienced contradictions during his youth as his parents placed specific job expectations on him. However, he was not able to make specific commitments to certain values as a result of this experience. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that identity formation also occurs without exposure to contradictions. Cantonal planner V did not refer to any contradictory experiences from his distant past but still had a clear idea of what he wanted to do with his life. Hence, cantonal planner V and Z developed different identity statutes than their entrepreneurial colleagues.

These findings correspond to the theory of identity formation that was developed by Marcia (1966). He defines individuals who have not faced a crisis but who have made a clear commitment to specific values as identity foreclosed (as in the case of cantonal planner V). Individuals who have faced a crisis but have not expressed a clear commitment to specific values are defined as being in an identity moratorium (as in the case of cantonal planner Z). Individuals who have experienced a crisis and who have built strong commitments upon it are identity achieved individuals (such as the entrepreneurial planners but also cantonal planner X). Hence, the analysis shows that the entrepreneurial planners

differed from the planners that did not act as institutional entrepreneurs mainly by the identity statuses that are differently related to their distant past.

4.5.2 Identity Achievement and Institutional Contradictions as Learning Experiences

All entrepreneurial planners were open to embracing a wide range of experiences in line with their achieved identity. Cantonal planner A realized that she wanted to work for the public interest as it suits her values, and thus she decided to focus on spatial planning. Cantonal planner B did welfare work as it corresponded with his conviction to stand up for social justice. Cantonal planner C discovered through detours that spatial planning is a discipline that must be approached from different perspectives – which complies with his values of challenging the status quo. Cantonal planner D discovered environmental science and interpreted the discipline based on his corresponding beliefs that everything and everybody is connected to each other. Cantonal planner E chose spatial planning as it was an opportunity to combine and integrate different perspectives, an attitude that he always practiced. In line with this logic, all entrepreneurial planners sought diverse experiences throughout their lives and became familiar with diverse settings. Simultaneously, they displayed an open mindset and dealt with people from different backgrounds throughout their lives and professional careers. Hence, they wanted to understand different disciplines and contexts as well as the people who represent them. They sought such diverse people as they realized the need to do so to comply with their values. In this way, they faced further institutional contradictions as learning experiences due to their established achieved identities.

While pursuing such broad experiences, they came across relevant role models who supported them in confirming and finetuning their achieved identity. In the case of cantonal planner A, her geography professor introduced her to spatial planning and supported her in finding her first job. Cantonal planner B was also inspired by a professor who introduced him to the concept of sustainable development – a concept that allowed him to combine his values with his social work and his studies. Cantonal planner C was inspired by his German professor who taught him the art of debating. Cantonal planner D met the director of a natural museum who taught him the complex relationships in nature. Finally, cantonal

planner E was inspired by the presentation at his school by an urban planner who explained that a city is a complex organism consisting of diverse aspects. Consequently, the different role models inspired the entrepreneurial planners as they helped to label the planners' established values and provided examples of what to achieve with these values.

These findings comply with existing theory on institutional entrepreneurship. Burt (2004), for instance, states that change agents are more likely connected with diverse people, whereby they become familiar with different ways of thinking and acting. Similarly, Greenwood and Suddaby (2006) assert that actors in "distinct network locations" would be more capable to act as institutional entrepreneurs. This existing research, however, leaved open the question of why institutional entrepreneurs are more willing to embrace such diverse settings initially. The analysis discloses that institutional entrepreneurs are eager to experience further institutional contradictions as their established values guides them to do so: The entrepreneurial planners possessed strong values that enabled them to embrace the world free from any social borders.

Research based on Marcia's (1966) theory on identity statuses confirms this finding: Identity-achieved individuals (who have made clear commitments to certain values as in the case of the entrepreneurial planners) are more open to new experiences than, for instance, identity-foreclosed individuals (Tesch & Cameron, 1987). Correspondingly, cantonal planner V (as an identity-foreclosed person) remained mainly in his professional field and established his main network within it. Cantonal planner Z (as an individual in an identity moratorium) embraced diverse experiences but with a different motive: He was rather looking for a job that suited him better. Hence, the analysis highlights that the willingness to embrace further institutional contradictions is strongly related with an actor's initially formed identity status.

4.5.3 Institutional Contradictions as Learning Experiences and Acquisition of Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills

All entrepreneurial planners mentioned that their previous professional experiences essentially supported them when reforming the cantonal structure plan. They often referred to complex previous situations that involved diverse interests, where they had learned to approach such contradictions by establishing a consensus among stakeholders. Through

these experiences, the entrepreneurial planners learnt to deal with diverse people. They became empathic toward various people and realized that they need to adopt their language in line with actors' backgrounds when trying to integrate them. They also learned that tactical moves are sometimes needed in such situations. Consequently, through previous experiences with institutional contradictions, they established valuable skills that they could apply when reforming the cantonal structure plan. As they were open to embracing institutional contradictions in line with their achieved identities, they were often exposed to such contradictory situations and encountered various opportunities to acquire institutional entrepreneurs' skills.

While the entrepreneurial planners could prove to possess such skills, they often received further responsibilities that exposed them to additional institutional contradictions. Accordingly, in almost all cases, the entrepreneurial planners were asked to become cantonal planners. Their political superiors hired them because they wanted somebody who could deal with such complex situations. Therefore, entrepreneurial planners received additional opportunities to deal with institutional contradictions, where they could further strengthen their institutional entrepreneurs' skills.

These findings correspond to existing research on institutional entrepreneurship. Scholars have already discussed that institutional entrepreneurs possess certain skills that enable them to identify complex situations and to deal with a variety of people (Fohim, 2019; Fligstein, 2001). Garud and colleagues (2002), for instance, elaborate that institutional entrepreneurs have skills to motivate cooperation "by providing […] common meanings and identities around which actions can be undertaken and justified" (207). Further, Perkmann and Spicer (2007) recognize that institutional entrepreneurs can frame new "institutions in ways that appeal to wider audiences" (1103). However, this existing research has not explained how the respective institutional entrepreneurs had developed these skills. The analysis clarifies that entrepreneurial planners have developed their skills through broad experiences, which they searched in line with their achieved identities. Accordingly, cantonal planner V, who did not have such broad experiences, did not express institutional entrepreneurs' skills in the same way. Neither did cantonal planner Z, who sought broad experiences but as part of a self-discovery process.

4.5.4 Embracing Institutional Contradictions as Opportunities for Change

The analysis further reveals that the entrepreneurial planners were able to identify the present institutional contradictions that emerged throughout the reform process. They were aware that the reform of the cantonal structure touched the interests of diverse actors and that these interests needed to be integrated into one coherent strategy. Consequently, they understood that the reform of the cantonal structure plan required great sensitivity. Cantonal planner D accordingly noted that:

> Spatial planning should learn much more from sociology or psychology. It is a political authority that takes decisions… Hence, it is a cultural and political challenge. If we handle spatial planning only on the technical level, it's like religion during the middle ages: It exists, but nobody understands it.

Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that the entrepreneurial planners perceived the present institutional contradictions from the perspective of their identities. Cantonal planner A recognized an opportunity in the reform process to establish fair decisions that respect different interests as much as possible. Cantonal planner B wanted to establish a reform that adequately balances the diverse demands. Cantonal planner C interpreted the reform as a chance to achieve innovation as a canton. Cantonal planner D aimed to develop a future that brings humans into greater harmony with their environment. Cantonal planner E strived to advance the canton in a way that satisfies all relevant actors of his canton. Hence, the interpretation of the present contradictions was not uniform. All interpretations related to the respective key values of each entrepreneurial planner. The entrepreneurial planners were thus able to identify the underlying institutional contradictions during the reform while perceiving them through the lenses of their achieved identities.

Existing research on institutional entrepreneurship support these findings. Tracey, Philipps, and Jarvis (2011), for instance, discover how institutional entrepreneurs identify opportunities for change in situations of clashing logics. Mair and Marti (2009) recognize that institutional entrepreneurs identify so-called institutional voids upon which they can establish new institutions. However, this existing research has neglected to explain why certain actors are able to recognize such ambiguous situations while others miss them. The

present analysis reveals that institutional entrepreneurs can identify such contradictions due to their earlier established achieved identities. Thanks to their achieved identity and their corresponding values, they embrace such situations more holistically as they recognize opportunities to realize their own values. Furthermore, they are usually more familiar with comparable situations as their identity has already guided them toward similar contradictions.

This established insight corresponds with previous research on identity statuses. Empirical findings prove that identity achieved individuals as well as individuals in identity moratorium possess a higher level of integrative complexity (the ability to recognize and integrate multiple perspectives) than identified foreclosed individuals (Slugoski, Marcia & Koopman, 1984). Accordingly, the entrepreneurial planners as well as cantonal planner Z (as an individual in an identity moratorium) recognized the prevalent institutional contradictions better than cantonal planner V (as an identity-foreclosed individual).

4.5.5 Exploiting Institutional Contradictions Through Institutional Entrepreneurship

The analysis further shows that the entrepreneurial planners acted as institutional entrepreneurs during the cantonal structural reform. They were able to do so as they applied their previously established institutional entrepreneurs' skills throughout the reform process: They persuaded the involved actors and unified them behind a new spatial vision. Additionally, the analysis discloses that the entrepreneurial planners were more motivated to undertake the reform and did not solely interpret it as a required implementation of a political decision. Consequently, the entrepreneurial planners acted as institutional entrepreneurs throughout the reform process as they were able and willing to do so.

Existing research confirms that institutional entrepreneurs contribute in creating, and/or disrupting institutions (Lawrence et al., 2011). However, this research has failed to answer why certain actors are willing to start this process. The analysis discloses that institutional entrepreneurs' willingness is linked to their achieved identities. The entrepreneurial planners recognized an opportunity to realize their earlier established values in the ambiguous situation. Therefore, they were motivated to launch a process of institutional change. Simultaneously, they were also better prepared to do so, because they

were experienced in exploiting similar situations that they had faced in line with their achieved identities. Cantonal planner V, meanwhile, understood the reform of the cantonal structure plan as an administrative task that needs to be fulfilled. This behavior underlines his identity-foreclosed personality that predicts a rather obeying attitude (Podd, 1972). Cantonal planner Z, in turn, was overburdened by the prevalent situation. He was able to identify the institutional contradictions but as he did not make clear commitments to certain values, he did not know how to shape this ambiguous situation. Research on identity statuses accordingly confirms that individuals in an identity moratorium (such as cantonal planner Z) express increased struggles to function during stressful situations (Marcia, 1967). Cantonal planner X, finally, didn't want to exploit the prevalent institutional contradictions, because they violated his achieved identity and his corresponding values: He believes that humans should decide on their own what is best for them, and thus interpreted the reform as a situation in which the canton would patronize the subordinate municipalities. Consequently, he did not apply institutional entrepreneurs' skills in the same degree as his entrepreneurial colleagues did during the reform process.

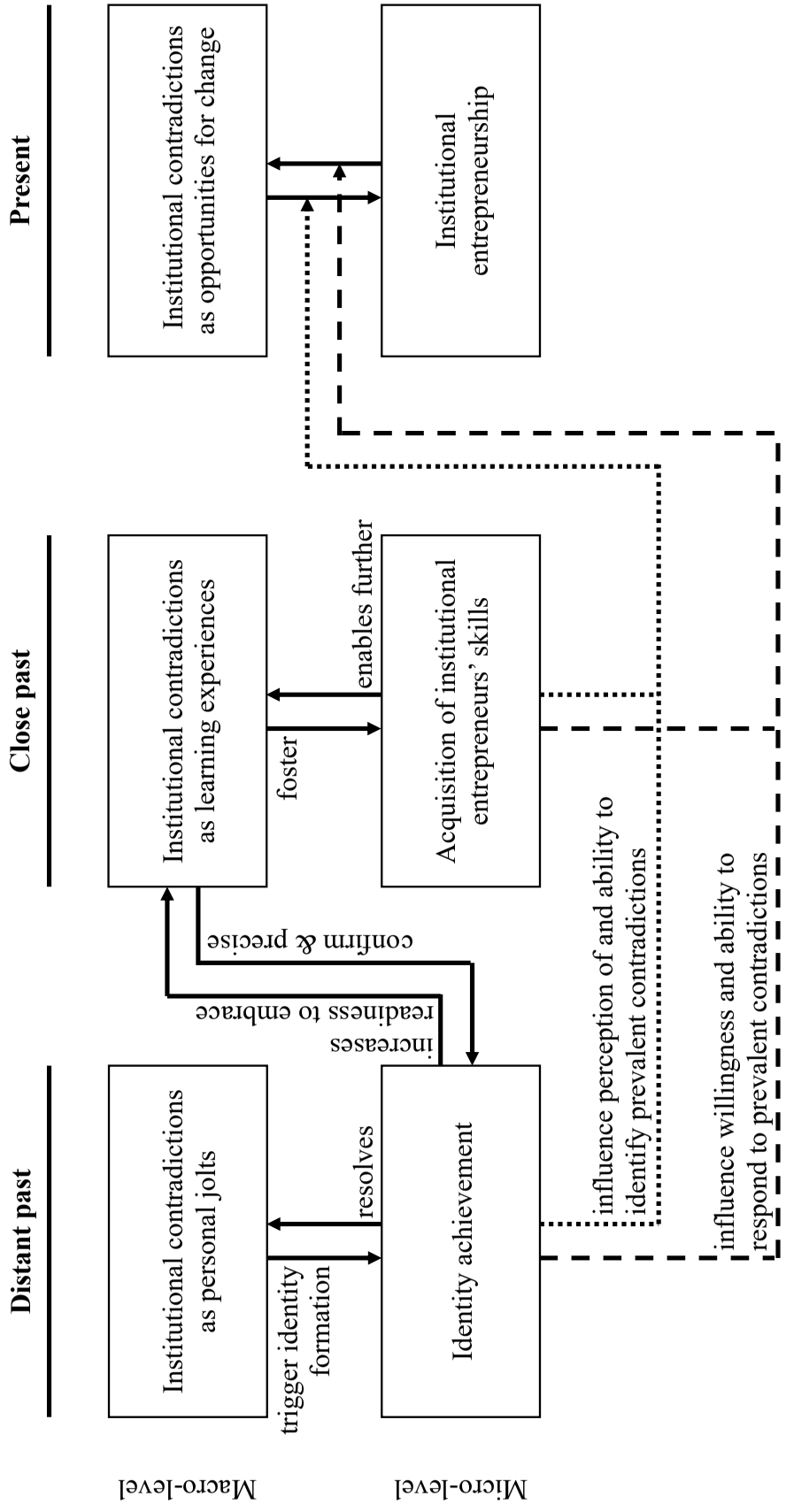
4.6 Discussion and Conclusions

I investigated the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs. I studied and compared the biographies of actors who did or did not act as institutional entrepreneurs during an enabling situation for change – namely, during institutional contradictions. To this end, I examined the life journeys of eight out of 26 shortlisted cantonal planners (five institutional entrepreneurs and three that are not perceived as institutional entrepreneurs) who reformed their cantonal structure plans within their cantons between 2014 and 2019 – a reform that meant comparable institutional contradictions for each cantonal planner and an opportunity to act as an institutional entrepreneur. I investigated their lived experiences in depth by applying a phenomenological methodology. Using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), I developed superordinate themes among the identified institutional entrepreneurs' life journeys, and I compared them with the planners' journeys that did not act as entrepreneurs. To interpret the results and to better generalize the findings, I mirrored them with existing research on institutional entrepreneurship and on identity formation.

By this approach, I developed a process model that illustrates the emergence of institutional entrepreneurs as shown in Figure 8. The findings disclose how institutional entrepreneurs' achieved identities – which they relate to their distant past as a reaction to experienced personal jolts – influence their life journeys and their ability and willingness to contribute in changing institutions. Due to actors' achieved identities, they embrace further institutional contradictions throughout their professional career. By these learning experiences, actors acquire institutional entrepreneurs' skills that they can apply when confronted with upcoming contradictions. Actors' identity status thus influences their perception of and their ability to recognize current institutional contradictions, as well as their ability and willingness to exploit such situations. If actors recognize in present contradictions opportunities to realize their established values, they might be able and motivated to exploit these contradictions by acting as institutional entrepreneurs.

Accordingly, actors refer to formative experiences from their *distant past* to which they relate the establishment of their identities and corresponding values. In the present cases, the entrepreneurial planners placed such events during their childhood or youth years. However, such formative experiences could also occur at a later stage of actors' live as long as it is an event that actors understand as crucial to define who they are (Tost, 2011). Furthermore, it might be possible that actors change their perspectives on their own identity, for instance, when they retrieve new information from their past (Schultz & Hernes, 2013). Throughout their *close past*, actors then make experiences in line with their established identities. In the discussed cases, cantonal planners learned to understand different contexts and people of diverse disciplinary backgrounds throughout their professional careers. Thanks to these later experiences, actors acquire skills that they might be able to reproduce during an opportunity for change. Actors might be willing to act as institutional entrepreneurs during such opportunities, if they see in these ambiguous situations a chance to realize their key values. They might be additionally able to do so, if they made similar experiences that support them in dealing with the present situation. From this perspective, institutional entrepreneurs are not extraordinary actors that exist per se to change the world. Institutional entrepreneurs rather emerge, when the right actors (with suitable values and required skills for the task) are at the right time at the right place to initiate an institutional change process.

Figure 8: The Process of Becoming an Institutional Entrepreneur



4.6.1 Limitations

The present study has two limitations. First, as the study is based on a small number of interviewees, the findings can be criticized for not being generalizable beyond the specific research context. However, like a single case study that does not aim to generalize directly to other cases but to theory (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012), the present research generalizes its findings by embedding them in existing theory. In this regard, Sousa (2014) claims that a phenomenological research project is generalizable if it is "external consistent" with regard to the development of theory. By interpreting the conducted analysis through the integration of existing research on institutional entrepreneurship and on identity formation, I tried to make my findings generalizable beyond the present context.

Second, the study can be criticized for reflecting exclusively the subjective perception of the interviewees. This concern can be raised as the intention of a phenomenological methodology is to capture the interviewees' subjective interpretation of lived experiences. This approach was deliberately chosen to understand how actors perceive institutional contradictions differently – an approach also suggested, for instance, by Voronov and Yorks (2015) when studying different reactions to institutional contradictions. By these means, I found that actors perceive current institutional contradictions in relation to previously lived contradictory experiences. However, the study cannot reach any definite conclusions if actors become institutional entrepreneurs if, viewed objectively, they experience very intensive institutional contradictions or if they are in principle more sensitive to perceiving such ambiguous situations. I propose further research to tackle this question, whereby experiments could be an appropriate method to approach this issue.

4.6.2 Contributions

The findings have four core contributions. First, they contribute to the literature on institutional entrepreneurship by tracing the formation of these change agents. Most studies on institutional entrepreneurship investigate the causes for an observed institutional outcome (Leca et al., 2008) and often conclude that institutional entrepreneurs are necessary factors for the emergence of change. As I apply potential institutional entrepreneurial behavior during an enabling situation for change as the outcome, I detected

as cause of institutional entrepreneurs' distinct behavior to be their initially formed identities. On this basis, I also discovered the underlying motivation of institutional entrepreneurs; an aspect rarely covered in research on institutional entrepreneurship, although it is part of the concept's core definition: Institutional entrepreneurs are "organized actors with sufficient resources" that change institutions if they see "in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly" (DiMaggio, 1988, p. 14). I could reconstruct that institutional entrepreneurs seek to contribute in changing/establishing institutions during institutional contradictions, if they interpret in these contradictions an opportunity to realize their achieved identities and their corresponding key values.

Second, the findings contribute to the debate on the paradox of embedded agency. Scholars have often criticized the concept of the institutional entrepreneur as its existence seems to violate institutional theory's core principal of actors being embedded in institutions. Holm (1995, p. 398) thus critically asks: "How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change?" The present study reveals that institutional entrepreneurs remain embedded actors, though not embedded in present situations but in their decisive past experiences that shape their further life journeys. In other words, institutional entrepreneurs legitimize their actions vis-à-vis not their present institutions but rather their own histories. Consequently, institutional entrepreneurs seem to be disembedded actors viewed from the outside but remain embedded actors in their past experiences viewed from their own perspectives.

Third, the findings emphasize that the concept of skills in the context of institutional entrepreneurship needs adjustment. Fligstein (2001) highlights that social skills are crucial qualities that support institutional entrepreneurs when initiating institutional change. Based on the present study, I confirm this conceptualization of social skills. However, I emphasize to conceptualize social skills additionally as the expression of actors' identities and their corresponding values. The study disclosed that actors only develop and apply such social skills if their values motivate them to do so. By emphasizing that social or institutional entrepreneurs' skills are the expression of actors' key values, such a definition underlines that actors do not possess these qualities per se; the qualities rather develop over time and can appear contextually during decisive situations.

Fourth, the findings also make a practical contribution as they can provide guidelines for study programs that aim to prepare students for a future work life that increasingly demands innovation and creative adaptation. From the results, it can be deduced that students should be confronted with institutional contradictions during their studies. This insight is already adopted by many study programs, particularly interdisciplinary studies that seek broaden students' horizons by exposing them to different viewpoints. However, such an approach often assumes that students will automatically learn to think unconventionally and become innovative when exposed to diverse perspectives. This study highlights instead that depending on one's identity status, individuals may be more or less successful in taking advantage of such an approach. Identity-achieved students will most likely easily find their position in an interdisciplinary study program. Students in an identity moratorium, meanwhile, might be overburdened by such situations; and identity foreclosed students might not even fully recognize the current contradictions and would fail to integrate different perspectives. Consequently, future study programs should provide instruments that enable students to better become aware of established contradictions in their studies, while supporting them in establishing an achieved identity as a response to these contradictions. A possibility is for students to write a synthesis report during their final semester that requires them to explicitly name the different perspectives experienced throughout the studies. On this basis, they could reflect on their own values as a response to these experienced contradictions. Such a reflection process could be enhanced by group discussions among students and lecturers. Having established a clear commitment to specific values, they might be more prepared to embrace future institutional contradictions and respond to them by contributing in developing change and innovation.

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4.8 Appendix B

Table 9: Identification of Institutional Entrepreneurs (IE)

Cantonal planner	Analytical skills	Empathic skills	Framing skills	Translational skills	Organizational skills	Tactical skills	Timing skills	Average degree of IEs' skills	Shortlisted cantonal planners *
A	5	4	4	5	4.5	4.5	4	**4.43**	*
B	5	4	4.5	4.5	3	5	4.5	**4.36**	*
C	5	4.5	3.5	5	2.5	4.5	5	**4.29**	*
D	5	4	4.5	4.5	4	3.5	4	**4.21**	*
E	4.5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	2.5	4	**4.07**	*
F	5	4.5	3.5	4.5	3.5	2	5	**4.00**	
G	3.5	3.5	4	4.5	4	3	4.5	**3.86**	
H	2.5	3.5	5	4	3	4.5	4.5	**3.86**	
I	3.5	5	5	4.5	3.5	3	2	**3.79**	
J	3.5	3	4	4	4.5	3	4	**3.71**	
K	4.5	4	2.5	4.5	4	3.5	3	**3.71**	
L	3.5	3	3	3	5	5	3	**3.64**	
M	3.5	3.5	3.5	3	4	4	3.5	**3.57**	

Table 9: (Continued)

Cantonal planner	Analytical skills	Empathic skills	Framing skills	Translational skills	Organizational skills	Tactical skills	Timing skills	Average degree of IEs' skills	Shortlisted cantonal planners *
N	2.5	3.5	4	2.5	4	3.5	3.5	**3.36**	
O	4	4.5	2.5	3.5	3	1	4	**3.21**	
P	3	3	3.5	1	2	5	4	**3.07**	
Q	4	2.5	1	2.5	3.5	4.5	3	**3.00**	
R	2.5	3	1.5	3	4	1	4.5	**2.79**	
S	1.5	2.5	4	2.5	5	1.5	1.5	**2.64**	
T	2	3	3.5	3.5	3.5	1	1	**2.50**	
U	3	3	1.5	2	2.5	1	4	**2.43**	
V	1	1.5	2	3.5	2.5	4	2.5	**2.43**	*
W	1.5	2	2	1.5	1.5	3.5	3.5	**2.21**	
X	2.5	3	1.5	1	4	1	1	**2.00**	*
Y	1.5	1.5	1	2.5	1.5	3	1.5	**1.79**	
Z	1	2	1	1	1	2.5	1	**1.36**	*

4.9 Appendix C

Table 10: Data Exemplars for Shared Themes

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Formative experience	"My father was Portugues, and we were two children… The rules for boys and girls are not the same in a Portuguese family. However, my Swiss mother didn't agree. She always said that it is important to treat all people equally." [planner A] "My father had to start working as a 11-year old boy to provide food for his brothers, sisters and his mother." "He had to go to the war." "He was very silent about these issues." "I thus had a much more distant relationship with my father… This silence frustrated me a lot." [planner B] "My parents were divorced." "It was an insecure time in my family… My parents told me that I was searching for safety and I have only partly found this safety. The unsafe feeling was a constant presence." [planner D]
Developed key values	"I think these are mainly values that have developed through my family background. I was always told to treat all people equally." "For me, the values of equality and of the public interest are important." [planner A] "My father has faced a lot of injustice. It has greatly influenced me. And when you are confronted with a silence, you understand that the person is hurt due to this injustice. When I understood this, I realized that social justice is a fundamental value for me." "I couldn't imagine working for a bank. If I could go back in time, I might become a lawyer. But again, not a lawyer for multinational companies. Rather a lawyer for the underdogs or to defend the public interest." [planner B] "The example of being a cook may be quite apt. When I cook, I know the ingredients that I need and I put them all together. But that alone is not enough. It takes someone to mix them together; in the right quantity, the right order, and so on. That's why cooking is a good example [to describe me]." [planner E]

Table 10: (Continued)

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Important role models	"Two professors strongly influenced my university path and thus the development of my values. First, there was Prof. S., who introduced me to spatial planning. He gave me the passion for this topic. And then there was Prof. D. who introduced me to the concept of sustainable development." "Prof. D. helped me to make this link between my political activity and my studies." [planner B] "One professor was very important for me. There was my German professor. He always thought us that we are independent people and that we are responsible for our lives… I say that he brought me to the path of the debate, of arguing." "And then all the green issues of that time have influenced me… We debated a lot about plants and about ecology." [planner C] "Then there are certain people in my life who were a role model for me. One of these persons is the director of the natural museum of my home canton." "He could show me the laws of the world. About the ecology. I have already studied this topic before. But he could synthesize them; and again, with a humanistic approach, which is important for me. He could not only explain to me the butterfly. Its environment too. And myself and my role in it as well." [planner D]

Table 10: (Continued)

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Broad interests	"During my studies, I also took courses on ecological industry although I didn't receive a diploma for it. I didn't take the course for any diploma; it was just for the interest of learning a new theory that was close to my social ideas that I tried to build and defend." "When I was 19, I started to do welfare work in my hometown… There were always some values that were very important and influenced my choices." [planner B] "I studied botany, but I couldn't only do this. I couldn't go that deep into one topic only." "I had many different side courses… I have always looked for broad topics. The debate, that's it. The interest in broad topics." "During my continuing education, we studied the democracy theory of Karl Popper, that was very interesting." "It is not a surprise that I looked for something such as spatial planning that enabled me to embrace many different topics." [planner C] "I wanted to understand how a city works. How is the political system? Who decides how a city is developed?... And when I found the studies that I chose, I knew it was the right one. I had very broad topics… we had courses in law, economics, architecture, ecological issues. Very broad… for some students it was too much; they dropped out." [planner E]
Open mindset	"We are a small canton and a small team. We don't have a specialist in environmental issues, a specialist in mobility. We have to look for the specialists in the other departments. Hence, we have to reach out for the specialists… This is sometimes difficult. But I like it. It corresponds with my values." [planner A] "During the continuing education, we had to do group work. And the participants were from different backgrounds. This was very interesting. We had many discussions. There I realized that spatial planning is a balancing of interests." "It was also interesting to see how the different professors of different backgrounds interacted with each other. To see their different viewpoints." [planner C] "I took jobs that are very low in the social hierarchy. And I met people who probably work their whole life in such positions. This was a very important experience. I learned what it means to earn only 1,500 Swiss francs." [planner D]

Table 10: (Continued)

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Gained responsibility	"The government asked me to become the director of the department. But I didn't want to do it." "It didn't go well with the new directors… The government of that time told me then that this is the moment for you to take the position. And I told myself, ok, this is the moment." [planner A] "He [cantonal planner D] was asked to participate in many projects… Projects that were relevant to the entire department, mainly in the context of planning. In this way, he could learn a lot." [colleague of planner D] "Initially, I refused the job offer… I told the government that the department doesn't use its potential. I said that the department should collaborate much more with other departments to make them understand that spatial topics concern everybody… [planner E]
Experience in contradictions	"What I have learnt throughout 30, 40 years is to make decisions based on your gut feeling… For example, if there is a river, a forest, and a groundwater zone. If we only followed according to the rules, we couldn't do anything. Hence, we have to decide based on our gut feeling that does not completely correspond with the law. We need to find compromises." [planner C] "There was a project were a private company was involved that produced cement. And they possessed an industrial zone in the middle of a nature parc. And the question was what to do with this parc… We convinced them to make a historic preservation out of it… I have learnt through this project to make relationships with people and to convince them." [planner D] "During my time as a consultant, I had a project in which various real estate agents were involved. And a green politician of that municipality wanted to protect the land that was owned by these real estate agents. These agents played poker. I have learnt a lot through this experience. How do you deal with such a situation in which all are bluffing?... How do you prepare such a situation that they can't play their games, that they need to show their cards openly?" [planner E]

Table 10: (Continued)

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Experience with diverse people	"My activities as welfare worker have helped me to get this sensibility to deal with the federal government, with other cantonal departments or within the department. Hence, to understand what is the actual meaning of somebody's proposition? How does the other reflect?... Very important skills in spatial planning." [planner B] "I think it is important that we [as spatial planners] speak different languages... I studied botany and geography. And I made my thesis about a certain lake. And when I had to discuss with the director of the department of environment about our lake here, he initially thought that I have no idea. But then I adopted my language and started to question him about the differences between the two lakes." [planner C] "[Through these small jobs that I did during high school,] I have developed also a certain empathy. I have developed a certain respect [for people who do these jobs]. And this enabled me to communicate on another level. These are communication skills specifically for people that I meet." [planner D]
Determination of contradictions	"Sometimes my employees say 'oh, these politicians, they are all idiots. They don't understand anything.' Then, I always remind them that they are our bosses, they are the people. They represent the people of canton C… The politicians have a different role from ours. We are only the experts who work in this department." [planner C] "Spatial planning should learn much more from sociology or psychology. It is a political authority that takes decisions… Hence, it is a cultural and political challenge. If we handle spatial planning only on the technical level, it's like religion during middle age: It exists, but nobody understands it." [planner D] "You have to observe and then make observations. You need to look at what has already happened. Who are the big players? You have to initially analyze it before you come up with an idea to find acceptance. If you work against everybody, you don't have a chance." [planner E]

Table 10: (Continued)

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Perception of contradictions	"I always propose a strategy that is fair. It means that depending on the situation, somebody has the right for something more. But I never develop a strategy that favors only one region… Even if it made sense from an economic perspective to focus only on the centers… I never propose a strategy in which one of the nine regions receives nothing." [planner A] "My vision of canton C, at least in the context of spatial planning, is that it remains open and innovative. That the canton keeps trying new things. Try to learn from failures." [planner C] "I want canton D to provide good living spaces. Open spaces with lakes and recreation areas. To provide the possibility of walking and or commuting by bicycles… I hope that we will have a landscape that is open for changes but that respects the canton's rural history." [planner D]
Persuasion of people	"[When establishing a cantonal structure plan] the phase of vulgarization is very important. It means that you have to adopt your way of speaking to the audience. Hence, you need to know your audience. Is it one of scientists? Is it one of investors? Is it one of municipalities?" [planner A] "I often explain the technique to the politicians and the politics to the technicians." "For instance, a project leader might be very enthusiastic about his project and believes that everybody will fall in love with it. But there are certain issues that you cannot present to a mayor of a municipality. Hence, you need a certain sensibility to know how to pass the information." [planner B] "It is crazy, but when I speak with members of a right-wing party, I speak differently than when I speak with some young members of a left-wing party… I use different arguments. I try to convince them that the new cantonal structure plan is in line with their positions… The right-wing party uses keywords that I adopt then." [planner C]

Table 10: (Continued)

Shared Themes	Exemplars from the Data
Unification of people	"[When making a cantonal structure plan] it is important to integrate the different representatives of the different political sensitivities. And the initially formed commission of the cantonal structure plan does exactly this. In this way, potential conflicts can be discussed from the beginning." [planner B] "At the beginning, we had workshops with three groups. The first group consisted of our municipalities. The second group was the neighboring cantons and people of the cantonal administration. The third group were the political parties. And for the third group, we also invited some external experts." [planner C] "We organized workshops with people of similar interests. Hence, a group with people from agriculture that gave answers. Then a group with environmentalists. A group with people from tourism. A group with the municipalities… We made protocols for all these workshops to understand who said what." [planner D]
Intrinsic motivation	"There was a moment when he [cantonal planner B] could have taken the post as director of the entire department. But he refused… He preferred to look for precise topics than to manage a department." [superior of planner B] "The reason why I took this position is because this canton is always in my heart. And doing spatial planning in this canton, I can help to shape it, to contribute. Doing this was much closer to my heart, I guess than doing something else." [planner C] "This is my nature. I want to leave a mark, a positive mark. I want to make a contribution with the values, with the know-how…; to make a more livable environment. This is what I am driven by." [planner E]

5 Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Articles

As discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, each article of this dissertation pursuits a different aim while taken together contributing to the overall research question. Hereinafter, I briefly summarize each article's findings to subsequently elaborate their contributions and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.

5.1.1 Article 1: Institutional Entrepreneurs' Skills

The literature review on institutional entrepreneurship revealed seven skill dimensions (Fohim, 2019). According to the phase of a change process, institutional entrepreneurs apply different dimensions of skills. During the preliminary phase, institutional entrepreneurs express analytical skills (the ability to perceive opportunities for change) and emphatic skills (the ability to put oneself into different positions). During the subsequent initiation phase, change agents exert framing skills (the ability to design institutional projects in accordance with the audience's knowledge) and translational skills (the ability to adopt their language in line with diverse actors). During the final implementation phase, institutional entrepreneurs use organizational skills (the ability to establish instruments that ensure the implementation of new practices and/or rules) and tactical skills (the ability to counter power struggles). Furthermore, institutional entrepreneurs dispose timing skills (the ability to identify the proper moments to induce change) throughout an entire institutional change process. The article claims that the established concept of institutional entrepreneurs' skills suits research in microfoundations of institutions: actors' applied skills can provide insights on observable macro-outcomes, while being the starting point in studying the underlying learning processes.

5.1.2 Article 2: Institutional Actors

The conceptual paper develops four types of institutional actors (institutional custodians, institutional outsiders, institutional entrepreneurs, and institutional defenders) that behave differently during enabling situations for change – namely during institutional contradictions (incompatible institutional arrangements) (Fohim & Haack, 2020). While staying faithful to institutional theory's core notion of actors being embedded in

institutions, the article asserts that actors' divergent behavior originates from their unequal past experiences. The article argues that institutional custodians have been mainly socialized in stable social fields and will not be able and willing to change institutions during opportunities for change. Institutional outsiders have internalized institutional contradictions but are still socialized in stable social fields, whereby they are motivated to change institutions but unable to do so. Institutional entrepreneurs have been socialized in institutional contradictions; consequently, they are both able and motivated to change institutions. Institutional defenders have been mainly socialized in a stable social field that they have initiated as former institutional entrepreneurs, which is why they sabotage an institutional change process if their own initiated institutions are jeopardized. The article concludes that institutional actors remain embedded actors, not necessarily in the present moment but in past experiences that guide their behavior in the present.

5.1.3 Article 3: Becoming an Institutional Entrepreneur

The empirical paper discloses that the shortlisted entrepreneurial cantonal planners differ from their non-entrepreneurial colleagues regarding their identity formation (Fohim, 2020). The entrepreneurial planners achieved an identity with corresponding key values that they relate to contradictory experiences from their distant past. In line with their achieved identity, they made several learning experiences with institutional contradictions that enabled them to acquire skills to deal with future contradictions. Consequently, the entrepreneurial planners were experienced, and thus able to act as institutional entrepreneurs during the reform of the cantonal structure plan (the examined institutional contradictions as opportunity for change). Additionally, they were motivated to establish new institutions during the reform as they interpreted the prevalent contradictions as an opportunity to realize their own key values. Hence, the entrepreneurial planners' ability and motivation to act as institutional entrepreneurs was strongly related to their achieved identity that they relate to formative past experiences.

5.2 Contributions

The introduction of this dissertation mentioned that the research projects aims for a theoretical and practical contribution. Hereinafter, I discuss both types of contribution that result from the established findings.

5.2.1 Theoretical Contribution

The main theoretical contribution of this dissertation tackles the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Holm, 1995). Institutional theory confronts the puzzle that institutional entrepreneurs act beyond institutions, although institutions are supposed to guide actors' behavior. The findings reveal that institutional entrepreneurs orient their behavior vis-à-vis crucial past experiences: institutional entrepreneurs' established identity, which they relate to formative past experiences, influence actors' ability and willingness to respond to current institutional contradictions. The findings reveal that institutional entrepreneurs are not disembedded actors as portrayed by some scholars (Beckert, 1999). However institutional entrepreneurs remain mainly embedded in formative past experiences and not necessarily in present situations (Cardinale, 2018; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). In line with institutional theory's arguments, institutional entrepreneurs, thus, legitimize their actions towards their histories (Washington, Boal & Davis, 2008). In other words, institutional entrepreneurs are also an outcome of external circumstances, but they introduce these experiences into the present moment. Hence, to tackle the paradox of embedded agency, it is important to adopt a temporal perspective, which is a standpoint that corresponds to current streams in institutional theory (Dacin, Dacin & Kent, 2019; Suddaby, Foster & Quinn Trank, 2016).

5.2.2 Practical Contribution

The practical contribution results from the deduction of the established theoretical findings for educational matters. The findings reveal that triggers for institutional entrepreneurship are previously experienced institutional contradictions. Accordingly, study programs that aim to train their students in becoming entrepreneurs could introduce contradictory situations within their curricula. Interdisciplinarity can imitate such contradictions and is commonly said to foster entrepreneurship (Henneke & Lüthje, 2007;

Ronstadt, 1985). However, the findings further reveal that not everybody can develop upon such contradictions an achieved identity that is crucial to actively embrace future contradictions. Consequently, entrepreneurship programs should support their students in developing an achieved identity with corresponding key values throughout their studies. A mandatory synthesis report during the final year could support students in addressing the different perspectives of how each learned discipline has triggered the awareness of the experienced contradictions. On this basis, students could reflect upon the experienced contradictions in order initiate the development of an identity with key values. Group discussions with other students and/or lecturers could enhance such a reflection process.

5.3 Limitations

The dissertation as well as its chosen approach consist of limitations that I aim to discuss hereinafter. I structure these limitations along three dimensions: methodological, empirical, and theoretical limitations. The limitations provide the basis for future research that I elaborate in the subsequent section.

5.3.1 Methodological Limitations

The dissertation applies a phenomenological approach that builds on Heidegger's philosophy (1988). Heidegger (1988) claims that individuals' past experiences shape their understanding of current experiences. Accordingly, he challenges the assertion that actors can be free of any assumption. For this reason, when using a phenomenological methodology, the aim is to capture the subjective interpretation of individuals' past and present experiences (Høffding & Martiny, 2016). To increase validity in line with a phenomenological approach, a researcher should strive for intersubjectivity (Sousa, 2014). This means that the subjective interpretation of the interviewees shall be best transmitted to other people. I aimed to approach this standard by triangulating the collected interview data with the cantonal planners; I interviewed other persons about the cantonal planners' biographies, and I consulted available documents, such as Curriculum Vitaes, LinkedIn, Facebook-profiles, or academic works written by the investigated persons, about the cantonal planners' life journey. This approach revealed that the examined institutional

entrepreneurs relate their established identity to formative (mainly personal) experiences that I name institutional contradictions as personal jolts.

A phenomenological approach (and particularly an interpretative phenomenological analysis that I applied), however, is unable to capture the specific characteristics of formative experiences themselves. The reproduced experiences had always passed the individual filter of the interviewees, whereby their statements cannot be taken as reliable references to determine the nature of these experiences itself. In this regard, the dissertation cannot determine if specific types of experience favor the formation of an identity status towards institutional entrepreneurship or if institutional entrepreneurs are more sensitive in recognizing contradictions. Accordingly, the examined institutional entrepreneurs might have lived situations that many other people would not report as challenging or contradictory. On the other hand, cantonal planner V who didn't refer to any contradiction might have faced situations that other people would declare as contradictory. This methodological limitation particularly upholds for the planners' reported childhood experiences as I was unable to triangulate this early phase of their lives. The dissertation can thus not disclose this ambiguity and it should be tackled in future research projects as I will elaborate later.

5.3.2 Empirical Limitations

The dissertation builds on a specific research context; namely, the life journey of selected Swiss cantonal planners. Pursuant to a case study, the chosen approach allows the generalization to theory by disclosing relationships among crucial variables within a specific context (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012; Sousa, 2014). By this approach, the findings revealed that institutional entrepreneurs' identity status plays a decisive role in how and why institutional entrepreneurs exploit institutional contradictions. Furthermore, the findings disclosed that institutional entrepreneurs relate the development of their identities to formative experiences in their distant past. In the studied case, in line with their identities, the examined entrepreneurial planners had experienced more diverse settings throughout their past (meaning that they were familiar to deal with different stakeholders), whereby they had an advantage throughout the reform process; a process that demanded for a dialogue with different stakeholders.

Although the findings are generalizable to theory, they cannot be directly generalized to other research contexts. Accordingly, not every institutional entrepreneur must have made broad experiences in order to initiate change. Another setting might demand for other qualities (such as social position, power, or creativity), whereby other types of experience will be more relevant. The established theoretical relationship between present and past contradictions due to an achieved identity might indeed uphold in another research context. Nevertheless, this link cannot be directly deduced from the established findings of this dissertation. In order to increase the generalizability of the findings and thus to ensure external validity (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010), additional research is needed. This is particularly relevant as the dissertation strives for a practical contribution too. Accordingly, the established theoretical relationships of this dissertation need to be tested in a variety of different research settings. Such an approach demands mainly for quantitative methods as I will elaborate in the next section.

5.3.3 Theoretical Limitations

As discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, I applied a neo-institutional perspective throughout the entire research project. Institutional theory emphasizes the role of macro-conditions and how these macro-conditions shape actors' behavior. On this basis, my research focused on detecting crucial experiences and the interpretation of these experiences that form actors in becoming institutional entrepreneurs. By this approach, the findings revealed that institutional entrepreneurs relate their established identity to contradictory experiences from their distant past. These formative events were from the perspective of the examined institutional entrepreneurs relevant to approach new broad experiences throughout their professional lives; a circumstance that had helped them to acquire those institutional entrepreneurs' skills that they applied to successfully implement the cantonal structure plan within their territory.

Applying a neo-institutional perspective, however, implied to exclude other potential causes that could also explain the formation of institutional entrepreneurs' skills. Other causes, nevertheless, do exist. Fligstein (2001) claims, for instance, that some people are better in learning such institutional entrepreneurs' skills, whereby he defines them as "more socially skilled" (p. 113). Or Czarniawska (2009) argues that institutional

entrepreneurs are more talented in feeling “what is in the air” in order to recognize opportunities for change (p. 438). The reasons behind such talents might be a higher cognitive capacity that support actors in identifying the complexity of uncertain situations and in responding quickly to these circumstances. Charisma might be another factor that help certain actors to convince other people more easily.

Beside these influencing factors, a controversial debate among institutional scholars exists if such nano-conditions should enter the theoretical reasoning. Some scholars fear that the focus on such nano-conditions would overemphasize the role of individual causes for institutional change and thus undermine the relevance of other influential macro-conditions. Regardless of one’s position within this debate, such discussed nano-conditions exist and do most likely influence the outcome of change processes as well. As the dissertation adopted the current mainstream approach in institutional theory, it did not dive into the nano-level. The findings of the dissertation are thus unable to make any statement about the role of any innate characteristic in becoming an institutional entrepreneur. Accordingly, future research could also elaborate the relevance of such nano-conditions throughout institutional change processes.

5.4 Future Research

As discussed above, the dissertation and its applied approach possess limitations that should be addressed in future research projects. I subsequently elaborate different research approaches that could partly compensate the introduced limitations.

5.4.1 To Improve Internal Validity

The previous section disclosed that the findings of the dissertation consist of an ambiguity that concerns the internal validity. Internal validity refers to the causal relationship between relevant variables (Gibbert & Ruigrok, 2010). This rigor criteria should be improved as the established findings cannot clearly determine if the formation of institutional entrepreneurship is initially triggered (i) by contradictory experiences, (ii) by actors who are more sensitive in disclosing contradictions, or (iii) by a combination of both factors. To compensate this shortcoming, additional data on formative experiences need to be collected. Ideally, such data could be gathered by shadowing potential institutional

entrepreneurs throughout their different life stages. Considering the required effort of such an approach, the study of historical biographies on recognized institutional entrepreneurs could be an alternative method. If rich biographical data about known change makers exist, their life journey could be compared as a strategy to disclose potential patterns among these journeys. Ideally, these data could be mirrored with the interpretation of the lived experiences by the respective change agents themselves. Such a juxtaposition of interpretation of experiences and actual experiences could disclose the relationship among these two variables in further depth.

5.4.2 To Improve External Validity

It has been discussed that external validity should be improved as the dissertation is limited to one research context exclusively. To expand external validity, a rather quantitative approach is required in order to test the developed theoretical relationships. Field experiments could be an appropriate approach. Such a field experiment could be undertaken throughout a study program that aims to train students in becoming entrepreneurs. Students could be divided into two groups. Both groups are exposed to situations that reflect institutional contradictions; for instance, by discussing a specific topic from the perspective of different disciplines. While one group is offered specific training programs to support them during their identity formation process, the other group does not receive any additional help. At the end of the study program, a test could measure both groups' performance in being successful entrepreneurs. If the group of students with the additional training program performs significantly better, the findings of the dissertation would display a higher generalizability.

5.4.3 To Consider Additional Causes

As mentioned above, the applied research approach did not focus on any actors' innate characteristics that could also be decisive in developing institutional entrepreneurs' skills. To include such nano-conditions, scholars need to apply other measurement methods. The integration of IQ tests as well as the measurement of brain activities could be an approach to determine innate characteristics such as intelligence or individuals' cognitive capacity. By comparing such data with people's capability to act as institutional

entrepreneurs, this approach could provide insights on the role of such additional influencing factors. To make such findings relevant for the debate on institutional theory, however, it would be relevant to elaborate how such nano-conditions relate with other relevant macro-conditions that also shape institutional change processes. If institutional theory is willing to dive into the nano-level, nevertheless, remains to be seen.

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6 Curriculum Vitae

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Academic Curriculum

Since 03/2020	**University of Bern, Switzerland** Postdoc at KPM Center for Public Management
08/2015 – 02/2020	**University of St.Gallen, Switzerland** PhD in International Affairs and Political Economy
05/2019 – 12/2019	**Copenhagen Business School, Denmark** Visiting scholar at the Department of Organization
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08/2012 – 07/2015	**University of St.Gallen, Switzerland** M.A. in International Affairs and Governance
02/2014 – 07/2014	**Sciences Po, France** ERASMUS student at Paris School of International Affairs
08/2008 – 07/2011	**University of St.Gallen, Switzerland** B.A. in International Affairs

Non-Academic Work Experience

08/2014 – 02/2020	**Institute for Systemic Management and Public Governance**, St.Gallen (CH) Consultancy for public sector organizations
09/2013 – 12/2013	**REM • Consult**, Hamburg (DE) Consultancy for realization of EU-INTERREG projects
09/2012 – 08/2013	**ARCOM Management Consulting**, Zurich (CH) Business Consulting firm for SMEs and public organizations
08/2012 – 05/2013	**Corris AG**, Zurich (CH) Fundraising agency for non-profit organizations
06/2012 – 07/2012	**Intercontinental Trust Limited**, Ebene (MU) Management Company for fiduciary services to international businesses
10/2011 – 02/2012	**Community Service at Boarding School Ringlikon**, Zurich (CH) Non-profit school for children who require special support
05/2004 – 08/2011	**Best of Switzerland Tours**, Zurich (CH) Sightseeing operator
11/2005 – 08/2009	**Military Service consisting of cadet school and two refresher courses** Truck Driver