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Motivation

University-industry collaboration (UIC) is often seen as an economic driver because knowledge transfer between academia and industry can stimulate innovation. However, the diverse background of partners can have negative consequences that may outweigh the benefits of such cooperation. Intermediary organizations are established to overcome the cognitive distance between participants and facilitate UIC [1].

This study aims to pick out the key social factors that contribute to successful cooperation in UIC knowledge-intensive projects and identify the place of intermediary organizations in this process. For this purpose, we explore Wetsus, a unique Q/Q helix network consisting of academia, industry, government, environment, and civil society [2].

Research challenge

The interaction between universities and industry is attracting increased attention from scholars who are looking for factors that determine success. However, there is a dearth of understanding regarding the patterns and configurations leading to satisfactory results. In this research project, we apply a multidimensional approach based on the social system concept [3] to uncover several possible paths to UIC success (Fig. 1). A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods is used to identify the configurations of social factors influencing outcomes and elucidate the underlying mechanisms of these effects.

Research goals

The aim of the project is to investigate the configurations of social factors that predict the success of collaborative projects between academia and industry in the context of sustainable (water) development. This goal will be achieved in stages:

- Identifying the key social factors that predict the success of university-industry collaboration using literature and explorative data;
- Development of the theoretical framework based on the social system concept;
- Empirical examination of various equifinal combinations of factors or conditions that contribute to the success of UIC;
- Providing practical recommendations for academic institutions, industry leaders, and policymakers on how to build collaborations for maximum effectiveness.

References

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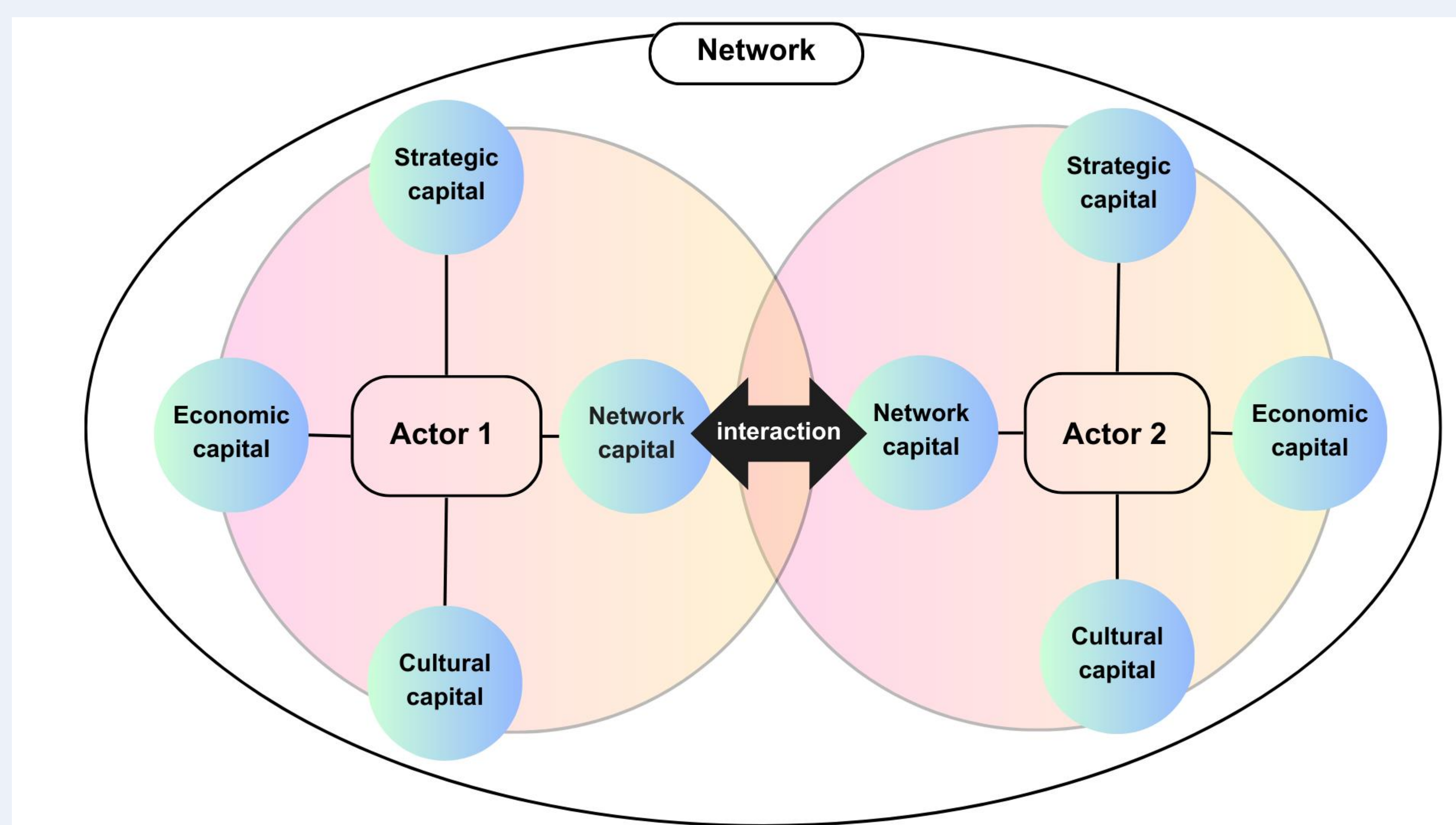


Fig 1. Dyadic Network Model from a Social System Perspective (adapted from Groen, 2005 [4]).