
The Limits of Innovation in Intrapreneurship: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Innovation in intrapreneurship emerges as a significant phenomenon that enhances the sustainability and profitability of organizations. Organizations can profit from the innovation of employees if they can remove the factors that limit intrapreneurship. This study, therefore, explored the factors that limit innovation in intrapreneurship. The systematic literature review approach was employed. Relevant studies were searched from various well-established academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct, Emerald, and Google Scholar. A mix of keywords and Boolean operators that included terms like “intrapreneurship,” “entrepreneurial behavior,” “corporate entrepreneurship,” “employee innovation,” “innovative work behavior,” “innovation constraints,” and “organizational innovation” were used for the search. A predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria guided the screening and selection of suitable studies from the pool of articles that were identified from the search. A total of 17 studies were chosen for the final review. The analysis revealed organizational and individual-level limits to innovation. At the organizational level, the factors identified include resource constraints, bureaucracy, rigid structures, procedural barriers, organizational culture and intrapreneurial environment, leadership style and management support, and HR systems, incentives, and reward structures. Further, the individual level limits included qualifications, skills, and cognitive style, self-efficacy and perceived control, employee satisfaction and motivation, and attitudes of employees, management, and colleagues. The findings of the study contribute to the literature by conceptualizing limits to innovation in intrapreneurship as the interaction between individual and organizational factors. The study concludes by making recommendations for practice and direction for future studies.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Intrapreneurship, Systematic literature review

Introduction

The continuous advancement of technology and globalization is shifting the global economic paradigm. For example, the rapid spread of technology and information has heightened the competition among organizations, which can either enhance or threaten the sustainability and profitability of firms. Almeida (2020) noted that new modes of production, consumption, and cooperation are always emerging and pose significant challenges to enterprises. Organizations must be innovative and agile to keep pace and remain competitive in their respective industries. To achieve this, businesses must continually innovate, developing technologies and production methods that are based on knowledge generation. Innovation has therefore emerged as a key pillar of global economic expansion (Orlova et al., 2018; Spender et al., 2017).

Innovation within an organization can be influenced significantly by the employees. The majority of employees search for opportunities that are meaningful for the improvement of their organization as a whole (De Jong and Wennekers, 2008). This process, whereby employees innovate and improve the performance of their organization, is referred to as intrapreneurship. The concept of intrapreneurship was introduced by Pinchot (1985). According to Pinchot (1985), intrapreneurship emphasizes internal entrepreneurship within businesses. Intrapreneurship is an approach that encourages workers to work as intrapreneurs inside an organization. An intrapreneur is an auto-motivated, proactive, and result-oriented person who starts working on an idea for an innovative product-service offering (Camelo-Ordaz et al., 2012). An intrapreneurial environment encourages creativity, which in turn inspires intrapreneurs to innovate without worrying about possible financial setbacks (Menzel et al., 2007). An intrapreneur has immense potential to bring innovation to his/her work environment using his/her creativity, intelligence, and entrepreneurial spirit, just like an entrepreneur does (Lumpkin, 2014). Organizations can benefit from intrapreneurs in their employee pool by allowing an intrapreneurial culture in organizations, which leads to increased innovation, adaptability, and competitiveness of organizations. An intrapreneurial culture provides an entrepreneurial environment to employees of an organization to tap into their entrepreneurial potential for creating value for themselves as well as for the organizations they work for (Lumpkin, 2014).

According to different authors in the literature, intrapreneurship has three key interpretations. First, it involves recognizing workers who display initiative, promote creativity, as well as undertake risks in an organization (Edú Valsania et al., 2016). Secondly, intrapreneurship involves employees' involvement in internal entrepreneurial activities of an organization (Perlines et al., 2022). The third definition focuses on employee actions that support intrapreneurship at the organizational level (Perlines et al., 2022). These are the contributions of employee-intrapreneurs to their company (Woo, 2018). In this review, the researchers define intrapreneurship in the context of the organizational environment, which is explained as a creative process in which an employee utilizes opportunistic approaches to implement novel ideas in organizations using small changes to initiate large shifts in an organization (Berzin et al., 2016).

Intrapreneurship allows employees to implement their ideas as though they were entrepreneurs in an organization. As compared to entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs work in the safe environment of an organization, which prevents any possible negative impacts of potential failure or losses incurred by intrapreneurs (Reuther et al., 2017). From this understanding, it could be argued that intrapreneurship refers to entrepreneurship conducted within an established organization. This can be perceived as a process wherein employees within organizations seek opportunities irrespective of the resources at their disposal, engaging in novel endeavors and diverging from traditional practices to pursue emergent behavioral intentions or actions that deviate from conventional business methods (Antoncic and Hisrich, 2011); or merely as an entrepreneurial spirit embedded within the existing organization (Antoncic, 2007). Farhad et al. (2011) assert that contemporary firms recognize the significance of intrapreneurship inside their structures. The objective of intrapreneurship is to encourage innovation within organizations.

The concept of innovation is associated with Schumpeter (1934), who defined it as the process of creating products or services, or utilizing methods or inputs that are new to the company (Śledzik, 2013). Thus, Schumpeter holds that innovation is realized through creative productivity, which may result in the development of a new product or an improvement in the quality of an existing product. Innovation may result imply the development of new or improved quality of existing manufacturing methods, a new market, a new source of raw materials, or a new form of business organization. Crossan and Apaydin (2010) summarized the definitions of innovation as the process of doing things differently. The perspective of Crossan and Apaydin (2010) is incomplete because doing things differently has a detrimental impact or may be as effective as the old way of doing things. As such, summarizing the definition of innovation as the new ways of things is problematic because it looks at innovation as a process and not a product. To improve on the notion of Crossan and Apadydin (2010), innovation could be summarized as the new way of doing things more effectively and efficiently. In this sense, innovation is not concerned with only the process of doing things but also the outcome of the process. A process is deemed innovative only when it leads to a more effective and efficient outcome. As noted by Coad et al. (2016), innovation should be linked to the concept of change and the simultaneous transformation of that change for the advantage of businesses. In this review, the researchers defined innovation as the production or adoption, assimilation, and exploitation of a value-added novelty in organizations, renewal and enlargement of products, services, and markets, development of new methods of production, and establishment of new management systems that are more effective and efficient. Management encouraged to pursue innovation because of the benefits that innovations brings to the stability and profitability. Luamba et al. (2021) found that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the USA used innovation as a strategy to advertise on social media, promote customer service, and sustain competitiveness. SMEs also agreed that innovation was crucial to increase survivability and profitability (Luamba et al., 2021). Also, innovation improved sales growth, productivity growth, and employment growth of Spanish firms between 2004 and 2012 (Coad et al., 2016).

The foregoing shows that innovation can significantly influence the performance of firms as such organizations endeavor to create a suitable environment that encourages innovation. The review

of the literature shows that researchers have shown a considerable interest in examining the limits of innovation in intrapreneurship. However, the findings are scattered across several industries and countries. The purpose of this study is therefore to conduct a systematic review of the literature to synthesize the findings and provide a suitable conclusion on the limits of innovation in intrapreneurship.

Research Method

Research approach

The study adopted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, following the PRISMA framework as a guideline. The SLR was selected because it gave the researcher a chance to discover, choose, and merge the relevant empirical studies on intrapreneurship and innovation in a clear and orderly manner (Lame, 2019). The SLR helped the researchers eliminate bias and ensure that the evidence collected from a well-defined group of studies could be compared across different sectors, countries, and types of research. The SLR followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). The PRISMA guideline provided a lucid, step-by-step process for the searching, screening, inclusion and analysis of studies, thus, heightening the rigor and credibility of the claims made regarding the limits of innovation in intrapreneurship.

Data search

The researchers searched for studies from renowned academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct, Emerald, and Google Scholar. The search involved the use of a combination of keywords and Boolean operators, featuring terms like “intrapreneurship,” “intrapreneurial behavior,” “corporate entrepreneurship,” “employee innovation,” “innovative work behaviour,” “innovation constraints,” and “organizational innovation.” The search focused on studies that were published between 2015 and 2025. The researchers used further read through the references of derived studies to identify other studies that could be relevant to this review. All the search procedures and screening steps were arranged and reported according to the PRISMA guidelines.

Data selection

The selection process followed the PRISMA flow: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. At first, all the records (i.e., 178) that were obtained from the databases went to a reference management system, where duplicates were eliminated. During the screening, the researchers read through the titles and abstracts over and over again to omit the studies that were clearly irrelevant. During the eligibility stage, the full texts of the potentially relevant articles were checked against the pre-determined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Only studies that satisfied all the inclusion criteria were kept for the final synthesis, leading to the collection of 17 empirical studies from various countries and industries. Figure 1 provides a summary of the screening and selection process.

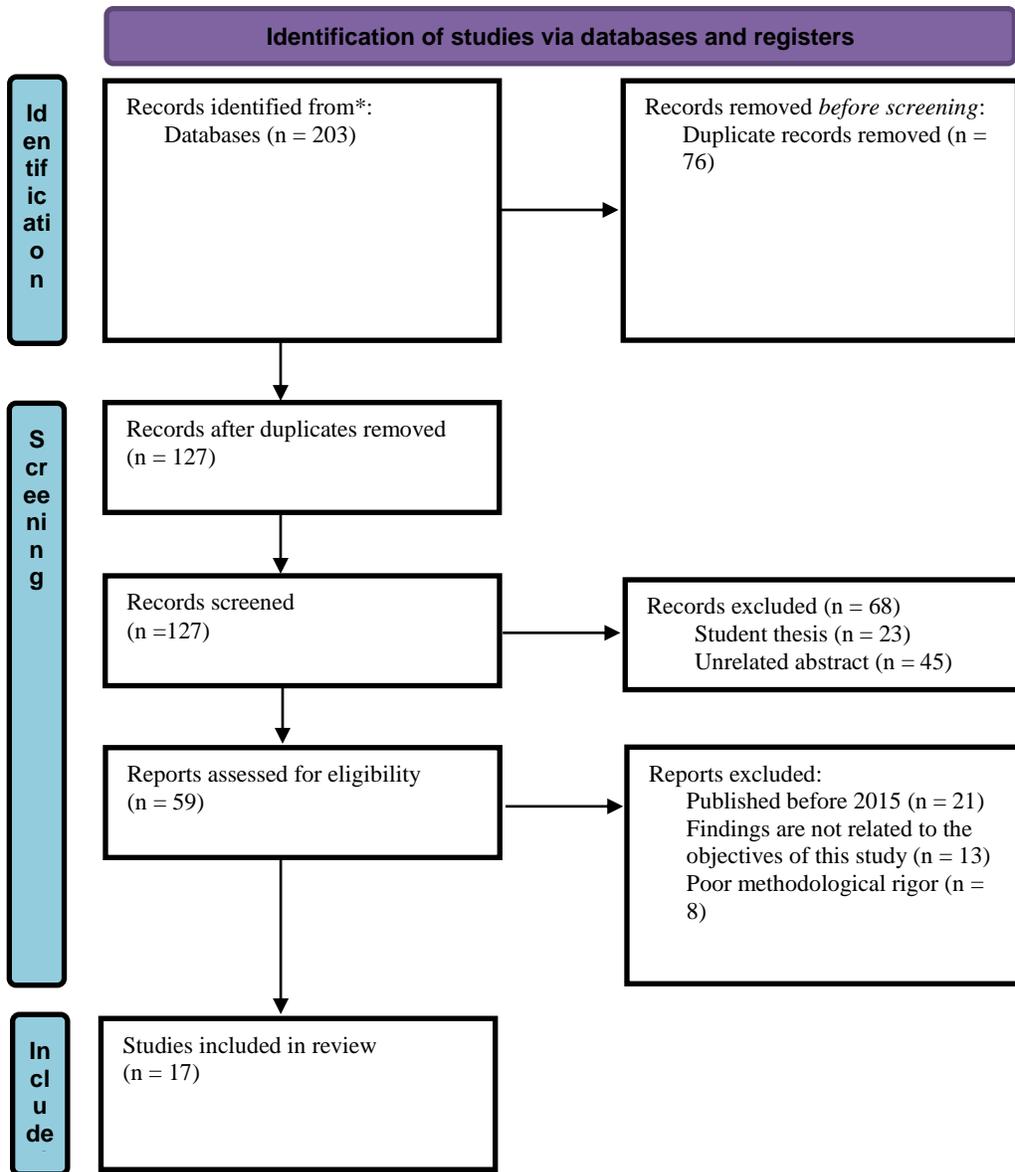


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the selection process for review, based on PRISMA (Moher et al, 2009)

Criteria for inclusion and exclusion

Studies had to fulfill the following criteria to be accepted in the review:

- Empirical studies that used primary data (quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods).
- Studies published in peer-review journals between 2015 and 2025.
- Studies whose findings focused on innovation-related outcomes, processes, enablers or constraints associated with intrapreneurial behavior.
- Studies that give ample methodological and empirical specifics that would persuade the extractor of the key traits and findings.

The studies of the following characteristics were not included:

- Only conceptual or theoretical papers, editorials, book chapters, and conference abstracts without primary empirical data.
- Innovation not being the main focus (e.g., dealing with entrepreneurship more generally without an innovation component).
- Studies conducted in non-organizational contexts like individual entrepreneurship outside firms.
- Not within the specified time frame or in languages other than English.

Extraction and analysis of data

Data from all 17 included studies were analyzed using a standardized template for extraction. The template captured: author(s), year of publication, country, industry or sector, type of participants, research approach (qualitative, quantitative or mixed method), data collection methods, and key findings relating to intrapreneurship and innovation, including reported enablers and limits. Finally, the sample was constituted of six qualitative, nine quantitative, and one mixed-methods study that cut across manufacturing, healthcare, higher education, finance, agri-foods, and state-owned enterprises. The data extracted from the studies are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Data extraction

Author, date, country	Purpose	Industry/participant	Approach	Data collection	Analysis	Findings
Almeida, (2020), Portugal	to explore the role of entrepreneurial teams in such companies, to understand the inhibiting factors of innovation, and to find the essential conditions for these organizations to continuously innovate and promote intrapreneurship within their organizations	textiles, metallomechanics, and electronic components	Qualitative	Semi-structured	Thematic	The findings reveal that several factors constrain employee participation in this process, including lack of qualifications, limited resources, corporate bureaucracy, and reduced time and budget. In the conditions necessary to support the innovation process emerge the support given by the management team, the qualification of individuals and teams, and the existence of an organizational culture that promotes communication, collaboration, and tolerance to risk
Boyles (2015), Canada/USA	Examines how news intrapreneurship interfaces with three qualities of managerial change: newsroom leadership, organizational culture and innovation speed.	A-level news publication/ Managers and supervisors	Qualitative	In-depth interviews	Thematic analysis	Organizational barriers: Bureaucratic nature of newsroom authority - Cultural barriers: Isolation of intrapreneurial units from the broader news organization - Individual-level barriers: Three layers of tension (executive, practitioner, and internal).
Farrukh et al. (2019), Pakistan	Investigate the association among styles of leadership and intrapreneurial behavior (IB) of employees in the presence of psychological empowerment	Higher education/University staff	Quantitative	Questionnaire	structured equation modeling technique	Findings revealed a positive impact of transformational leadership (TL) and authentic leadership on intrapreneurial behavior, while a negative association between transactional leadership and IB was found. Contrary to these results, no significant association was observed between IB and passive-avoidant leadership
Abdelwahed et al. (2022), Pakistan	Examine employee satisfaction, intrapreneurship, and firm growth among top managers in Pakistan	Manufacturing industries/top managers	Quantitative	Questionnaire	structured equation modeling technique	The findings of the SEM analysis show that Employee Satisfaction has a significant and positive impact on intrapreneurship and Firm Growth
Muavia et al. (2023), Pakistan	Examine the direct and indirect effects of regulatory focus (RF) on employee intrapreneurship (EI) in Pakistan's small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)	SMES/employees	Quantitative	Questionnaire	structured equation modeling technique	The results showed the positive direct and indirect effects of promotion focus on Emotional Intelligence. As expected, the results showed negative direct and indirect effects of the prevention focus on intrapreneurship.
Letsie (2021), South Africa	Highlights the barriers of intrapreneurship	Healthcare/nurses	Qualitative	Interview guide	Thematic analysis ³	The barriers identified in this study include; lack of resources, security issues affecting freedom of staff

	practice experienced by unit nurse managers working within the embattled public hospitals					and patients, poor staff ratios impacting on the rights of staff and patients, poor communication and unfair incentivized performance management system
Burkholder and Hulsink (2022), Netherland	To examine how academic intrapreneurs perceive and respond to organizational factors set by departments, faculties, schools, and university boards that influence knowledge transfer, the initiation of an internal project, and the collaboration with societal stakeholders	Education/Healthcare	Qualitative	Interview guide	Thematic analysis	The results show that the relationship between academics and the Knowledge Commercialization Process within the DS at Erasmus MC was influenced by six factors (i.e., external collaboration, product quality, time availability, external financing, internal financing, and rewards and reinforcement). Our study highlights that the perception of- the academic entrepreneur's control and influence seems to impact effective transferring of academic knowledge from academic institutions to the private sector for economic and societal benefit
Marques et al. (2021), Portugal	Explore the role of cognitive styles and intrapreneurship in health professionals' innovation outputs,	Healthcare/professional healthcare practitioners	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Partial least squares structural equation modelling	Our findings reveal that cognitive style plays a significant role in intrapreneurship and innovation outputs, which are mediated by intrapreneurship. In particular, health care professionals with the rational cognitive style are likely to be more of an intrapreneur and innovative as compared to those with an intuitive cognitive style. Promoting intrapreneurship is crucial for successful innovation outputs.
Portalanza-Chavarrías Revuelto-Taboada (2023), Ecuador	Analyzes the effect of employee perceptions of high-performance work systems on intrapreneurial behavior, with potential mediation by knowledge management processes	Finance/ Employees of banks	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Partial least squares structural equation modelling	The results show that innovative behavior can be enhanced by implementing high-performance work systems. These systems promote sound knowledge management processes.
van Egeraat and Curran (2022), Ireland	identify the main barriers and challenges to intrapreneurship in these different context	Agri-foods, engineering, financial services, ICT, medical technology and pharmaceuticals	Qualitative	Interview guide	Thematic analysis	Time and capital resources, individuals with bounded skill sets, element of the solution lies in the reward system, motivating staff, including those whose ideas have been rejected
Reuther et al. (2018)	To suggest a systems theory-based approach to assess possible barriers of intrapreneurship in organizations under consideration of	-	Quantitative	Questionnaire	-	The application of the model in a single-case study suggests that the influence factors 1) market situation, 2) attitude of employees, 3) skills and creativity, 4) values and goals of the organization, 5) working environment, 6) agility and rule breaking tolerance, 7) managerial processes or management support, 8)

	risk, systems and organizational behavior					communication processes, 9) knowledge and 10) intangible assets could have a high impact on intrapreneurial activities.
Rambakus et al. (2020), South Africa	to measure the intrapreneurial climate, determine its strengths and weaknesses as well as constraints, identify strategies to enhance the intrapreneurial culture and test their influence on intrapreneurial behavior.	Sugar producing company/ 142 managers	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics	The findings revealed a low intrapreneurial climate, with the firm's weaknesses revolving around leadership style, structure, culture, systems and its core activities. Its strength lies in its managers that displayed high levels of entrepreneurial orientation. Capital availability, bureaucracy, resource availability, a poorly understood innovation process, lack of leadership style, and management support were perceived as barriers.
Afryie et al. (2020), Ghana	to examine the effect of employee perceived self-efficacy on intrapreneurial behaviour among Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).	Fresh fruit juice processing industry/234 employees	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Exploratory factor analysis/Descriptive analysis	Findings show that employees' perceived self-efficacy relates positively to their intrapreneurial behaviour. However, it was also observed that self-efficacy was not a sufficient condition for intrapreneurial behaviour to occur. Firm characteristics play a crucial role in the practice of such behavior. That is, while employees' self-efficacy is a principal determinant of employees' intrapreneurial behaviour, the strength of self-efficacy is enhanced by firm resources such as reward systems.
Chamba and Chazireni (2021), Zimbabwe	Seeks to establish the influence of intrapreneurship on the efficacy of SOEs in developing countries, using the case of SOEs	State Owned Enterprises/Employee	Mixed method	Interview guide/questionnaire	Descriptive and Thematic analysis	The study revealed that most SOEs have a poor Intrapreneurship Orientation, which negatively impacts on the performance of SOEs. Most SOEs generally have low innovation levels and have not developed services in line with customer demands. However, SOEs anchored in an intrapreneurial architecture were able to achieve greater public value through innovations which led to better service delivery and cost effectiveness.
Engzell et al. (2023), Sweden	Investigates corporate conditions from the individual's perspective as well as the types of intrapreneurs that exist	Employees in Swedish private corporations	Quantitative	Survey	Cluster analysis	Time availability, personal independence, and personal recognition and rewards were used to illustrate the internal corporate conditions. Their perception of the internal environment will have effects on their individual well-being, resulting in effects on both individual performance and corporate performance. Understanding various working conditions can increase individual well-being. In the end, corporations that understand and support their employees who behave intrapreneurially tend to perform better than other corporations.
Engzell et al. (2024), Sweden	Propose an integrative framework that captures both	Higher education, University Lecturers	Qualitative	Interview guide	Thematic analysis	This study identifies the attitudes of management, colleagues, and external collaborators as crucial factors fostering and sustaining

	organizational and individual-level responses to these multiple logics, while also incorporating intrapreneurial logic					intrapreneurial logic.
Almeida and Miguel-Oliveira (2021) Portugal	exploring the role played by existing resources to support intrapreneurship initiatives	Start-ups	Quantitative	Questionnaire	analysis of variance (ANOVA)	Finally, medium-sized startups and those with more qualified human capital tend to value and support intrapreneur initiatives more intensely. In contrast, startups with less academically qualified human capital offer worse conditions and support to intrapreneur activities.

Data analysis and reporting

The analysis of the extracted data followed the thematic synthesis process of analysis. This process began with coding procedure in order to identify the elements and concepts that were occurring repeatedly across the findings of the primary studies. The next step was to rearrange the codes into larger categories that not only contained organizational-level conditions (structures, culture, climate, human resource systems, leadership, work systems) but also individual-level conditions (skills, qualifications, cognitive styles, motivational orientations, perceptions of control, and well-being). Finally, the themes were compared, refined, and interpreted in the context of the review's main objective which was to gain an understanding of how the limits of innovation within intrapreneurship are constructed and maintained in organizations. The PRISMA framework was used throughout the whole process to ensure transparency and rigor in the reporting of the search, selection, and synthesis procedures.

Findings

Characteristics of included studies

This section presents a bibliometric analysis of the studies included in the review. It presented findings on the year of publication, country of publication, regional distribution, research approach, and industry of focus.

Year of publication

This review specifically included studies published between 2015 and 2025. The details of the year of publication for the included studies are shown in Figure 2.

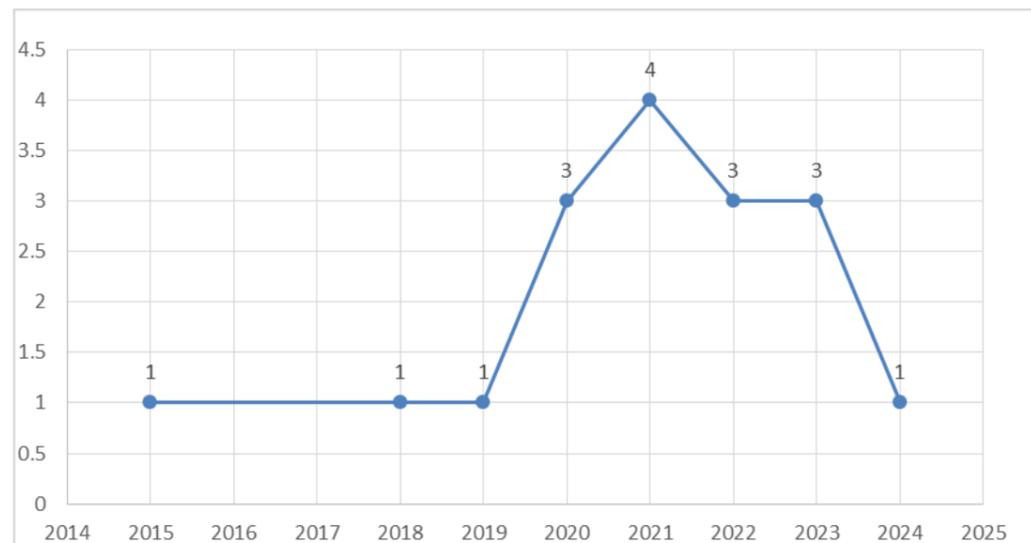


Figure 2: Year of publication

The temporal distribution of the selected studies reveals that the limits of innovation in intrapreneurship research have steadily increased over the last ten years. In 2015, there was only one article published, while in 2018 and 2019, one article was published each year. This is suggestive of the limited attention the topic received during the first part of the period. Then, in 2020, there was a significant increase in the number of publications: three studies in 2020, four in 2021, three in 2022, and three in 2023. The number of publications then dropped to one more in 2024. It could be inferred that there is growing interest in intrapreneurship and its innovation-related constraints, particularly from 2020 onwards. This signified a more recent and deeper concern regarding the impact of organizational and individual factors on intrapreneurial innovation in the current business world.

Country of publication

The studies are drawn from diverse national contexts, geographically, and have some clear regional concentrations. The details are shown in Figure 3.

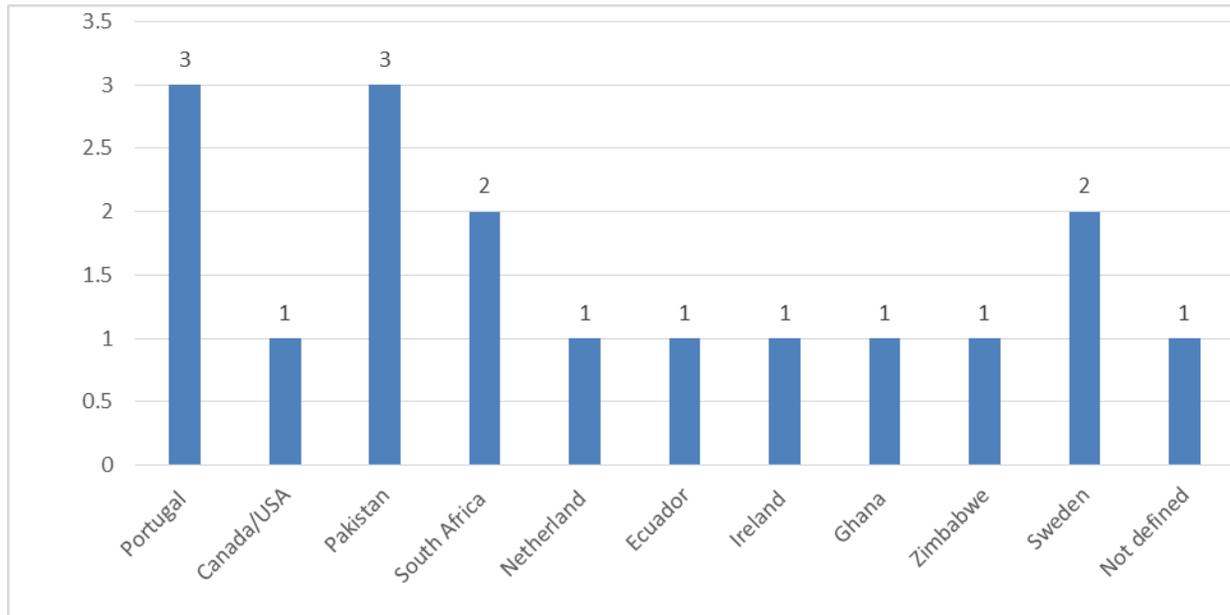


Figure 3: Country of publication

Figure 3 shows that Pakistan and Portugal have the largest share, with three studies each. This means that there is a relatively strong interest in the topic of intrapreneurship and its related constraints to innovation among researchers in Pakistan and Portugal. South Africa, and Sweden have two studies each, which may be a sign of the continuous empirical interest in intrapreneurial dynamics in Europe and Africa. Besides, there are also several countries, including Canada/USA, the Netherlands, Ecuador, Ireland, Ghana, and Zimbabwe, with one study each. One study did not indicate the country of publication. In summary, the distribution indicates that the evidence base encompasses both developed and developing economies, with a significant concentration in Pakistan.

Regional distribution

The different studies were conducted in various countries located in Europe, Africa, and Asia, but the geographical distribution is uneven.

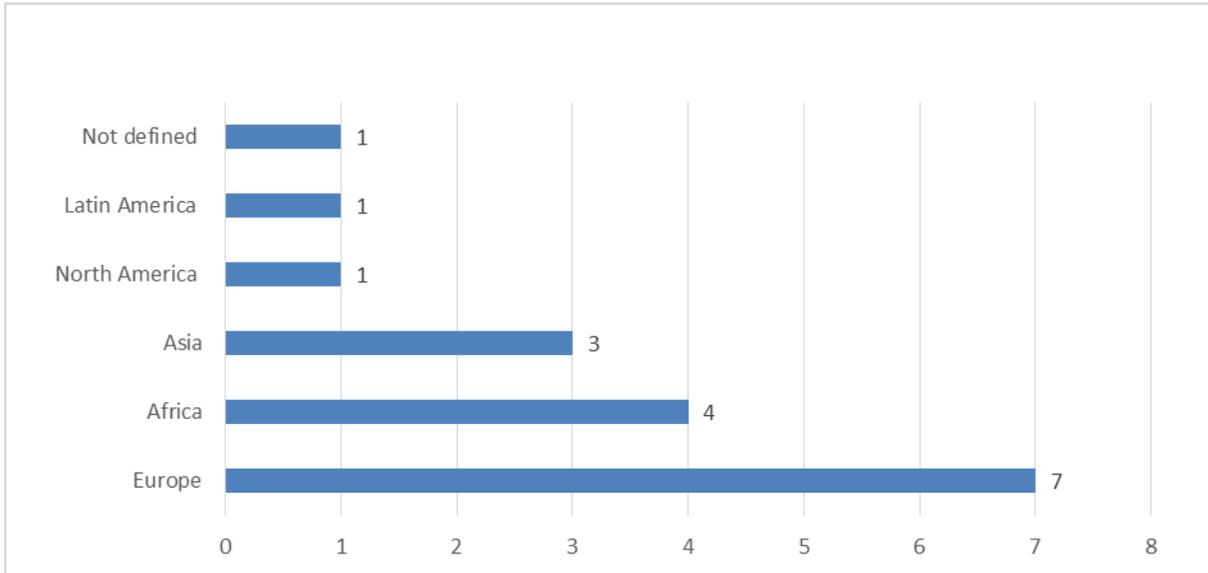


Figure 4: Regional distribution

The evidence from this review is based on studies relatively small number of countries like Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, and Sweden, while the rest of the world is either not covered at all or only partially. Latin America, for instance, has only one study from Ecuador, and North America has only one study from the Canada/USA border, despite the economic importance of these two regions. On the same note, only the southern part of Asia is represented in the sample, with Pakistan, while Oceania, Central and Eastern Europe, and many African countries are completely absent. This scenario indicates that the current understanding of the geographical limits of innovation in intrapreneurship is primarily based on a few countries and regions. Thus, cross-regional comparisons and empirical studies in less explored areas would facilitate the discovery of new insights.

Research approach

The studies in this review employed three research approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods shown in Figure 5.

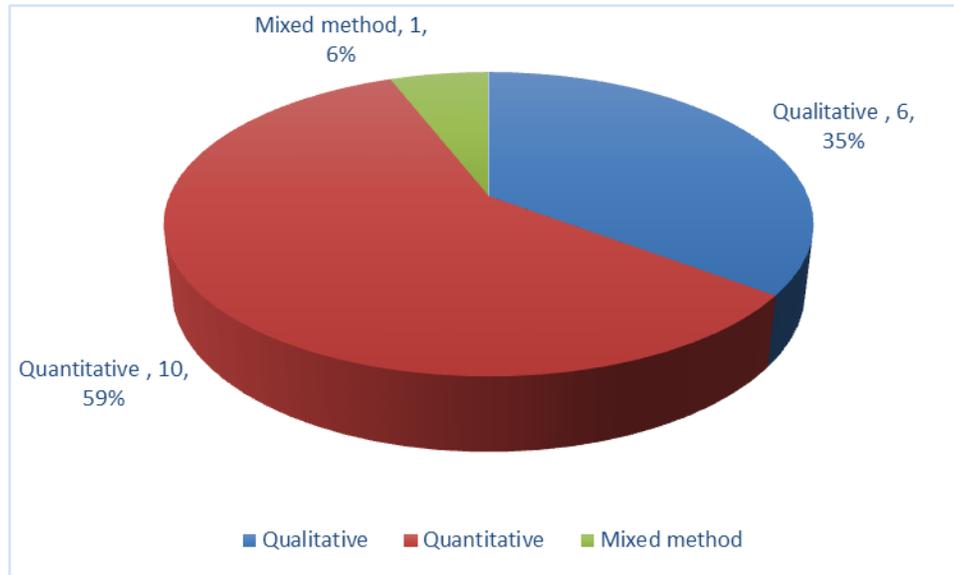


Figure 5: Research approaches

In terms of the research methodology, the weight of evidence remains in terms of the use of a quantitative approach, as indicated by the presence of 10 studies out of a total of 17 studies that made use of a quantitative approach. Another 6 studies made use of a qualitative approach, while only 1 study made use of a mixed approach. This suggests there remains a fair emphasis in the research methodology aimed at studying the relationship between the variables of intrapreneurial practices, organizational conditions in innovation, as well as the use of statistical survey methodology. Figure 5 shows that relatively fewer studies have used the qualitative approach compared to the quantitative approach. The use of the qualitative approach can provide an in-depth understanding of ways that intrapreneurship is limited. However, there remains a negligible level of research aimed at the use of the mixed methodology. Researchers should focus attention on the use of mixed methods in the study on limits to innovation in intrapreneurship to effectively explore the relationship between variables and the underlying reasons for the relationship in a single study.

Industry of focus

This comprehensive review incorporated a total of 17 studies, which, although belonging to different industries, were categorized into four major sectors. The four major industries include education and health, manufacturing, service, and public/state-owned enterprises. It is noteworthy that some of the studies did not define the industry of focus. Figure 5 shows the graphical representation of the industry of focus.

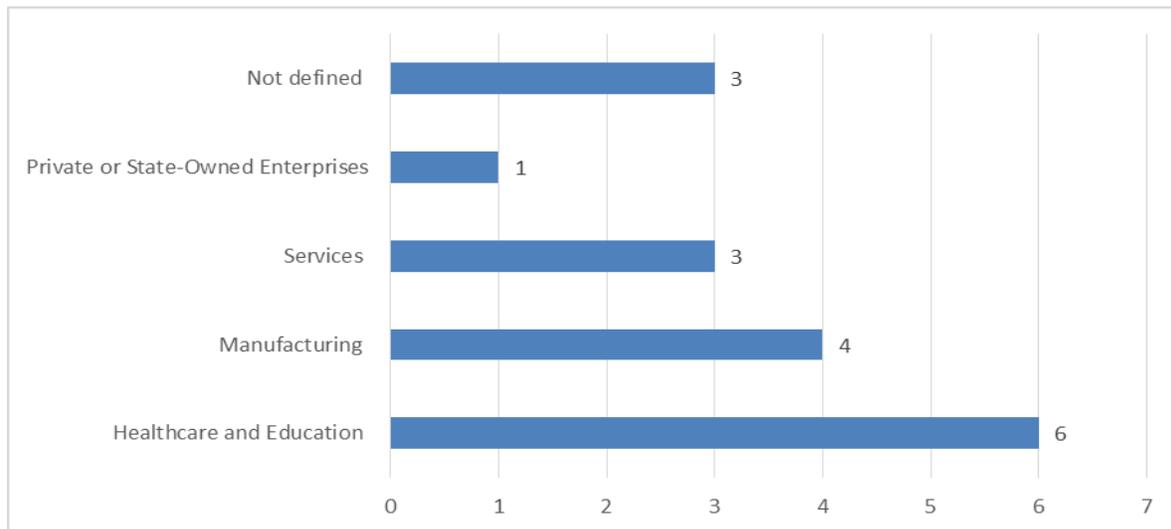


Figure 6: Categorization of studies based on industry of focus

Figure 6 shows that the most significant sector is healthcare and higher education, with six studies (Letsie, 2021; Burkholder & Hulsink, 2022; Marques et al., 2021; Farrukh et al., 2019; Engzell et al., 2023; Engzell et al., 2024) that indicate the decisive role of intrapreneurship in research done in knowledge-intensive professional and public-service environments. Next to it is the manufacturing and industrial sector with the second largest cluster of four studies (Almeida, 2020; Almeida and Miguel-Oliveira, 2022; Abdelwahed et al., 2022; Rambakus et al., 2020; Afriyie et al., 2020). The main processes in these cases are textiles, food processing, metallomechanics, and sugar production. The smallest cluster consists of three studies, which concern the service and knowledge-intensive sectors, including media, banking, ICT, and mixed service industries (Boyles, 2015; Portalanza-Chavarría & Revuelto-Taboada, 2023; van Egeraat & Curran, 2022). In one study, public or state-owned enterprises were analyzed (Chamba & Chazireni, 2021; Burkholder & Hulsink, 2022), which reveals a lack of research in this area. Three studies did not specify the industry under consideration.

Themes identified from the analysis

The objective of this review was to explore the limits of innovation in intrapreneurship. The findings from the review have been categorized into organizational-level constraints and individual-level constraints.

Organizational-level constraints

Resource Constraints (Time, Capital, Staffing, Security)

Several studies revealed resource-related constraints as one of the major limits to innovation in intrapreneurship. Almeida (2020) and van Egeraat and Curran (2022) state that limited resources, less time, and budget lead to lower employees' innovation participation, while Letsie (2021) claims that a lack of resources and poor staff ratios, together with security issues, limit employee intrapreneurship. Similarly, Rambakus et al. (2020) also cite the lack of capital and resources as one of the most important reasons for not having a favorable intrapreneurial climate.

Bureaucracy, Rigid Structures, and Procedural Barriers

Bureaucratic and structural inflexibility are reported as the primary factors limiting intrapreneurship to some degree. Almeida (2020) noted that corporate bureaucracy is the main hurdle to the participation of staff in the process of innovation, whereas Boyles (2015) mentions the bureaucratic nature of the authority in the newsroom as a hindrance to the media organizations' creative innovations. Amplifying this view, Rambakus et al. (2020) remark that the intrapreneurial climate in firms is weakened by high levels of bureaucracy coupled with unsuitable structures, culture, systems and a poorly understood innovation process.

Organizational Culture and Intrapreneurial Environment

Six studies (Engzell et al., 2023, 2024; Van Egeraat and Curran, 2022; Chamba and Chazireni, 2021; Almeida, 2020; Boyles, 2015) found organizational culture and climate as the core determinants for the emergence of intrapreneurial thoughts and innovations within an organization. According to Almeida (2020) and Reuther et al. (2018) showed that communication, collaboration, and risk-taking are what give birth to an innovative climate. Instead, without communication, collaboration, and risk-taking, innovation will be stifled, and people will be excluded. Chamba and Chazireni (2021) and Boyles (2015) found that restricting and cutting off intrapreneurial teams from the remaining organizational members creates a cultural barrier to limit the exchange and spread of innovative ideas. Moreover, Engzell et al. (2023, 2024) add evidence that perceptions of internal environments, namely, availability, independence, recognition, and attitudes toward management and colleagues, are the most influential antecedents to the growth of an intrapreneurially stimulating climate.

Leadership Style and Management Support

The style of leadership and management support is found to be a significant determinant of intrapreneurial behavior. According to Farrukh et al. (2019), transformational and authentic leadership styles encourage intrapreneurial behavior; on the contrary, transactional leadership style hinders innovation and intrapreneurship. Almeida (2020) indicates that management support is the frontline condition for the innovation process to be effective. Reuther et al. (2018) pinpoint that management processes and management support, including openness to rule breaking and speed, are the most important factors influencing intrapreneurial activities, while Rambakus et al. (2020) announce that the absence of management support and wrong leadership style are the two most significant barriers. Last but not least, Engzell et al. (2024) assert that good management attitudes are those that allow for and keep the intrapreneurial logic within organizations.

HR Systems, Incentives, and Reward Structures

Human resource systems and incentive strategies are the main factors that determine whether intrapreneurship will flourish or be restricted. Letsie (2021) states that an unfair performance management system based on incentives can make the staff lose interest and thus, stop the intrapreneurial initiatives. Afriyie et al. (2020) report that high-performance work systems coupled with effective knowledge management practices promote employees' innovative behavior. Burkholder and Hulsink (2022) state that the rewards and reinforcement strategies

influence the willingness of academics to innovate and commercialize knowledge. Engzell et al. (2023) additionally argue that personal recognition and rewards are very important internal factors that determine the well-being and innovation of employees and, thus, the performance of the company. Van Egeraat and Curran (2022) argue that reward systems, which keep the staff, including those whose ideas are turned down, are very important to enhancing intrapreneurship

Individual-level constraints

Qualifications, Skills, and Cognitive Style

A person's qualifications, skills, and cognitive preferences are the primary constraints and facilitators. Almeida (2020) states that when employees' qualifications are low, their contribution to innovation will be less effective; on the other hand, highly qualified people and teams will even develop the intrapreneurial capacity. Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023) prove that limited skills harm employees' problem-solving contributions, while Reuther et al. (2018) point out that the skills and creativity of the employees are the main drivers of the intrapreneurial activities. Concerning cognition, Marques et al. (2021) report that hospital staff with a rational cognitive style are more likely to become intrapreneurs and be innovative than those with an intuitive style, and that intrapreneurship is the link between cognitive style and innovation outputs.

Self-Efficacy and Perceived Control

The review showed self-efficacy and perceived control as important factors that hinder intrapreneurship, yet their effect varies with the situation. Afriyie et al. (2020) stated that the employees' self-efficacy can enhance intrapreneurial behavior; however, they also argue that self-efficacy without the presence of firm supportive characteristics and resources is not enough. In the same way, Burkholder and Hulsink (2022) indicated that the perception of staff on their own control and influence over the commercialization process is an essential factor for the transfer of academic knowledge to the private sector for economic and societal benefit.

Employee satisfaction and Motivation

The review additionally demonstrated that employee satisfaction and motivation are the drivers of innovation in intrapreneurship. In the case of Pakistan's top-level management, Abdelwahed et al. (2022) state that employee satisfaction plays a major role in granting to their movement as intrapreneurs. Van Egeraat and Curran (2022) reported that in Ireland, the motivation leads to a rise in both the intrapreneurship and innovation of the employees.

Attitudes of Employees, Management, and Colleagues

The attitudinal factors at different levels significantly determine the degree to which intrapreneurship is either supported or constrained. According to Reuther et al. (2018), employees' attitudes influence their intrapreneurship. Employees who can work in an agile environment and a rule-free context easily engage in intrapreneurial activities. Boyles (2015) points out the tensions at executive, practitioner, and internal levels, thereby showing that the conflicting attitudes within the organization are the causes of friction for intrapreneurs and thus

their initiatives are limited. Engzell et al. (2024) state that management, colleagues, and external collaborators' attitudes are important in terms of the development and continuity of intrapreneurial thinking, indicating that the presence of supportive and friendly social environments can neutralize some of the obstacles created by the organization's structure.

Discussion

The findings from the review show that organizations seek to capitalize on the intrapreneurship and innovation of employees. However, innovation in intrapreneurship is limited by several factors, ranging from structural limitations to psychological constraints. Several studies including Almeida (2020), Letsie (2021), Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023), and Rambakus et al. (2020) reported is the limited availability of resources, i.e., limited time, funds, personnel, and sometimes even security risks, is a constraint to innovation in intrapreneurship at the organizational level. These constraints are often the result of internal prioritization choices, work distribution, and budgeting practices. This implies that the barriers to innovation in intrapreneurship are only partly dictated by absolute scarcity; they are also determined by the way firms arrange their operations and allow room for trial and error. The limited resources are utilized under strict instructions that employees are unable to try or test their new ideas. The limited resources and lack of flexibility for employees to innovate are closely linked with the bureaucratic and rigid nature of organizations. Boyles (2015), Almeida (2020), Rambakus et al. (2020), and Chamba and Chazireni (2021) have indicated that various features of bureaucracy, such as lengthy paperwork, authoritarian management, and, in certain instances, isolation of creative teams from the main organization, are the primary hindrances to the birth of new ideas. The case of state-owned companies is particularly illustrative of the negative impact of bureaucratic measures and the lack of intrapreneurial orientation. This leads to the situation where innovation is almost nonexistent and organizations are unable to meet the needs of users (Chamba & Chazireni, 2021). Nevertheless, some findings showed that bureaucracy can promote innovation in some scenarios. For example, Afriyie et al. (2020), Reuther et al. (2018), and Burkholder and Hulsink (2022) have pointed out that excellent staff policies, explicit channels for knowledge-sharing, and leadership styles focused on motivating people are such factors that can foster and let intrapreneurship grow in an organization's environment. It could therefore be inferred that the presence of bureaucracy in itself does not stifle innovation and intrapreneurship, but rather of whether the structures are designed to primarily impose strictness and order or to allow free experimentation, flow of knowledge, and agility.

Another important area of constraints is formed by organizational culture, climate, and human resource systems. Almeida (2020) underscores that a culture that fosters communication, collaboration, and tolerates risk-taking is the prerequisite of participation in intrapreneurship and innovation processes. On the other side, Letsie (2021) illustrates how performance management systems based on incentives that are perceived unfairly in the healthcare context, together with poor communication and staff ratios, demoralize the staff and thus create constraints to the realization of intrapreneurial initiatives. Together with Afriyie et al. (2020), Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023), Burkholder and Hulsink (2022), and Engzell et al. (2023), the studies have shown that the implementation of high-performance work systems, the

introduction of knowledge-management practices, and the provision of reward structures that are aligned with and reinforce intrapreneurial efforts are all factors positively influencing the manifestation of innovative behavior and the attainment of improved organizational outcomes. One major conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the boundaries of intrapreneurial innovation are not only observable on a structural level but are, in fact, very much influenced by the way organizations define their priorities through daily practices of evaluation, recognition, rewards, and sanctions.

Leadership and management are also mentioned as great factors affecting intrapreneurial behavior. Farrukh et al. (2019) suggest that leadership styles such as transformative and authentic styles encourage intrapreneurial behavior, while transactional styles restrict innovation. Muavia et al. (2023) show that the support from leaders significantly determines the intrapreneurship and thus the performance of organizations. Reuther et al. (2018) and Rambakus et al. (2020) observed that flexible managerial processes can enhance the intrapreneurial process. Furthermore, Burkholder and Hulsink (2022) and Engzell et al. (2024) prove that the psychological atmosphere of management, coworkers, and outside collaborators, as well as perceived control over the key processes, are crucial for the intrapreneurial logic and effective knowledge transfer among employees, which is essential for innovation.

The findings show that intrapreneurship is not a function of only organizational structures and that employees' capabilities and psychological orientations play a crucial role. Almeida (2020), Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023), and Reuther et al. (2018) refer to lack of adequate qualifications, limited skill sets, and lack of creativity as employees' factors that limit innovation to a greater extent. Marques et al. (2021) introduce an aspect of cognition by revealing that healthcare professionals who have a rational cognitive style are more likely to exhibit intrapreneurial behaviors and produce innovations. Van Egeraat and Curran (2022) and Burkholder and Hulsink (2022) show that self-efficacy and perceived control as individual characteristics that positively impact intrapreneurial behavior and effective knowledge commercialization, respectively. However, these authors also emphasize that individual capabilities require an enabling organizational context to be properly realized.

The emotional, relational, and experiential aspects of intrapreneurship are another important strand of findings. Boyles (2015) reports tensions at the executive, practitioner, and internal levels of media organizations and shows that intrapreneurs very often exist on the periphery of the prevailing organizational logic and suffer from isolation and ambiguity. Engzell et al. (2023) demonstrate that among the factors influencing individuals and organizations positively, the employees' perception of time availability, personal independence, and recognition, as well as their well-being, are the most important. Engzell et al. (2024) continue to point out how the roles of positive attitudes from management, colleagues, and external collaborators are significant in maintaining intrapreneurial reasoning. The mentioned studies agree that the drivers of intrapreneurial efforts are not only cognitive or structural nature; they have a substantial emotional component. Thus, to some extent, intrapreneurial behavior is influenced by employees' motivational orientations and the rewards management attaches to innovative

behaviors. Where organizations do not acknowledge these costs associated with intrapreneurship and do not take any steps to offset them, the employees might, as a matter of rational choice, resort to routine behaviours rather than active participation in intrapreneurial engagement, even when they perceive room for improvement.

It is clear, based on the findings of this review, that innovation and intrapreneurship may be limited due to a complex network of interactions between firms' designs, management, culture, and human resources systems on one hand, and the skills, cognitive styles, motivation, and well-being personal factors on the other hand. Thus, it is common for organisations to claim that they want intrapreneurship, but at the same time, they maintain organizational structures, resource allocations, and evaluation practices that make intrapreneurial activities very costly and risky. Individual factors can amplify or diminish the impact of these constraints, but they can rarely remove them completely. In this regard, researchers and organizations should not see intrapreneurship as a mere collection of individual behaviors that can be instilled through training or incentives. Rather, it should be conceptualized as an evolving and constrained institutional practice with the power to shape the entire organization's structure, resources, and meanings.

Conclusion

This systematic review endeavored to explore the limits of innovation within intrapreneurship. The review showed that intrapreneurship is viewed as an essential component for improved organizational performance. However, it is limited within organizations on a structural, cultural, and psychological level. The results obtained make it evident that organizational arrangements, such as resource allocation, bureaucratic processes, management practices, and more generally, organizational leadership, play a crucial role in suppressing employees' endeavors to initiate and implement innovations. Also, individual employee factors such as qualifications, cognitive style, self-efficacy, and regulatory focus influence the intrapreneur role of employees. However, even employees with positive individual intrapersonal traits are restricted in their innovation when organizations fail to provide such employees with supportive context factors.

The study concludes that the limits of innovation in intrapreneurship do not lie within a single barrier, but cannot merely be attributed to the personal shortcomings of entrepreneurial orientation on the part of human resources. This is because these boundary conditions are created by the combination of organizational design and human agency. This means that such factors as resource barriers, organizational bureaucracy, and risk-aversion can limit the temporal and psychological space within which employees can otherwise explore, while organizational climate, style, and reward mechanisms can serve to signal what behaviors are truly valued. Within this framework, employees with strong motivation and capability can make rational, calculated decisions to desist from intrapreneurial activity if they perceive that the costs involved within such activity—whether these pertain to temporal commitments, career risk, stress, and/or rewards—far outweigh any possible payoffs.

The review also points to the significance of paying attention to specificities in each sector and institution. These constraints on intrapreneurship, particularly within manufacturing and industrial organizations, have strong linkages with operating constraints. The constraints within healthcare and educational institutions have been shown to have linkages with work values. The constraints on intrapreneurship, particularly within public organizations, have strong linkages with institutional legacies. An initial observation is that generic approaches to encouraging innovation in intrapreneurship may prove to be inadequate within specific contexts.

The review adds to the literature by enhancing our understanding that innovation in intrapreneurship could be limited by personal behavior and organizational arrangements. The implications for managers and policymakers seeking to leverage intrapreneurship to enhance their innovative capacities should improve organizational structure and processes to support capability development rather than making demands for employees to simply be more innovative.

Finally, this review has exposed significant gaps within the available literature on this topic under study. From a methodological perspective, the over-reliance on quantitative studies employing a cross-sectional design currently hampers our understanding of the processes by which intrapreneurial ventures are developed, grow, and can fail within limiting contexts. From a geographic perspective, the review showed that the majority of the studies on limits to innovation in intrapreneurship have been published within a few countries and industries. This limits generalization concerning our current understanding of this topic. Future studies aiming to fill these knowledge gaps could greatly benefit from employing longitudinal and qualitative approaches to better uncover how processes and outcomes concerning intrapreneurship can be developed, modified, and transformed to overcome these limiting factors.

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