



Determinants of Employee Intrapreneurial Behaviour: The Case of Malaysian Manufacturing Firms

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Abstract. The company has prioritised intrapreneurship development as a coping mechanism in response to the dynamic and ever-changing competitive environment. Unfortunately, there are a number of information gaps that must be filled before this can be accurately applied. This study was created to fill in some of those gaps. The literature revealed that there is no agreement among studies, notably on the coherence of internal and external antecedents in their influence on intrapreneurial behaviour and performance. A minimum sample size of 155 responders is required to test the model. This amounts to 14.1% of the total number of international firms that have been identified (MNC). The results showed that intrapreneurial behaviour is significantly influenced by both internal and external antecedents. This conclusion emphasises how crucial it is for managers to foster an environment where employees can act in an entrepreneurial manner. In this study, managerial support, employee autonomy, and rewards were the main internal antecedents. According to employees and managers inside the organisations, the findings also emphasised the value of a supportive, generous corporate climate.

1 Introduction

Several academics have studied intrapreneurial behaviour in recent years, paying close attention to the internal and external elements that affect the construct (Diaz et al., 2020; Reuther et al., 2018). Research from the past had established conceptual frameworks that highlight the characteristics that account for intrapreneurial behaviour (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990). The organisational approach may be used to describe this strategy. However, a review of the pertinent literature suggests that academics have generally used a small number of variables to piece together their explanations of intrapreneurial behaviour. They neglected to take into account the relative impact of a variety of theoretically grounded variables (e.g., Alzyadat et al., 2020; Chouchane et al., 2021; Giner et al., 2020; Itzkovich et al., 2021). In addition, very few intrapreneurship studies have addressed the phenomena of intrapreneurial behaviour and actions in the context of workers in industrial sectors, despite the large number of intrapreneurship research that have been conducted. This sparked questions regarding how employees interpret intrapreneurship

in light of organisational and environmental changes, mechanical structure, and factors that influence intrapreneurial behaviour in Malaysian manufacturing workers.

Many studies have shown that intrapreneurial behaviour can enhance business performance (Do & Luu, 2020; Dung & Giang, 2021; Gawke et al., 2018; Klein & Ben Hador, 2019). However, scholarly discussion about the precise effect that aspects of intrapreneurial behaviour have on business performance continues 31 years after Covin and Slevin (1991) published their scale (Mahmoud et al., 2020). (Lumpkin & Dess, 2006). The current study explores the role of employees in intrapreneurial action and how they influence the relationship between intrapreneurial behaviour and activities on business performance in an effort to add new insight to this discussion. The traditional level of analysis, which is from the perspective of the organisation, is changed in the current study to that of the individual employee.

Therefore, using the intrapreneurship model developed by Guth and Ginsberg (1990) as its underlying theoretical framework, this research examines the acknowledged gap identified in the internal antecedents and external environment as well as the mediating effect of intrapreneurial behaviour on intrapreneurial activities and firm performance.

2 Literature Review

It's not novel to evaluate one of the principles associated to intrapreneurship (culture, posture, and context) (Aloulou & Fayolle, 2005; Lang & Baltes, 2019). For a long time, intrapreneurship researchers have been interested in intrapreneurial behaviour. Numerous research have been carried out in the past throughout the development of the intrapreneurial behaviour theory and the investigation of intrapreneurial behavior-related issues. The next two sections provide a concise summary of the most representative and important findings from the research on entrepreneurial behaviour: There are two types of intrapreneurial behaviour: one that is examined from a single perspective, and another that is examined from numerous dimensions. Since the 1980s, general studies on intrapreneurial behaviour have been carried out. The focus of intrapreneurship study eventually concentrated on characteristics along three primary dimensions, namely innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness, during the development of knowledge about intrapreneurial behaviour. To uncover intrapreneurial behaviour connected to intrapreneurial phenomena, empirical research into each intrapreneurial behaviour dimension were conducted. These investigations of intrapreneurship behaviour, despite being done from a single dimension viewpoint, did advance the field of intrapreneurship study.

Although intrapreneurs “categorise business situations as processing less risk than non-intrapreneurs,” intrapreneurship scholars who performed studies on risk-taking as an intrapreneurial behaviour operationalize their results by taking intrapreneurs as “moderate risk-takers” (Giner et al., 2020). Based on their empirical findings, the scholars that include innovation or innovativeness as a component of intrapreneurial behaviour assert that innovation is “the common theme underpinning intrapreneurial behaviour.” Other aspects are thought to be precursors, outcomes, or correlations of innovation (Güven, 2020). These results supported Schumpeter's contention that the core of intrapreneurship is innovation (Khan & Hyder, 2020). According to scholars that

consider proactiveness to be the primary indicator of intrapreneurial behaviour, proactiveness “is the opportunity-seeking mindset where businesses aggressively interact with their environment; proactiveness is the pursuit of ‘first mover’” (Neessen et al., 2019).

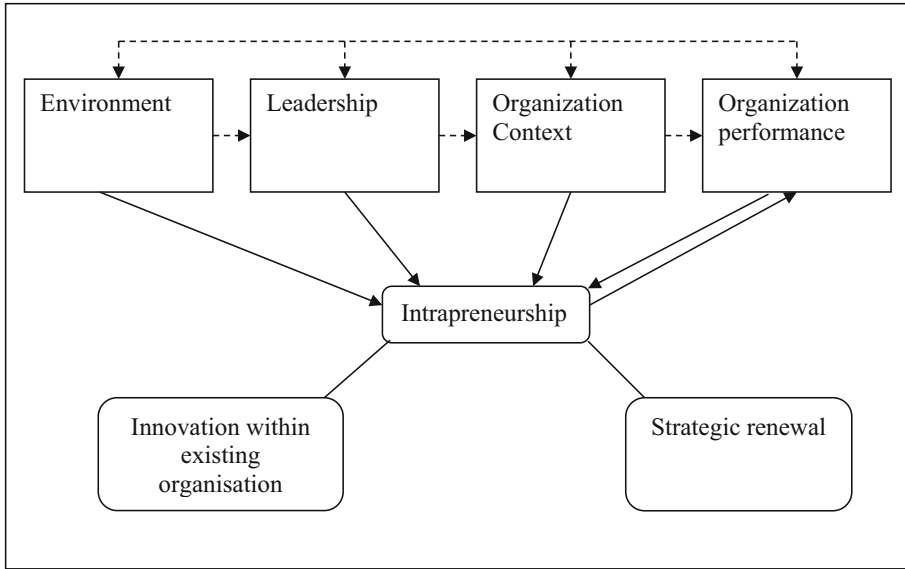
It is clear from a number of earlier research on intrapreneurial behaviour that have been examined from a single angle that the major characteristics of intrapreneurial behaviour are inventiveness, risk-taking, and proactiveness (Naksung & Piansoongnern, 2020; Neessen et al., 2021). The majority of the research on intrapreneurial behaviour was done at the firm level. Even though intrapreneurial behaviour was only examined from one angle in this study, it nonetheless yielded important empirical results for intrapreneurship research. The study findings of intrapreneurial behaviour researched from many viewpoints are presented in the following section to achieve a thorough review of the available literature on the topic.

In order to enhance the predictive hypothesis regarding the entrepreneurial behaviour of a company. The benefits and drawbacks of three assessment methodologies—management perceptions, business behaviours, and resource allocations—are examined by Steward et al. (2010). They examine numerous recent studies that have employed these techniques, provide some important cautions, and suggest that combining three different techniques can improve measurement accuracy. They address theoretical, resource accessibility, and interpretability issues throughout the measurement phase of their theoretical research.

In their research, Lumpkin and Dess (2006) confirmed their five characteristics of intrapreneurial behaviour: autonomy, creativity, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggression. In response to academics who hold the view that competitive aggressiveness and autonomy have an equal and equivalent impact on business performance, these authors investigate the relationships between these two approaches and how they relate to firm success. Additionally, they examined how the operating environment affected how their activities varied. They arrived to the conclusion that two distinct routes to intrapreneurial success are proactiveness and competitive antagonism. The findings of their field study, which involved 124 executives from 94 different organisations, mainly suggest that the two methods of intrapreneurial decision-making may have differing effects on the performance of the company. The differences in how businesses interacted with their surroundings were most obvious.

In conclusion, the most significant dimensions for intrapreneurial behaviour study were recognised by the major intrapreneurial behaviour studies undertaken from a variety of perspectives as innovation, risk-taking, and proactiveness. The total of these three factors indicates how entrepreneurial a firm is. The majority of multi-dimensional intrapreneurial behaviour research focuses on these three main sub-dimensions because researchers have realised that analysing intrapreneurial behaviour along multiple dimensions is more important than analysing intrapreneurial behaviour along a single dimension. Furthermore, the firm rather than the individual has been the primary analytical unit in the majority of prior study.

In this study, the phenomenon of intrapreneurial behaviour is explained using the strategic paradigm of intrapreneurship (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990). But no tests have ever been conducted on this model (Groenewald, 2010). According to this academic,



Source: Adapted from Guth and Ginsberg (1990)

Fig. 1. Strategic Model of Intrapreneurship. Source: Adapted from

empirical research is needed to understand how the internal and external environment affect intrapreneurial behaviour.

The organisation and the external environment are the main areas of attention in the present effort to increase intrapreneurial behaviour among employees. The link between intrapreneurial behaviour and intrapreneurial activity, two intrapreneurship components that drive firm performance, is neglected by this method. According to Pinchot's grounded theory from 1987, intrapreneurial behaviour and intrapreneurial actions interact to affect firm performance. It also acknowledges the person's behavioural shifts in intrapreneurial tasks like idea generation, product design, or resource recombination, such as proactive behaviour, innovativeness, self-renewal, and risk-taking behaviour. According to the strategic paradigm of intrapreneurship, leadership style and the external environment also influence intrapreneurship. In a strategic model of intrapreneurship, the significance of the corporate framework in which employees are engaged is also addressed. Compensation, management support, autonomy, time and resources, and organisational limits in the industrial sector are internal antecedents that are pertinent to employees in this situation (Fig. 1).

Guth and Ginsberg's (1990) paradigm can help integrate the literature's occasionally disparate organisational and individual viewpoints (Adonisi, 2003). Performance is a topic that both organisational and individual academics are interested in, but they often approach it differently. People's viewpoints, for instance, frequently centre on their intrapreneurial behaviour, and employees' performance is seen as either a goal in and of itself or as a part of job performance (Performance et al., 2006). Organizational perspectives, on the other hand, frequently focus on how firm performance—such as productivity, growth, and financial success—affects the organisation (Ağca et al., 2009).

These opposing ideas have produced largely distinct literature, raising concerns that if researchers do not mix knowledge from several disciplines, they will replicate certain aspects of the examination (Brussel, 2008). Guth and Ginsberg (1990) can advance the field of study by drawing additional parallels between organisational and individual perspectives on intrapreneurial behaviour and firm success (Benitez-Amado et al., 2010). By examining the interactions between human, behavioural, organisational, and environmental elements that affect company success, investigating the Guth and Ginsberg (1990) model can also aid in the development of a more full understanding of intrapreneurship (Antoncic, 2007). This model combines often studied intrapreneurial behaviour into a small number of larger conceptual categories in an effort to balance comprehensiveness and simplicity in comprehending the myriad impacts on intrapreneurial behaviour. The model of Guth and Ginsberg (1990) gives a theoretical foundation for forecasting how these variables can interact. Because the Guth and Ginsberg (1990) model have yet to be reviewed (Groenewald, 2010), this study will add to the literature by analysing how a subset of the interactions represented by this Guth and Ginsberg (1990) model relates to individual employees, as Groenewald advises (2010).

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Decisions on the sort of study and target demographic and sample, as well as the data collection method, research instruments, and data processing are addressed in this study's methodology section. Explanatory research was used to identify the pattern and magnitude of relationships and interactions between predetermined exogenous variables (internal antecedents) and endogenous variables (intrapreneurial behaviour, intrapreneurial activities, and firm performance) in order to better understand the phenomenon of intrapreneurial behaviour (intrapreneurial behaviour, intrapreneurial activities, and firm performance). This study used cross-sectional survey research. This strategy enables the researcher to collect data from a huge number of people at the same time, in a relatively short length of time and at a low cost (Ary et al., 2007). (Ary et al., 2007). The greater sample size may help to alleviate the issue of change discrepancies. A self-administered questionnaire was utilised to gather data since Cavana et al. (2010) claimed that this method is objective and independent of the researcher's prejudice and value. Furthermore, multivariate statistical analyses were performed to characterise and explain the occurrences of intrapreneurial behaviour among employees.

3.2 The Sampling Procedure

Malaysian manufacturing workers participated in this study. According to Ary et al. (2007), sampling comprises picking a subset of the population, making observations on this smaller group, and then extrapolating the findings to the larger population.

A Survey of a vast geographical area such as the one done in this study needed a more intricate sample design than normal random sampling. Since the study intended

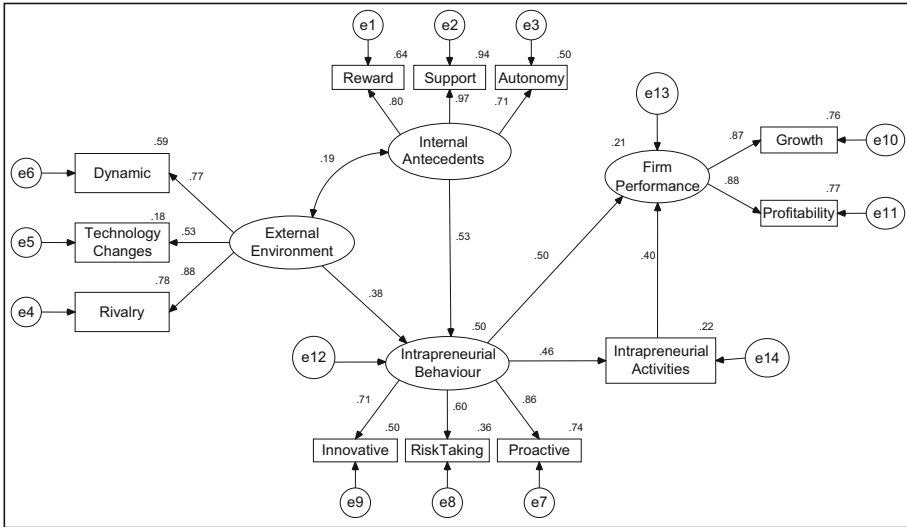


Fig. 2 .

to cover a relatively broad and dispersed geographical area, a suitable strong yet affordable sampling strategy should be examined. Therefore, multistage cluster sampling was utilised in the study to cover the two regions of Klang Valley and Penang.

A total of 1101 people are employed by the six companies. Each employee was requested to participate in the study voluntarily by completing a 20-min survey. No personally identifying information was obtained from employees, and any groupings of ten or fewer responses were placed in the next closest strata when stratified based on demographic data. The survey gathered 155 responses or 14.1 percent of the total population.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was performed for multiple reasons which are: I testing the excellent model fit; (ii) examining the influence of intrapreneurial conduct and intrapreneurial activities on firm performance (iii) assessing the correlations between the variables simultaneously.

4 Result

Six multinational corporations (MNC) manufacturing groups from Penang (three) and the Klang Valley (three) participated in the study (3 companies). According to Table 5.1, the majority of respondents (84 respondents) were from Penang MNC businesses (84 respondents). A total of six multinational corporations (MNCs) from six different countries participated in this study (1). (1). Only one company has been operating in Malaysia for more than five years out of the five example companies. Non-managerial occupations (139) and management positions (16) are the two types of jobs held by respondents (139 respondents). More technical employees (118 of them) than non-technical ones (37 of them) took part in this poll (37 respondents).

In Fig. 2 it is shown that the internal antecedents construct has a higher influence (0.53) on the intrapreneurial behaviour than the external antecedents' constructs (0.38). These findings find that the intrapreneurial behaviour construct influences firm performance (0.50) and intrapreneurial activities (0.46). This finding also suggests that intrapreneurial behaviour is a construct that could be managed and improved by focusing on the internal antecedents of management support, rewards for intrapreneurial behaviour and allowing employees to have work discretion and function autonomously.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

A structural equation model was used to determine which antecedents showed the strongest relationship with intrapreneurial behaviour. The complexity of the model and the small sample size led to a model being constructed for intrapreneurial behaviour. The literature and statistical analysis showed that intrapreneurial behaviour is more strongly influenced by the internal and external antecedents measured in this study than intrapreneurial activities. The SEM model showed that management support, autonomy and rewards contributed significantly to measuring the internal antecedents which significantly influence intrapreneurial behaviour. External environment, measured by dynamism, technological changes and the competitive rivalry, contributed significantly to intrapreneurial behaviour. These findings are consistent with the model proposed in the Guth and Ginsberg Model (1990) illustrated that intrapreneurial behaviour could be altered in a firm through management interventions.

Several options are available to the top and middle managers to create a supportive environment for intrapreneurial behaviour. Some of the actions that top and middle managers could consider include championing innovative ideas; recognition of employees who articulate and implement ideas; and formalising the implementation of ideas by establishing venture committees. These actions require top or middle management to be part of these committees. Furthermore, a climate should be created in which employees feel they may commit errors when innovating without being disciplined. In such a climate there should be a willingness among managers to adopt workable ideas put forth by employees.

A supportive organisational climate for intrapreneurial behaviour should encourage trust and provide employees with decision-making authority in terms of tasks for which they are responsible. Employees should have the freedom to make decisions and manage the consequences. Monetary and non-monetary rewards could be provided to encourage employees to act in intrapreneurial ways. Rewards may take many different forms and should be varied. Examples of rewards are certificates, gifts which recognise and motivate employees, and "fun trips" for a department which succeeds in successfully implementing a new initiative. Also, an employee's job responsibilities could be increased or, where applicable, promotions may well follow. These rewards serve as signals to employees that the company values their intrapreneurial behaviour.

This study indicates the moderate influence of munificent (external environments) on intrapreneurial behaviour. Technology-push factors, demand new products-pull factors from the market and intrapreneurial activities of employees in an organisation stimulate intrapreneurial behaviour. Further, the results of this research provided support

for the role of the external environment on intrapreneurial behaviour. This finding suggests that, for intrapreneurial employees to maximize their overall performance, they should match their level of innovative, proactive, and risk-taking behaviours with the characteristics of their external environment (dynamism, technology changes and competitive rivalry). Thus, it is of critical importance for both managers and researchers to understand the complex nature of the relationship between intrapreneurial behaviour and firm performance when attempting to predict and explain the success of manufacturing organizations.

The results showed a moderate relationship between intrapreneurial behaviour and intrapreneurial activities. It also shows the influence of intrapreneurial activities on firm performance. Thus, the intrapreneurial activities (such as ideas about new products, new production processes or ideas about the new market) are robust enough to affect firm performance. Additionally, intrapreneurial behaviour also improves performance and organizational performance. This shows the importance of the behaviour of each organization to enhance organisational performance.

5.1 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research

Although the present study aimed to make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on intrapreneurial behaviour and the influence of antecedents on intrapreneurial behaviour, certain areas still need to be explored or expanded. Future research should refine the model of the antecedents' influence on intrapreneurial behaviour. The antecedents only explain 50% of the variation of the data in intrapreneurial behaviour. Future research should enhance the predictive power of the model by measuring other internal factors, such as the influence of the individual in the intrapreneurial behaviour process; the type of intrapreneurial behaviour practised by a company; organisational culture; the value system of an organisation; and its control systems - all of which may well influence intrapreneurial behaviour.

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