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Intrapreneurship as an Engine of Corporate Renewal

Exploring the Intrapreneur and
How Corporate Conditions Influence
Intrapreneurial Behavior

Jeanette Engzell

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Abstract

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The aim of this thesis is to explore the characteristics of the intrapreneur and subsequently probe the question of how various internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior. Using an evolutionary framework as the overarching theoretical point of departure to understand the core phenomena, the questions are tested on a comprehensive dataset of employees in the private sector in Sweden. The analyses are conducted in four individual papers following a quantitative research design.

The thesis expands the classic intrapreneur stereotype “a dreamer who does” by offering a more comprehensive perspective of an intrapreneur and showcasing various types of intrapreneurs such as resilient intrapreneurs, neglected intrapreneurs, and privileged intrapreneurs. Additionally, the findings reveal a set of corporate conditions that influence employees’ intentions to become engaged in intrapreneurial behavior. They also open up the relatively unexplored gender perspective on intrapreneurship, showing that some components of corporate culture can encourage intrapreneurship and that these components relate to existing gender roles within the corporation. Overall, these findings contribute to prior research on the intrapreneur and intrapreneurship in the Swedish context.

Keywords: Corporate entrepreneurship, Intrapreneurship, Intrapreneurial behavior, Intentions, Corporate conditions

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List of Papers

This thesis is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.

- I Engzell, J. Searching for the Intrapreneur – A Descriptive Study. *A previous version of this paper was presented at the 2019 AEM & TIM Workshop in Naples and at the Global Research Conference on Marketing and Entrepreneurship 2019 Annual Meeting, London.* To be submitted to the International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research.
- II Blomkvist, K., Engzell, J., Kappen, P. & Zander, I. How Planned Behavior Drives Employee Intentions to Pursue New Product and Service Development. *Presented at the virtual 81st Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management 2021.* To be submitted to the Journal of Product Innovation Management.
- III Blomkvist, K., Engzell, J., Kappen, P. & Zander, I. A Gender Sensitive Perspective of Corporate Culture and the Spawning of Intrapreneurs. *A previous version of this paper was presented at the entrepreneurship sector meeting 2020.* To be submitted to Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice.
- IV Engzell, J. Beyond the Stereotype of an Intrapreneur - An Exploratory Study of Different Intrapreneurs and Various Corporate Conditions. *Presented at the virtual 81st Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management 2021. Nominated for best paper proceedings at the virtual 81st Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management 2021. Presented at the Global Research Conference on Marketing and Entrepreneurship 2021 Annual Meeting. To be presented at the Nordic Academy of Management Conference 2022.*

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Introduction

Intrapreneurship as a Driving Force of Corporate Renewal

Intrapreneurship has become a holy grail of sorts for corporations that aim for renewal. Research over the past decades have called for corporations to adapt, adjust, or redefine themselves at a much faster speed than before in order to stay competitive (Zahra & Covin, 1995; Buekens, 2014; Bierwerth et al., 2015), partly because of a number of new challenging environmental conditions in the global business environment (Ireland, Hitt, & Sirmon, 2003; Morris, Webb, & Franklin, 2011; Klofsten, Urbano, & Heaton, 2021). Most recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has generated new problems and opportunities for established corporations (Zahra, 2021). Digitalization has emerged as a crucial condition for competitiveness and has picked up pace in the last few years (Caligiuri, De Cieri, Minbaeva, Verbeke, & Zimmermann, 2020), and the development of new technologies is occurring at a faster pace than before (Hoyer, Kroschke, Schmitt, Kraume, & Shankar, 2020). Also, new forms of businesses and organizations with new business models and relationships are appearing (McMullen, 2018; Zahra, 2021). There are labor shortages and political concerns about resources (Nightingale, 2017; Horbach & Rammer, 2020). On the technology side, the numbers of patents issued and new products licensed are increasing (European Innovation Scoreboard, 2019).

Overall, such increase in environmental conditions have forced corporations to invest in building competencies or capabilities, diversify risk, decrease cost of production, and improve business models. One suggested way to effectively bridge these environmental conditions is by intrapreneurship (Pinchot, 1985; Covin & Slevin, 1986, 1991; Bierwerth, Schwens, Isidor, & Kabst, 2015; Klofsten et al., 2021). Nowadays, intrapreneurship is viewed as a necessary component for sustainable growth and profitability for all types of firms, regardless of its size and industry (Carrier, 1994; Jennings, Cox, & Cooper, 1994; Barringer &

Bluedorn, 1999; Hornsby, Kuratko, Shepherd & Bott, 2009; Åmo, 2010; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013; Pinchot, 2017).

The phenomenon intrapreneurship, or corporate entrepreneurship,¹ has developed over time from the first early research in the 1970s.² The term intrapreneurship was popularized in the early 1980s when it was used in an issue of “The Economist” (Buekens, 2014). Since then, the term has increased in popularity and has been ascribed many meanings and uses (Blanka, 2019; Pinchot, 2021). As such, intrapreneurship research has unclear boundaries (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990; Zahra, 1996; Kuratko, 2007; Blanka, 2019). Fundamentally, it is a field that deals with the questions of how and by whom new products and services are discovered and commercialized by already established corporations, and with the resulting outcomes and impact of these discoveries³ (Pinchot, 1985, 1987; Burgelman, 1983a; Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001, 2003; Morris, Kuratko, & Covin, 2011; Casales Morici, 2018).

Drawing on the definition of intrapreneurship by Pinchot (1985, p.xv), who sees intrapreneurship as “entrepreneurship inside of the corporation,” the source of new products and services is the individual intrapreneur. The intrapreneur is described in literature as an autonomous, innovative, and risk-taking person (Åmo & Kolvereid, 2005; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013; Sinha & Srivastava, 2013; Park, Kim, & Krishna, 2014). A person who shares similar competences as an “A-player” who is visionary and result driven (Huselid, Beatty, & Becker, 2005; Rivera, 2017). This thesis defines the intrapreneur in line with Pinchot’s 1992 definition stated in the

¹ The terms intrapreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship are closely related to each other and therefore used interchangeably in this thesis. Intrapreneurship is commonly understood as individual behavior by employees at the bottom of the organization, whereas corporate entrepreneurship, to a large extent, is understood as incorporate strategy and top-down decision (Park, Kim, & Krishna, 2014; Blanka, 2019).

² Peterson and Berger (1971) and Hill and Hlavacek (1972) showed that entrepreneurial activities help companies to develop new businesses within existing corporations (Burgelman, 1983a; Block & MacMillan, 1993; Kuratko, Montagno, & Hornsby, 1990), by transformation of existing organizations (Kanter, 1984; Beer, Eisenstat, & Spector, 1990) or changing the competition for its industry (Schumpeter, 1934; Stevenson & Gumpert, 1985; Pinchot, 2017). Since the 1970s, researchers have conceptualized intrapreneurship at the organizational level to include entrepreneurial behavior that needs organizational conditions and resource commitments for the purpose to develop different types of value-creating innovations (Schollhammer, 1982; Burgelman, 1983a, 1983b; Kanter, 1985; Pinchot, 1985).

³ Intrapreneurship places “the gale of creative destruction” (Schumpeter, 1942: 84) inside the already established corporation, that is, to change or replace parts or a whole innovation in a market or industry, while simultaneously generating new products, including new business models (Schumpeter, 1934, 1942).

American Heritage Dictionary (2021) as “a person within a large corporation who takes direct responsibility for turning an idea into a profitable finished product through assertive risk-taking and innovation.”

Intrapreneurial behavior occurs when an individual makes a personal business decision as to influence a corporation’s performance (Ireland, Kuratko, & Morris, 2006; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013; Selig, Stettina, & Baltes, 2016). It is typically not an assigned activity, such as work with the intention taking place at a research and development department or assigned from a manager. Rather, intrapreneurs may take their own initiatives at any place within the corporation and may even work on projects that not everyone knows about (Pinchot, 1985; Park, Kim, & Krishna, 2014; Feldmann & Teuteberg, 2019). As a result, intrapreneurs are inherently difficult to identify and categorize empirically (Churchill, 1992; Neessen, Caniels, Vos, & De Jong, 2019).

It is generally believed that intrapreneurial behavior can be influenced by the internal conditions in a corporation (Russell, 1999; Ireland et al., 2006; Veenker et al., 2008; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2014; Reuther, Schumann, Borodzicz, & Johnston, 2018). Commonly explored factors such as the hierarchical structure, corporate culture, and processes are factors to consider in the corporation (Hornsby, Kuratko, & Montagno, 1999; Foss, Woll, & Moilanen, 2013; Kuratko et al., 2014), and they have been shown to influence intrapreneurial behavior both positively and negatively (Russell, 1999; Yariv & Galit, 2017). Many established corporations have nevertheless developed bureaucratic structures and practices that inhibit risk-taking and innovation (Sykes & Block, 1989; Hornsby, Kuratko, Holt, & Wales, 2013; Globocnik & Salomo, 2015; Scott & McMurray, 2021), which implies that there are also working conditions that hinder development and subsequent commercialization of new products and services (Fast, 1978; Kanter, 1985; MacMillan, Block, & Narasimha, 1986; Monsen, Patzelt, & Saxton, 2010; Reuther et al., 2018). It is not uncommon that the individual intrapreneur has to fight against the bureaucratic structure and practices in the established corporation in order to succeed with the desired outcome or project (Jones & Butler, 1992; Berzin et al., 2016; Heinze & Weber, 2016).

As an example of an intrapreneur and intrapreneurial behavior, consider Nils Bohlin (1920-2002) who was formerly employed at the Swedish multinational corporation Volvo. He was originally an engineer specializing in aviation, who ventured outside his working area and

responsibilities to develop the three-point seatbelt in 1959 (Alexa, Cioată, Rațiu, & Dascăl, 2020). This was something totally new that did not exist in the plans of the host corporation. Today, the seatbelt is a standard requirement in every car, saving approximately one life every six minutes. Another well-known example of a group of intrapreneurs was the Macintosh team. Described as “a group of people going, in essence, back to the garage, but in a large company” (Jobs, 1985: 1). Both examples illustrate intrapreneurs who developed new products and services in the context of an already existing corporation, either by themselves or as a group of individuals (Pinchot, 1985, 2010; Pinchot & Pellman, 1999; Blanka, 2019).

Examples such as theses emphasize the need for corporations to recruit employees that have the potential to become intrapreneurs. Moreover, retention of these individuals becomes important since intrapreneurs may be hard to replace with other employees.⁴ During the past century, corporations have increasingly understood the importance of employees who may behave intrapreneurially as a key component to growth and successful business (Gawke, Gorgievski, & Bakker, 2019). Despite its practical relevance, the intrapreneur and intrapreneurial behavior are still not well understood theoretically, and research remains limited and fragmented (Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013; Blanka, 2019; Alam et al., 2020). As a result, fundamental aspects on the individual level of intrapreneurship remain open for further investigation (Pinchot, 1985; Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013; Singh Ghura, 2017). Thus, this thesis explores an important research field and also contributes to a more unified definition of the term (Pinchot, 1985, 1987, 2017; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013). Taken together, the overall aim of this thesis is to explore the characteristics of the intrapreneur and how the internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior.

Research Gap and Aim of the Thesis

Understanding the intrapreneur is a necessary pre-condition for understanding how corporations introduce new products and services. In

⁴ Recruiting and maintaining employees with capabilities and knowledge is seen as critical for creating and sustaining competitive advantage and growth in today’s fast moving business environment (Schollhammer, 1981, 1982; Zahra, 1991, 1993; Zahra & Covin, 1995; Buekens, 2014; Bierwerth et al., 2015). Therefore, examining the intrapreneurial character is especially interesting from a recruitment point of view (Schuler, 1986; Hayton, 2005; Smart, 2005; Kuratko, Hornsby, & McKelvie, 2021).

previous research, intrapreneurs are often compared with entrepreneurs (Parker, 2011; Cadar & Badulescu, 2015) but are rarely described separately on an individual level or within a separate field of research⁵ (Antonic & Hisrich, 2003; Edú Valsania et al., 2013; Blanka, 2019). Previous studies have focused on personality traits and attitudes of an intrapreneur (Kolchin & Hyclak, 1987; Ross, 1987; Farrukh, Ying, & Mansori 2016; Delmas & Pekovic, 2018; Woo, 2018), but we still know surprisingly little about the characteristics of the individual intrapreneur (Corbett, Covin, O'Connor, & Tucci, 2013; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Hayton, 2015; Blanka, 2019). It is axiomatic that intrapreneurs are a heterogeneous group of people; however, even though there is a typical average intrapreneurial character, it is likely that there are different types of intrapreneurs. According to Pinchot's description (Pinchot, 1985, 2017), we can assume that not all intrapreneurs are "dreamers" and triggered by the same conditions (Bryant, 2015; Blanka, 2019). Several researchers have indeed stressed the need for further research on the intrapreneur and different types of intrapreneurs (Yariv & Galit, 2017; Neessen et al., 2019).

While previous work has offered many useful insights into how intra-organizational factors influence the behavior of individuals, the mechanisms and factors that influence intrapreneurial behavior are an under-researched arena for corporate entrepreneurship research (Kang, Matusik, Kim & Phillips, 2016) To date, systematic and especially large sample research on the internal corporate environment's influence on intrapreneurship has been limited (Sykes & Block, 1989; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2014; Reuther et al., 2018). It is generally acknowledged that having an internal environment that supports intrapreneurial behavior is crucial for corporate renewal. We also know from existing research that hierarchies and organizational boundaries create barriers and inflexibility that hinders intrapreneurial efforts (Dess, Lumpkin, & McKee, 1999; Sandberg & Aarikka-Stenroos, 2014). However, we still know little about corporate conditions (Kuratko et al., 1990; Hornsby et al., 1999, 2002, 2009; Reuther et al., 2018) and how the

⁵ Previous scholars have often compared entrepreneurship with intrapreneurship (Luchsinger & Bagby, 1987; Jennings, Cox, & Cooper, 1994; Cadar & Badulescu, 2015). Comparing entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs, intrapreneurs are crucial for the already established corporation to maintain growth and competitiveness (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Parker, 2011). Despite this, the entrepreneur and entrepreneurial behavior is more commonly studied by researchers (Gartner, 1989, 1990; Parker 2011). Intrapreneurship is as important as ever in the global, digital complex and unpredictable business environment (Pinchot, 2017). Thus, it is imperative to increase and expand previous knowledge on intrapreneurship.

possible combination of these may encourage or inhibit different individuals to engage in intrapreneurship (Rule & Irwin, 1988; Sykes & Block, 1989; Hisrich, 1990). In response to this, this thesis explores how a number of corporate conditions may influence intrapreneurial behavior (Russell, 1999; Kuratko et al., 2005; Kuratko et al., 2014; Neessen et al., 2019; Kuratko et al., 2021). Specifically, it is argued that understanding intrapreneurs' perspectives on which corporate conditions are conducive or unfavorable for individuals to engage in intrapreneurial activities is an area of great importance for academic scholars as well as corporations (Rule & Irwin, 1988; Ireland et al., 2006; Horbach & Jacob, 2018). This research follows a stream of literature that are racing toward an increased understanding of this phenomenon (Di Fabio, 2014; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Hayton, 2015; Badoiu, Segarra-Ciprés, & Escrig-Tena, 2020; Alam, Nasir, & Rehman, 2020).

The literature is particularly lacking a theoretically based and systematic answer on what factors make individuals step forward to behave intrapreneurially. Thus, an important piece in our understanding of what mechanisms drive individuals to intrapreneurial intentions is currently missing (Ajzen, 1991; Lee, Wong, Der Foo, & Leung, 2011; Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Fink, 2015; Razavi & Ab Aziz, 2017).

The issue of gender is increasingly discussed and is now considered a top priority for policy makers in society and corporations alike (Kanter, 1977; Acker, 1990; 1998; Sarfaraz, Faghieh, & Majd, 2014; Horbach & Jacob, 2018). While much effort has gone into research to increase our understanding of how organizations can become more innovative, entrepreneurial, intrapreneurial, risk-taking or oriented toward renewal (Kanter, 1985; Knight, 1987; Sykes & Block, 1989; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2014), our understanding of the gender aspect and how it relates to employees' willingness to take initiatives and become intrapreneurs is an under-researched question in the literature (Chisholm, 1987; Foss et al., 2013; Lyngsie & Foss, 2017). For example, there is limited knowledge on the components in the corporate culture and how they relate to the gender aspect (Faghieh & Majd, 2014). Considering the significance of the gender issue, it is important to develop an enhanced understanding of how certain corporate conditions may influence individuals of different gender to become engaged in intrapreneurial activities (Nussbaum, 1999; Cudd, 2006; Lewis & Simpson, 2012; Foss et al., 2013; Biju & Pathak, 2020).

Taken together, this thesis aims to fill research gaps concerning the characteristics of the intrapreneur, as well as how internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior. It takes its starting point in Pinchot's work from 1985 and the definition of the intrapreneur as "a person within a large corporation who takes direct responsibility for turning an idea into a profitable finished product through assertive risk-taking and innovation" (Salimath, 2018: 337). The thesis uses the quantitative research method and has the Swedish context of intrapreneurship. Four papers represent the core of the thesis, which is based on a large sample starting with the intrapreneur and then investigating the drivers of intrapreneurial behavior. The specific aim for each paper in the thesis is as follows:

Paper I describes the characteristics of the intrapreneur more broadly. It sets the stage for the papers that follow. *Paper II* examines a set of corporate conditions that may influence employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. This paper investigates the drivers behind intrapreneurial behavior. *Paper III* zooms in on a particular corporate condition, namely corporate culture, and explores how corporate culture may influence intrapreneurship distinguished by gender. *Paper IV*, finally, explores different types of intrapreneurs, based on how they perceive the corporate conditions under which they operate.

Research Questions

This thesis takes an essential exploratory approach to answer the research questions. The overarching aim is to better understand the phenomenon of intrapreneurship and to identify the characteristics of the individual and intrapreneurial behavior. By starting from a general idea of what intrapreneurship is, interesting aspects relating to behavior and corporate conditions were extracted and became the focus of the research. Especially the conditions that may have positive or negative influence on intrapreneurial behavior became the focal point of research. In sum, the overarching research question of this thesis is to explore:

What are the characteristics of the intrapreneur and how do internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior?

In order to answer the overarching research questions and fulfill the aims of the thesis, four empirical papers were developed and are presented in their complete form in this thesis. The four empirical papers are presented in appendices.

Paper I is a quantitative exploratory study of the intrapreneur. It tells us what the baseline characteristics of an intrapreneur are, in terms of age, gender, educational level, tenure in the host corporation, work position, and work area, industry and corporation size.

Paper II is a quantitative study and tells us how planned behavior drives employee intentions to pursue new product and service development. Drawing on the theory of planned behavior, individuals are expected to develop intentions to become engaged in a certain behavior if it is perceived to be desirable and feasible. More specifically, this paper is about factors related to attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control which can have either a positive or negative influence on employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services.

Paper III is also quantitative and tests the hypotheses about components of corporate culture that are beneficial to the spawning intrapreneurship and suggests that these components relate to existing gender roles within the organization.

Finally, paper IV is quantitative and identifies different types of intrapreneurs. This paper explores the various types of intrapreneurs and how they perceive the corporate conditions they work under. Table 1 presents an overview of all the research papers in the thesis and their chronological order in which they were written.

Table 1. *The research questions in the four papers*

Paper	Paper Title	Research Question	Paper Method
I	Searching for the intrapreneur -A descriptive study	What are the typical intrapreneurial characteristics?	Quantitative, descriptive
II	How planned behavior drives employee intentions to pursue new product and service development	What factors related to attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control have either a positive or negative influence on employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services?	Quantitative, hypothesis testing
III	A gender sensitive perspective of corporate culture and the spawning of intrapreneurs	Based on the assumption of corporate cultural heterogeneity, what effect does corporate culture have on males and females to become engaged in intrapreneurship?	Quantitative, hypothesis testing
IV	Beyond the stereotype of an intrapreneur - An exploratory study of different intrapreneurs and various corporate conditions	What are the different types of intrapreneurs and how do they perceive the corporate conditions they work under?	Quantitative, descriptive

Theoretical Framework

An Evolutionary Perspective on Intrapreneurship

This thesis takes an evolutionary perspective to explore intrapreneurship. Evolutionary theory is generally seen as a suitable framework for analyzing entrepreneurial processes and outcomes (Campbell, 1969; Hannan & Freeman, 1977, 1993; Nelson & Winter, 1982; Brittain & Freeman, 1983; Aldrich, 1999; Aldrich & Martinez, 2007; Aldrich et al., 2008; Breslin, 2008), as the taking of new initiatives and development of new products and services is similar to a biological process (Lewontin, 1970; Darwin & Bynum, 2009). The same thinking that Darwin explained in the *Origin of Species* can be applied to the origin of an intrapreneur (Darwin, 1859; Katz & Gartner, 1988; Ziman, 2003). First, there is variation, in terms of individuals with different characteristics. The intrapreneur forms new and various initiatives that are presented in a corporation or on an internal market. They appear in patterned ways through internal competition of resources, and as every corporation has its own irreplaceable climate and environment with patterns of behavior and culture (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Gartner, 1985). Secondly, the initiatives are selected by the intra-corporate environment. Selection occurs by cultural, hierarchical, administrative, and managerial mechanisms that regulate the allocation of resources and actions. Intrapreneurship can thus be seen as a result of selection and retention of variation of initiatives that lead to new products and services. Retention takes the form of corporation learning, shaping, replication, and shared views of the patterns in the corporation (Levitt & March, 1988). Thus, the initiatives that survive are replicated and diffused through the population (Hodgson, 2002) according to the environmental fit characteristics (Lewontin, 1970; Hodgson & Knudsen, 2010).

Variation

The starting point for evolutionary theory is variation or the organizational. *Intentional variation* is when individuals and ultimately corporations

actively seek to generate alternatives and solutions to problems. Variation comes from outcomes of business situations, market opportunities, founding, and so forth. *Blind variation*, on the other hand, happens independently of the environment or selection pressures (Aldrich & Kenworthy, 1999; Aldrich & Martinez, 2007). It does not come from intentional responses to adaptation pressures, rather from accidents, chance, luck, conflict, malfeasance, and creative exploration (March, 1981; Brunsson, 1985). Variations can be seen as the raw materials from which the selection process occurs given a certain selection criteria (Masucci, Parker, Brusoni & Camerani, 2021). The higher the frequency of variations, the greater the opportunities for change (Aldrich & Reuf, 2006).

Evolutionary theory emphasizes that *sociocultural variation* is blind, with respect to individuals' or corporations' needs. Individuals have needs that will explain their reasons for generating variation as they engage in search behavior, trying to solve problems. However, the need does not explain the solution. Selection of variations follows from their consequences, not from the intentions of the individuals who created the variations (Langton, 1979).

Sources of intentional variation. There are three sources of intentional variation within corporations: formal programs of experimentation and imitation, direct and indirect incentives offered to employees, and official tolerance of unfocused variation, "playfulness" (Miner, 1994). Corporations often want to support variation by incorporating experimentation in projects, programs and divisions, and other legitimate activities (Burgelman, 1983a, 1984; Kuratko, & Morris, 2018).

Incentives for variation around established routines can be to make innovation part of employees' job descriptions or compensating employees who have initiated ideas that are selected for evaluation. There will be a competition of employees who aim for recognition as a symbolic or monetary reward. Some managers tolerate unfocused variations because they recognize that stimulating variation is often not radical enough to break through innovation. This type of approach and encouragement are important because they help corporations to sustain heterogeneity that otherwise would disappear because of the pressures to follow and adapt.

Variation can also be deliberately inhibited within organizations. Dominant groups and networks can work against opportunities for

variation as they do not want to get their power and privilege challenged (Pfeffer & Salanick, 1978). Powerful groups can create structures and promote principles that shape individuals' perceptions of what is necessary and possible in the corporation (Burns & Dietz, 1992; Perrow, 1986; Monsen, Patzelt, & Saxton, 2010).

Variations may also be discouraged by corporations with a strong interest in existing agreements and industry structures (Low & MacMillan, 1988; Peneder, 2017). One example is the broadcasting industry, where outsiders to the system have introduced the most new practices (Leblebici et al., 1991). In this case, the innovations were initiated by the small and independent stations that had weaker networks or enterprising advertising agencies. The powerful and large corporations with an interest in institutionalized conventions have used their resources to maintain the status quo and introduced practices that their already established practices confirm. Many of the new practices that came from outsiders were nevertheless adopted by the dominant organizations, which later triggered legislative and regulatory changes that formed the industry.

Sources of blind variation include the everyday variation created by individuals in a corporation. Such sources include trial and error learning, luck, imitation, mistakes, misunderstandings, surprises, idle curiosity, and randomness (Aldrich, 1999). Employees may further forget routines and invent new ones, improve and try new practices, drop or unplug things, pursue creative insights, become discouraged or bored. Blind variation can also happen in groups of individuals, especially groups that are under demographic changes (Lawrence, 1997) or are gender stereotyped (Merten, 2005; Biju & Pathak, 2020). It can also occur when new members are included in the organization and old members quit. Shifts in top management often lead to unexpected outcomes that might be adaptive⁶ (Wiersema & Bantel, 1993).

The relative mix of intentional and blind variation has been debated. Some have argued that most variations within a corporation are purposeful (Corning, 1974). Often, managers have reasonable and thoughtful ways of behaving (Mintzberg, 1974) and believe that their actions are not blind.

⁶ New managers often try to reorganize tasks (Maier, 2014) and imitate other corporations (Haveman, 1993). However, imitation of other corporations might be misleading since the corporate sizes might differ and because of the associated likelihood of unintentionally incorporating elements in the corporate structure that do not fit.

They also assume that they can use their skills when faced with risks and uncertainty (March & Shapira, 1987). Kaufman (1985), on the other hand, argues that when managers face challenges in uncertain environments, decisions might be irrational and encounter difficulties with regard to implementation. In line with this, Campbell (1982, 1994) believes that most variations are blind (Weick, 1979). Nelson and Winter (1982: 11) argue for an in-between position: “it is neither difficult nor implausible to develop models of firm behavior that interweave ‘blind’ and ‘deliberate’ processes. Indeed, both elements are involved in human problem solving itself and are difficult to disentangle.”

Selection

While variation generates the raw materials for selection, selection is the second essential phase in the evolutionary process. There are several forces and mechanisms that select or selectively eliminate specific types of variations (Aldrich et al., 2008), for example, social and cultural conditions. Some variations are more successful in acquiring resources or gaining legitimacy; thus, these variations are selected for continued survival (Ghauri & Santangelo, 2012). Gender roles and stereotypes of men and women also represent selection mechanism (Merten, 2005). Men confirm with the biological stereotype, showing a higher level of aggression that can regulate power distance, whereas women show emotions and expressions of joy and sadness (Tucker & Riggio, 1988; Hall, 1990). This affects selection because the gender roles favor initiatives created by men before women (McDowell & Court, 1994; Mueller, 2004; Bönnte & Piegeler, 2013).

When variation is selected, it can be transformed by corporate resources into products and services (Schumpeter, 1934; Nelson & Winter 1982; Delmar & Shane, 2004). The selection criteria are set from the market forces or adjustment to institutionalized norms. Such norms may be present in the internal marketplace, but also within established organizations where variations occur. For example, the selection criteria in a corporation can favor administrative rationality and formalized control, whereas these adaptive corporations will favor the introduction of new practices. As a result, non-bureaucratic corporations will survive, and the bureaucratic corporations will die out. According to “Darwin’s formula,” evolutionary processes are “non-random because selection is not a blind lottery” (Buskes, 2013: 664).

Intra-organizational selection processes are those that occur within corporations. This internal selection is determined by an internal diffusion, imitation, promotion, culture, and incentive systems (Merten, 2005; Hodgson & Knudsen, 2010). Intra-organizational selection can be irrelevant or not connected to environmental fitness (Hodgson & Knudsen, 2004). Broadly speaking, there are three selection preferences for the corporation: pressures toward stability and homogeneity, past selection criteria that are no longer relevant in a new environment, and the willingness of founders or leaders to accept low performance (Campbell, 1969, 1994; Gimeno et al., 1997). This implies that intra-organizational selection will eliminate variation that does not benefit the corporate survival.

There are also organization- and population-level selection processes. At the organizational level, technology and managerial incompetence may provide limited access to resources from the environment. Populations tend to be characterized by the attributes of the surviving organizations than by the organizations that die out.

Retention

The third phase in the evolutionary process is retention, or the selective retention of variations (Aldrich, 1999). Retention happens when the selected variations are imitated or reproduced in order to be repeated in future generations. The process of retention allows groups and corporations to capture value from the routines that have been proved to be beneficial (Miner, 1994; Levitt & March, 1988). For example, biological “stereotype” of gender may be imitated and replicated (Merten, 2005). When the environment changes, the replication of selected variations is the key to corporate survival. Without the retention mechanisms, the benefits from the selected variations would soon disappear.

There is retention within organizations. The focus of corporations is to have stability and structure that can secure profit and the survival of the corporation (Nelson & Winter, 1982). In general, corporations have cultures, procedures, and practices that are deemed appropriate to follow (Hornsby et al., 1999; Foss et al., 2013). For example, accounting and information management systems create procedures and activities that

direct employees' attention and keeps employees away from new procedures and practices that are undocumented (Walsh & Ungson, 1991). There is also a memory in the form of physical resources that works as a corporate identity (Latour, 1993).

Employee specialization and standardization of roles will further limit their autonomy and protect the corporation from unwanted variation. Additionally, centralization of power and formalization limit role autonomy and guide employees to activities that make them more accountable to higher authorities. When behavior is integrated in the corporate culture and norm, this will belong to the corporation's identity (Hornsby et al., 1999; Loasby, 2003, 2007). In general, selected routines and structures help corporations to keep their existing arrangements (Morris et al., 2011). Under stable environmental conditions, this might result in less unwanted variation compared to changing corporate conditions when there might be more unwanted variation.

There is also population-level retention, which will maintain the existing technological and managerial knowledge that corporations in a certain industry use (Nelson & Winter, 1982). For example, there is a collective retention when a population develops an innovation. Together with retention within an organization, the innovation is diffused throughout a large number of individuals or units in a population.

When corporations survive, there will be replication and retained variation. Replication is generated by individuals observing each other, becoming role models, training and education, and by learning rules of behavior and interacting with technology (Aldrich & Martinez, 2007; Døving & Gooderham, 2008). At the industry level, there are corporations that are contributing to the diffusion of variations as well as corporations that do not contribute. The diffusion of variations across corporations might be limited due to the fact that there are factors that work against interorganizational variation. Often, corporations distrust outside information (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Tacit knowledge about the corporate routines might mislead outsiders to imitate wrong variations. Moreover, failure, incompetence, and unwillingness to learn hinder diffusion (Covin & Slevin, 1989, 1991; Sitkin, 1992). In short, all variations cannot be diffused to other corporations without uncertainty and risk.

The maintenance and survival of corporations is influenced and typically supported by social stability. By offering political stability and ideological legitimation, educational systems, transportation and communication networks, national economic planning and investments, the state will gain stability and survive. These factors affect the market for resources that are available to corporations. Under stable institutionalized conditions, there will be an imitation and reproduction of existing corporations that survive (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Hodgson & Knudsen, 2010).

Variation, Selection, and Retention in Intrapreneurship

There are many parallels between the evolutionary mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention and the phenomenon intrapreneurship (Campbell, 1969; Aldrich, 1979; Bhide, 2000; Jones, 2005). Both approaches study how selection and retention of variation occur in relation to environmental changes. In the context of a rapidly changing business environment, the importance of variation, which leads to the generation of new products and services, increases. Corporations generally change slowly and do not adjust at the same rate as the environment may change (Hannan & Freeman, 1977, 1984; Bryant, 2015), but intrapreneurship is an engine of corporate renewal that makes corporations keep up with the changes.

In the context of intrapreneurship, the emergence of new ideas for products and services come from sources of variation that are created by individuals within the corporation interacting with the internal conditions as well as the external business environment (Reuther, 2018). One source of variation is the natural changes in the global business landscape that generate problems that corporations have to overcome. Another source of variation is the components in the corporate culture, for example, the motivation to be ahead of competitors. This ambition can generate initiatives that aim to be new products and services in order to achieve a competitive advantage. Other sources of variation can come from the corporate structure and reward system. Variation of formalized routines for initiating ideas is another way of generating variation. Finally, the individuals themselves are also a source of variation since they have heterogenous experiences, preferences, and interests.

From an evolutionary perspective, the sources of variation can be seen as raw materials for selection (Aldrich, 1999). Selection occurs as these new products and services are tested out in the intra-corporate environment and in the external marketplace. It can lead to a gradual change or a more disruptive change of a new product or service. Retention is the outcome of this process. Some new products and services will be retained and reproduced, some spin-offs, while others will be discarded. In established corporations, the mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention happen simultaneously rather than chronologically. The mechanisms consider multiple levels of analysis in intrapreneurship, the initiative, the individual, and the corporation (Campbell, 1969; Kim, 1998; Aldrich, 1999) as well as the socio-political context where the individual is considered as engaging in bounded rationality (Simon, 1991).

There is a need for further exploration of the intrapreneur and the various intra-organizational factors that influence intrapreneurial behavior. By using the evolutionary framework, various initiatives are occurring from the interaction of individuals with the internal conditions in the corporation. Nevertheless, corporate conditions can inhibit variation. It is therefore important to study the sources of variation and to understand the different factors that determine the level of variation. Previous research has looked at the selection mechanisms of variation (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Delmar & Shane, 2004), various behavior to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Lorber & Farrell, 1991; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Acker, 1998; Alstete, 2002), and intentions to start new corporations or planning successful businesses (Delmar & Shane, 2003, 2004; Honig & Karlsson, 2004; Marques, Valente, & Lages, 2018). Few studies have examined the internal environment and what sources of variation influence individuals to develop new products and services that are selected and retained. By incorporating the evolutionary framework (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Aldrich, 1979, 1999; Aldrich & Martinez, 2007) and intrapreneurship literature (Pinchot, 1985; Sathe, 2007; Kuratko et al., 2014; Reuther et al., 2018), I seek to complement previous research and to contribute to our understanding of how various corporate conditions can influence intrapreneurial behavior. The thesis places less weight on the processes of selection and retention. Examining the factors that are the source of variation within the established corporation is especially valuable, due to the enhanced complexity of global corporations' internal conditions and heterogenous employees. Furthermore, corporations will in the end favor variation for selection that will result in the development of new products and services that would lead to competitive advantage for

the corporation. Thus, the corporation will select both among various initiatives and various individuals that will successfully be retained over time.

Methodology

The overall aim of the thesis is to explore the characteristics of the intrapreneur and how the internal corporate conditions may influence intrapreneurial behavior (research questions and an overview of the methods can be found in Table 3). In general, entrepreneurship research has many different methodological approaches since it is a relatively young field with many related disciplines analyzing multiple levels and contexts (Short, Ketchen Jr, Combs, & Ireland, 2010; Aldrich, 2016; Anderson, Wennberg, & McMullen, 2019). The research design for this thesis relies on quantitative methodologies that are presented in detail in each of the four individual papers. Quantitative methods were the most suitable for this thesis relating to the research question and desired outcomes, namely to generalize the characteristics, measure, and study the interactions of corporate and individual variables in order to generate new insights (Shepherd, 2015). Previous researchers claim that quantitative methods, for example, using testable hypotheses is the most common method (Neessen et al., 2019) and helps the entrepreneurship research field to gain legitimacy (Cornelius, Landström, & Persson, 2006). Quantitative research designs are typically characterized by measurement, formal hypotheses testing, and analysis of large-sample data on theory. These types of designs are thus better for generalizing statistical conclusions than qualitative methods, and they provide stronger arguments for generalizable causality (Bell & Bryman, 2011; Goodale, Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2011; Cooper & Schindler, 2014), which is one of my aims.

However, quantitative methods are generally limited in their capacity to consider context and the grounding of data available to qualitative and case-based research (Yin, 2014; Van Burg, Cornelissen, Stam, & Jack, 2020). Therefore, the quantitative method runs the risk of being mechanistic, while it is obvious that social processes are not (Bell & Bryman, 2007; Welter, 2011). These and other trade-offs considered, the quantitative method enables me to generate a systematic and broad-based picture of the characteristics of the intrapreneur, and to search for and

establish causality in the way internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior.

In the beginning of the research process, the focus was on the individual intrapreneur. A descriptive quantitative study was performed in order to show the intrapreneurial characteristics according to certain defined variables. The quantitative lens allowed me to make generalizations and to fill the identified empirical gap in our knowledge about intrapreneurs, specifically in the Swedish context. For the remainder of the research process, the corporate level was incorporated more distinctly and related to the individual. The aim was to investigate different corporate conditions and how they may influence and relate to intrapreneurship. Therefore, a slightly less exploratory and more formal quantitative approach was adopted. Two of the papers are thus concerned with hypothesis testing, based on the existing literature. Nevertheless, in the last paper, I returned to the intrapreneur to explore different groupings of intrapreneurs and how they perceive their corporate conditions.

Sample and Data Collection

To answer the research questions outlined before, the thesis makes use of data from individual employees of companies in the private arena in Sweden. Specifically, it uses data that were collected between 2017 and 2019,⁷ and constitutes a representative sample of the Swedish employee population. In order to assure a diversified and representative sample, organizations from different industries, according to the SNI classification, were included (SNI, 2021).⁸ It is unlikely that the sample is overly biased toward one specific group in the society or industry in Sweden⁹ and should thus offer a fertile testing ground for research questions that concern intrapreneurial activities in Sweden.

The sample varies in the four papers because the papers had different aims and research questions and were written at different points in time during

⁷ The data were retrieved from the Intrapreneurship Compass Project (www.ikompassen.se).

⁸ The SNI classification is used by Statistics Sweden, which is responsible for official statistics and for other government statistics in Sweden.

⁹ The Swedish case is interesting for several reasons. First, Sweden is ranked as the second country in the world in the Global Innovation Index (WIPO, 2019). This means that Swedish companies can be expected to be involved in the sustained generation of new products and services. Second, many successful global companies come from Sweden and various industries such as Atlas Copco, Electrolux, Ericsson, H&M, IKEA, Skype, and Spotify.

the research process.¹⁰ The sampling was done and data collected in 2017-2019 by Ipsos, a global market and opinion research corporation. The sampling frame used by Ipsos was Norstat's randomly recruited respondent panel, which is representative of the Swedish population. Also, the following criteria had to be fulfilled by the respondent in order to be included in the sample:

- The respondents age had to exceed 18 years.
- The corporations had to have passed the prototyping stages where the corporation is not a formal business yet. This means the corporation is not at the pre-venture or conceptual stage.
- The company size had to be above 10 employees (there was no upper limit for the company size). Corporations with less than 10 employees were excluded as the internal conditions for intrapreneurial activities can be seen to differ from those typically addressed in big extant intrapreneurship studies.
- The corporation had to be based in Sweden. Note that the sample makes no distinction on nationality of ownership. Thus, Swedish subsidiaries of multinational corporations were included.

The data were obtained from a self-reported survey and based on the respondents' own perceptions of conditions in their host corporations. The questions in the survey were presented in Swedish. The data collection procedure was carried out by means of invitation to take part in a digital survey, sent by email or text message to the respondents. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were provided anonymity. More than half of the respondents, particularly younger respondents, responded via smartphones or tablets. Survey invitations were sent over the course of two weeks, followed by up to three reminders. In total, 4,011 responses were collected from the 2017 data. For further details about the sample, see the section on descriptive data.

As this thesis takes its point of departure from Pinchot (1985) and the empirical findings from Kuratko et al. (1990, 2014), it aims to expand the knowledge of the individual intrapreneur as well as the corporate conditions that influence intrapreneurial behavior. Empirically, few prior studies focus on this area and when done it is often a smaller dataset that is used. By using a relatively large sample size, which also offers a good

¹⁰ In detail, the data in all the four papers came from the Intrapreneurship Compass Project but were based on one single year of data or the combination of data from different years.

representation of the population, the statistical power is likely to be improved (Martin & Bateson, 1986).

Survey Design

In detail, the survey that was administrated covered various aspects of intra-corporate conditions and new product and service development in the sampled corporations. Anchored in corporate entrepreneurship literature, it concerned areas such as the drivers of corporate entrepreneurial behavior (Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2014; Reuther et al., 2018; Neessen et al., 2019) and organizational structures, routines, and cultures (e.g., Kanter, 1985; Knight, 1987, 1989; Sykes & Block, 1989; Morris et al., 2011; Foss et al., 2013; Lukes & Stephan, 2017). The survey also included both background information about the employees in the organizations and the extent to which they were either considering or actively involved in intrapreneurial activities.

To the extent it was possible in a limited survey format, already established measures such as management support, work discretion, rewards/reinforcement, time availability and organizational boundaries were used whenever possible (e.g., Kuratko et al., 1990; Hornsby et al., 2002; Kuratko et al., 2014; Kuratko et al., 2021). The survey questions were typically answered on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1='don't agree at all' to 7='agree completely.' The respondents were also always offered a 'I don't know' alternative. By offering such an alternative, the reliability of those answers that were received and analyzed were most likely increased (Cox, 1980).

In total, the survey for 2017 included about 70 questions. However, the thesis is also based on the 2018 and 2019 surveys. The specific questions used in the 2017 survey are shown in Appendix A.

To capture different nuances of the concept, the measurement of intrapreneurial activities varied between the papers in the thesis. The operationalization of intrapreneurial activity in papers I, III, and IV was the survey question: *"I am currently leading the development of a new product or service in our corporation."* This dichotomous measure is consistent with the definition (Pinchot, 1985; Block & MacMillan, 1993; Hornsby et al., 1993; Høyrup, 2012; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013; Selig et al., 2016) of the intrapreneur, according to Pinchot in the American Heritage Dictionary (2021), namely "a person within a large corporation who takes direct responsibility for turning an idea into a profitable finished product through assertive risk-taking and innovation." This operationalization is also consistent with the measurement of entrepreneurial employee behavior in the Global Entrepreneurship

Monitor study GEM, (2019), where intrapreneurship is measured as active involvement in the development of a new project or service in a self-initiated project of corporate renewal. However, in the present study, the focus is specifically on the development of new products and services.

The 2017 data makes no distinction between self-driven intrapreneurs and those who were assigned to intrapreneurial activities.

In paper II, the measurement of intrapreneurial activities was employees' intrapreneurial intentions. Employee intrapreneurial intention was measured by the question: "*It is my objective to in the near future start the development of a new product or service in my company.*" This measurement is in line with the definition of the intrapreneur but focuses on the early stage of the process and the initiation of intrapreneurial activities.

Validity and Reliability

Two potential issues are of particular importance in the survey design and collection of data. First, the so-called social-desirability problem (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986), which might occur when respondents answer the questions in the way that puts them into good light. In other words, the respondents answer what they believe the researcher wants to hear, and this ultimately impacts the data. This situation should not be viewed as a crucial problem in this thesis, as the introduction in the survey stated that all answers were treated coincidentally with anonymity and the results were only treated in aggregated form, whereby no answers from specific individuals and their perception of the conditions in their company could be identified. Also, the survey did not ask for any company names.

A second and perhaps a more significant potential problem is common-method bias. In short, common-method bias can be explained as a risk of creating a false internal consistency in the data. This risk increases if, as in the present case, the dependent and the independent variable are collected from one single person or if a person provides data where there is a correlation between the constructs (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986; Chang, Van Witteloostuijn & Eden, 2010). At worst, this problem can create the illusion of a relationship between the variables in the data when there really is no such relationship (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Bagozzi, Yi, & Phillips, 1991).

In this thesis, there was an obvious intention to reduce the common-method bias since it affects the internal consistency and validity in the data (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). Several actions were taken in order to reduce the risk of common-method bias. First, the survey questions were made distinctive, and different scale types were occasionally used. According to Chang, Van Witteloostuijn, and Eden (2010), this can reduce the risk of common-method bias as, for example, the respondents become more alert to the questions. Also, the placement and designing of the questions that were asked would not reveal any pre-concerned ideas about casual relationships, which reduced the risk of respondents rationalizing their answers in the survey (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). In other words, it is unlikely that the respondents will have systematically understood and made theoretical connections between the aggregate constructs and measures. Finally, the risk of common-method bias was further reduced by the statistical analyses that were performed after the data collection. According to Chang, Van Witteloostuijn, and Eden (2010), post-hoc analyses reduce the potential problem (see post-hoc analyses in respective papers). Altogether, the potential effects of common-method bias cannot be ignored. However, the procedures before collecting the data and when analyzing the data should have alleviated some of the concerns associated with common-method bias (Chang, Van Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010).

The ambition of the thesis was to increase the theoretical and practical knowledge about intrapreneurship. More specifically, the aim was to fill the research gaps of the characteristics of the intrapreneur as well as how the internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior. The data collected and the measures developed should represent a trustworthy description of the phenomena, both from a reliability and validity perspective (Saunders et al., 2015). However, this is a social phenomenon, and it is difficult to develop a general picture without considering the context. In this case, the data relates to the Swedish context. The variety in the dataset of respondents also provided a richness that was captured in the papers. However, the general picture of the intrapreneur provides external validity (Mook, 1983; Brewer, 2000).

Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

The majority of the papers in this thesis are based on data from 2017.¹¹ The descriptive statistics of the 2017 sample shows a balanced collection of respondents. In total, the sample consisted of 4,011 respondents: 1,894 (47.2 %) women respondents and 2,117 (52.8 %) male respondents. Additionally, the data show a good balance of the sample respondents across company sizes and industries. The descriptive statistics of the sample in 2017 are presented in Table 2.

¹¹ Access to more data, including 2018 and 2019, was opened up during the research process, which explains the data variability.

Table 2. Baseline Characteristics of the data

The sample characteristics are presented in number of respondents and percentages.

Characteristic Variable	The Sample (N=4,011)	Share of the whole sample
Age, mean	44	
Gender¹²		
Men	2,117	52.8 %
Women	1,894	47.2 %
Education level		
Elementary school	203	5.0 %
High school	2,124	53.0 %
University degree	1 684	42.0 %
Tenure in the host corporation		
0–5 years	1,752	43.7 %
6–10 years	822	20.5 %
11–15 years	416	10.4 %
16–20 years	369	9.2 %
21–25 years	188	4.7 %
26–30 years	198	4.9 %
31+ years	266	6.6 %
Work Position		
Top management	210	5.2 %
Manager	738	18.3 %
Employee	3,063	76.4 %
Work Area		
Sales & Marketing	659	16.4 %
Management	122	3 %
Manufacturing	503	12.5 %
R & D	206	5.1 %
HR	94	2.3 %
IT	377	9.4 %
Purchasing & Logistics	250	6.2 %
Finance & Law	138	3.4 %
Accounting & Admin	369	9.2 %
Other	1,293	32.2 %
Corporation Size		
9–49 employees	1,135	28.3 %
50–249 employees	999	24.9 %
Over 249 employees	1,877	46.8 %
Industry		
1. Agriculture, forestry and fishing corporations	47	1.2 %
2. Mining and mining industry	24	0.6 %

¹² A gender-neutral group was missing in the survey. However, the data contained only five missing values for the gender question, so the impact is likely of limited magnitude.

Characteristic Variable	The Sample (N=4,011)	Share of the whole sample
3. Manufacturing	836	20.8 %
4. Electricity, gas and heating plants	80	2.0 %
5. Waterworks; wastewater treatment plants, etc., waste facilities	28	0.7 %
6. Construction industry	261	6.5 %
7. Trade; motor vehicle and motorcycle repair shops	167	4.2 %
8. Transport and warehousing corporations	287	7.2 %
9. Hotels and restaurants	121	3.0 %
10. Information and communication corporations	263	6.6 %
11. Telecommunication	176	4.4 %
12. Credit institutions and insurance corporations	166	4.1 %
13. Real estate corporation and property managers	48	1.2 %
14. Corporations in law, economics, science and technology	325	8.2 %
15. Rental corporations, real estate services, travel services and other support services	64	1.6 %
16. The education system	173	4.3 %
17. Healthcare	245	6.1 %
18. Healthcare and care with housing, open social efforts	105	2.6 %
19. Units for culture, fun and leisure	64	1.6 %
20. Other service corporations	490	12.2 %
21. Acquisition work in households; Household producers of various goods and services for their own use	13	0.3 %
22. Other	26	0.6 %

Data Analyses and Statistical Methods

The data obtained from the survey was analyzed using SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).¹³ The first paper is an exploratory and descriptive study based on an inductive approach. The results are presented as descriptive statistics (e.g., means and frequencies) (Dulock, 1993; Siedlecki, 2020). This paper develops a description of the typical intrapreneurial characteristics in relation to what we can expect from theory. This paper also describes the descriptive statistics of the non-intrapreneur and compares the data with the typical intrapreneur.

Papers II and III have a deductive approach with hypothesis testing of quantitative data, based on existing literature (Edmondson & McManus, 2007). Both of these papers are based on regressions analysis.¹⁴ In paper II, the analyses of employees' intentions to become involved in the development of new products and services were based on OLS regressions. This method was used in order to test the hypotheses in order to understand the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables (Stigler, 1981). In paper III, a binary logistic regression is used to predict the spawning of intrapreneurs by gender. Logistic regression is a particular form of regression that is designed to predict and explain dichotomous variables (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002); in the present case, this was whether or not respondents were leading the development of a new product or service within their host corporation. This paper has binary logistic regressions and maximum likelihood estimation to test the hypotheses.

In paper IV, I used an inductive, quantitative study to explore patterns of corporate conditions and different intrapreneurs. The statistical method used in this paper is cluster analysis, more specifically, k-means clustering

¹³ This software for analyzing data has been used in marketing, management, and strategy research (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013; Pallant, 2016) and is a suitable tool (Muijs, 2010; Ong & Puteh, 2017). Using SPSS has several advantages: first, it enables the researcher to organize the data. Second, it has the possibility to build models. Third, it makes the data analysis simplified. SPSS software was used in the data analysis for all four papers.

¹⁴ A logistic regression is mathematically based on the concept of logit, the natural logarithm of an odds ratio. It is a method that is well suited for testing and explaining a hypothesis about relationships between a categorical outcome variable and one or more categorical or continuous predictor variables. Logistic regression predicts the probability of an event (output) occurring based on a specific input. In contrast to multiple regression, the logistic regression does not use ordinary least squares estimation, and it is a method that is robust against assumption violations (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002).

(k-means partitioning).¹⁵ This method groups cases into clusters that are as different from each other as possible, while the members within each cluster are as similar to each other as possible (Ammon, Bowman, & Mourad, 2008).

The data analysis and statistical methods are presented in more detail in relation to each paper (an overview of each paper can be found in Table 3).

¹⁵ One of the strengths of the method is that it is relatively simple and like other partitioning clustering methods, it can handle a large number of observations. It nevertheless requires an assigned number of clusters at the outset (Duran & Odell, 1974; Hartigan, 1985; Manton, Lowrimore, Yashin, & Kovton, 2014).

Summary of the Papers

Below follows a summary of each of the four papers that constitute the thesis. An overview of the papers and the research findings are presented in Table 3.

Paper I: Searching for the Intrapreneur – A Descriptive Study

The first paper is a descriptive study that describes the typical intrapreneur. The research question is “What are the typical intrapreneurial characteristics?” This paper empirically documents intrapreneurial characteristics in the following aspects: age, gender, educational level, tenure in the host corporation, work position, work area, corporation size, and industry. This study shows what characteristics the average intrapreneur has: the intrapreneur is most likely to be a 42-year-old man with a university degree, employed in his host corporation for 0-5 years, and with a manager position in a large corporation, with more than 249 employees, in the manufacturing industry. It further shows that intrapreneurs are almost equally distributed among firm sizes. The paper contributes to the corporate entrepreneurship literature with a picture of what characterizes and intrapreneur. Implications for management are discussed, in order to encourage intrapreneurs and, in particular, other individuals with non-intrapreneurial characteristics.

Paper II: How Planned Behavior Drives Employee Intentions to Pursue New Product and Service Development

The second paper is concerned with the drivers of employee intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. The research question is “What factors related to attitudes, subjective norms,

and perceived behavioral control have either a positive or a negative influence on employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services?" In this paper, the hypotheses are formulated and empirically tested according to the theory of planned behavior. Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are seen to determine employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. The analysis of employees' intentions to become involved in the development of new products or services is based on OLS regressions. The results show that several factors: recognition and awarding of personal achievements, maintaining a risk-taking organizational culture, presence of intrapreneurial role models, top management support, and personal independence in action and decision-making; all have a positive effect on employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. This paper adds to the theoretical foundations of the theory of planned behavior to test how corporate conditions are linked to new product and service innovation. Also, this paper offers unique and large-sample evidence on the factors that either support or discourage individuals from developing intentions to pursue the development of new products and services within their corporations.

Paper III: A Gender Sensitive Perspective of Corporate Culture and the Spawning of Intrapreneurs

The third paper builds on liberal feminist theory to develop and test the hypotheses about components of corporate culture that are beneficial for spawning intrapreneurship and how these components relate to existing gender roles within the organization. The research question assumes corporate cultural heterogeneity, "what effect does corporate culture have on males and females to become engaged in intrapreneurship?" Binary logistic regressions show that certain components of the corporate culture have a statistically significant influence on individuals of different gender to engage in intrapreneurship. The findings suggest a gender sensitive perspective on corporate culture that relaxes the assumption of cultural homogeneity. In short, male intrapreneurs are likely to be encouraged by a competitive culture, whereas a corporate culture that embraces intrapreneurial role models is likely to spawn both men and women intrapreneurs, particularly women. Implications for management of the established corporation are discussed, in particular aspects such as gender equality and for human resources purposes.

Paper IV: Beyond the Stereotype of an Intrapreneur – An Exploratory Study of Different Intrapreneurs and Various Corporate Conditions

The fourth and final paper explores differences among intrapreneurs in how they perceive their corporate working conditions. The research question is “What are the different types of intrapreneurs and how do they perceive the corporate conditions they work under?” The working conditions have an effect on employee behavior. This paper empirically investigates corporate conditions from the individual’s perspective and the varying types of intrapreneurs that exist. By means of cluster analysis, this paper suggests that there are three types of intrapreneurs: resilient intrapreneurs, neglected intrapreneurs, and privileged intrapreneurs. The typical stereotype of an intrapreneur by Pinchot (1985) as a “dreamer” is expanded. The findings suggest that intrapreneurs are a heterogenous group of individuals who perceive the working conditions differently and speculates how different working conditions are connected to well-being and corporate performance. This paper contributes to our understanding of corporate conditions by showing that employees perceive the internal environment differently leading to different types of intrapreneurs.

Table 3. Overview of the four papers included in the thesis

Paper	Paper Title	Main Research Question	Research method	Main Identifying or Dependent Variable	Main Independent Variables	Main Findings
I	Searching for the Intrapreneur – A Descriptive Study	What are the typical intrapreneurial characteristics?	Quantitative, descriptive	Leading intrapreneurial activity	Age, gender, education, tenure in the host corporation, work position, work area, firm size, industry	Empirically documents the intrapreneurial characteristics
II	How planned behavior drives employee intentions to pursue new product and service development	What factors related to attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control have either a positive or a negative influence on employees' intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services?	Quantitative, OLS regression, hypothesis testing	Employee intention to start the development of a new product or service	Personal recognition and reward, acceptance of failure, risk-taking, role models, top management support, personal independence, time availability, collectivistic values	Factors such as recognition and awarding of personal achievements, maintaining a risk-taking culture, the presence of intrapreneurial role models, top management support, and personal independence in action and decision-making – have a

Paper	Paper Title	Main Research Question	Research method	Main Identifying or Dependent Variable	Main Independent Variables	Main Findings
						positive effect on employee intentions
III	A gender sensitive perspective of corporate culture and the spawning of intrapreneurs	Based on the assumption of corporate cultural heterogeneity, what effect does corporate culture have on males and females to become engaged in intrapreneurship?	Quantitative, binary logistic regression, hypothesis testing	Leading intrapreneurial activity	Competitive culture, invisibility culture, gender	A competitive corporate culture is likely to spawn male intrapreneurs, whereas corporate cultures having intrapreneurial role models are likely to spawn both men and women intrapreneurs, particularly women
IV	Beyond the stereotype of an intrapreneur – An exploratory study of different intrapreneurs and various	What are the different types of intrapreneurs and how do they perceive the corporate conditions they work under?	Quantitative, descriptive, cluster analysis	Leading intrapreneurial activity	Time availability, personal independence, personal recognition and rewards	Three types of intrapreneurs exist: resilient intrapreneurs, neglected intrapreneurs, and privileged intrapreneurs

corporate
conditions

Main Findings and Conclusions

The aim of this thesis is to explore intrapreneur characteristics and the corporate conditions that the intrapreneur faces within the host corporation. The following research question were postulated: *What are the characteristics of the intrapreneur and how do internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior?* Each of the four papers in the thesis addresses different parts of this research question and in doing so highlight the importance of intrapreneurship as an engine of corporate renewal.

This thesis started with a descriptive paper investigating the intrapreneur at the individual level. This paper specifically answers the first part of the research question, *What are the characteristics of the intrapreneur?* The fourth paper in the thesis also relates to this question by showing that intrapreneurs are not a homogeneous group. The findings of both these papers contribute to the corporate entrepreneurship literature by offering a “rediscovered” view of the typical intrapreneur. In particular, the findings expand the stereotype of intrapreneurs and refine who previously has been generalized as “dreamers who do” (Pinchot, 1985, 1987; 2017; Pinchot & Pellman, 1999). Beyond the contributions to the corporate entrepreneurship literature, the findings can possibly inform the human resource management literature, which would be interested in issues connected to the identification, attraction, development, and retention of corporate employees. It is noteworthy that the findings also indicate the connection to well-being with corporate conditions.

The second part of the research question, *how do internal corporate conditions influence intrapreneurial behavior?*, is answered by the other two papers. Collectively, they show that various internal corporate conditions have a direct influence on intrapreneurial intentions and behavior (Pinchot, 1985; Ajzen, 1988, 1991, 2011; Razavi & Ab Aziz, 2017; Marques et al., 2018). Taken together, the results develop our understanding of the connection between the corporate internal environment and intrapreneurial behavior which has long been considered a research stream that calls for more research (Low & MacMillan, 1988; Gartner, 1989; Stam, 2009; Kuratko et al., 2014; Reuther et al., 2018; Blanka, 2019; Alam et al., 2020).

Summary of the Main Findings

Paper 1 identifies the most likely intrapreneur as a 42-year-old man with a university degree employed by his host corporation for about 0–5 years. The average intrapreneur has a management position in a corporation with more than 249 employees in the manufacturing industry. Intrapreneurs across all industries have the following working positions: 19 % top management, 41 % managers, and 40 % employees. Here, it should be noted that the likelihood of being a (top)manager is much smaller than being an employee, so proportionally the groups that boast the most intrapreneurs are actually the (top)managers. The proportions of intrapreneurs compared to all employees in the group are: 42 % of the top(managers), 26 % of the managers, and 6 % of the employees. Additionally, intrapreneurs are found in companies of all sizes: companies with 9–49 employees (32 %), companies with 50–249 employees (33 %), and companies with more than 249 employees (35 %). The proportions: smaller companies with 9–49 employees (13 %), medium size companies with 50–249 employees (15 %), and large companies with more than 249 employees (9 %).

Paper II claims that certain conditions in the intra-organizational environment may have a positive effect on an employee's intention to become engaged in the development of new products and services: recognition and awarding of personal achievements, maintaining a risk-taking organizational culture, presence of intrapreneurial role models, top management support, and personal independence in action and decision-making. These factors are all found to have a positive effect on intrapreneurial intentions. Interestingly, however, not all of these corporate conditions were found to be positively linked to intrapreneurial intentions. In fact, collectivistic values, organizational acceptance of failure, and time availability for non-routine tasks have a statistically significant negative effect on employee intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. The paper finds inverted u-shape effects for both organizational acceptance of failure and time availability for the effect on employee intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. Finally, the results suggest that the individual and organizational factors which drive employees' intentions to engage in the development of new products or services in their corporations are relatively independent of company size.

The findings in Paper III show how select components of corporate culture can influence individuals of different gender to engage in intrapreneurship. A competitive corporate culture is likely to trigger male intrapreneurs, whereas corporate cultures having intrapreneurial role models is likely to spawn both men and women intrapreneurs, but particularly women. The findings in this paper also show that corporate conditions such as personal independence,

personal recognition and rewards, and top management support have a positive and statistically significant effect on the likelihood of both female and male intrapreneurs.

Paper IV claims that individual intrapreneurs perceive their working conditions differently. The findings of the descriptive data show that intrapreneurs generally perceive the corporate conditions higher than the general sample of respondents. Furthermore, the results suggest that intrapreneurs are a heterogeneous group of people, which, depending on how they perceive their working conditions, can be divided into three distinct groups: resilient, neglected, and privileged intrapreneurs. Resilient intrapreneurs do not perceive there is enough of time for routines in order to have time to work with new ideas. They are left to work as they please and get recognition for their work. They may be neither stressed nor adaptable but simply A-players. Neglected intrapreneurs think that the corporation ignores them when producing good results; especially when they perform well, they do not get the extra recognition. They are most likely to be intrinsically motivated in their work. Privileged intrapreneurs perceive that they can work autonomously and that they are rewarded for performing well. They are happy about the internal working conditions. In sum, the identification of different groups of intrapreneurs expands Pinchot's (1985) stereotype, and it is speculated how intrapreneurial behavior is linked to well-being and corporate performance.

Reflections on the Findings and Theoretical Contributions

The intrapreneurship phenomena can be viewed through the evolutionary lens of variation, selection, and retention (Gartner, 1989; Aldrich, 1999; Aldrich & Martinez, 2003, 2007). There is a heterogeneity of individuals taking initiatives in a given corporation, which can be seen as variation. It is both intentional and blind variation as it is possible to think that individuals intentionally seek to work with intrapreneurial tasks as well as do it unintentionally or by chance (March, 1981; Brunsson, 1985; Aldrich & Kenworthy, 1999; Aldrich & Martinez, 2007; Ajzen, 2011). Individuals may become intrapreneurs because of formal programs and systems that encourage experimentation and generate new initiatives (Miner, 1994; Feldmann & Teuteberg, 2019; Bloodgood, Hornsby, Burkemper, & Sarooghi, 2015) or because of chance, prior experience, and education (Kuratko & Morris, 2018).

The first paper shows that intrapreneurs across all industries tend to have a (top)manager position.¹⁶ This result confirms previous research which claims that managers are intrapreneurial (Kolchin & Hyclak, 1987; Maier, 2014). However, previous research also claims that intrapreneurship is an autonomous behavior originating from the bottom (employee level) of the organization (Burgelman, 1983b; Åmo & Kolvereid, 2005; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013; Sinha & Srivastava, 2013; Park, Kim, & Krishna, 2014). It is possible that managers, after some time, take over initiatives originally taken by employees at lower levels. Irrespective of true sources, variation of initiatives can be seen as the base for selection; thus, the greater the variation, the greater the opportunities for change (Aldrich & Reuf, 2006).

In the first paper, the findings further suggest that among all company sizes, intrapreneurs have a university degree. Even in small corporations, the majority of intrapreneurs have a university degree. This finding suggests an evolutionary mechanism where some individuals and initiatives are more successful in contributing to the corporation and therefore subsequently selected and ultimately retained. In other words, within-organizational selection, based on internal diffusion, imitation, promotion, and incentive systems (Hodgson & Knudsen, 2010), tends to favor individuals with a university degree. The findings of this paper lend support to previous research which claims the higher the education, the better the capacity to apply knowledge and skills in the creation of new initiatives, ideas, and products (Døving & Gooderham, 2008). The findings further show that intrapreneurs are nearly equally distributed among company sizes. From the evolutionary perspective, the processes of variation and selection appear to be very similar, no matter what the size of the corporation. This confirms previous research which suggest that entrepreneurial behavior and attitudes are necessary for all corporate sizes (Carrier, 1994; Barringer & Bluedorn, 1999; Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003).

The second paper is concerned with employee intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. In fact, the characteristics of the intrapreneur in Paper I does not tell us what the drivers are behind intrapreneurial behavior (Ajzen, 1988, 1991, 2011; Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Fink, 2015; Pejic Bach, Aleksic, & Merkač-Skok, 2018; Neessen et al., 2019). Paper II tests which factors have an impact on employee intentions to become engaged in intrapreneurial behavior, drawing upon the theoretical foundations of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1988, 1991, 2011; Fini et al., 2012; Kuratko et al., 2014; Marques et al., 2018). This paper thus offers a theoretically based explanation for how corporate practices are linked to new product and service innovation (Hayton, 2005; Adams et al., 2016). According

¹⁶ By looking at the proportions of intrapreneurs compared to all employees in the group.

to evolutionary theory, various factors in the corporate environment can influence individuals in their behavior (Corning, 1974; Kuratko et al., 2021). The finding that the corporate environment creates conditions and expectations for reasonable behavior and actions of employees suggests that in an important respect, variation is not blind (Mintzberg, 1974; Reuther et al., 2018). However, corporations face uncertainty in the external environment and decisions that can be seen as blind.

The findings in paper II show that various corporate conditions, such as recognition and awarding of personal achievements, maintaining a risk-taking culture, the presence of intrapreneurial role models, top management support, and personal independence in action and decision-making, have a positive effect on employee intentions to behave intrapreneurially.

In paper II, the findings also indicate that the corporate conditions, such as acceptance of failure, time availability, and collectivistic values, have a curvilinear negative effect on employee intentions to become engaged in the development of new products and services. This is an interesting finding since failures and errors are fruitful in theory, introducing variation in the corporation (Sitkin, 1992). In theory, the more variation, the more opportunities, which results in a better overall situation (Aldrich & Reuf, 2006). It would seem that being accepting of failure would bring about more variation to select from, but apparently the question is more complex than that. The same goes for time availability, which should open up for more “playfulness” (Miner, 1994; Hornsby et al., 2013; Neessen et al., 2019) among employees of the corporation. Overall, it appears that concentrated efforts to bring about intentional variation must be approached with caution.

In paper III, the results suggest that there are specific components of corporate culture which will influence individuals of different gender to engage in intrapreneurship. A competitive corporate culture is likely to spawn male intrapreneurs, whereas corporate cultures having intrapreneurial role models is likely to spawn both men and women intrapreneurs, particularly women. The results support the assumption from previous literature that employees in a given corporation are influenced heterogeneously by certain components of corporate culture (Heilman, 2004; Guiso, Sapienza & Zingales, 2015ab; Eddleston, Ladge, Mitteness, & Balachandra, 2016). From an evolutionary perspective, this paper confirms the belief that there are sources of intentional variation in an organization, and that the corporation may actively seek to develop a corporate culture with certain components that fit its environment and market. The various components of the culture may institutionalize gendered behavior and thereby bias variation in certain predictable ways. More specifically, through the lens of retention, the roles and behavior of what is female and what is male are imitated and kept over time.

It is possible to see the findings in paper III from a different retention perspective and at the population level in our society (Lewontin, 1970; Hodgson & Knudsen, 2004; Hodgson & Knudsen, 2010). There are characteristics of what is generally seen as female and male, for example, career choices (Lewis & Simpson, 2012; Lyngsie & Foss, 2017). Historically, and also today, innovation and entrepreneurial behavior are seen as qualities more frequently found among men (Eddleston et al., 2014; Biju & Pathak, 2020). According to evolutionary theory, gender roles and characteristics will be collectively retained and diffused throughout the population over time as long as they are selected repeatedly (Eagly, 1987, 2002; Eckes, 1994; Aldrich & Martinez, 2003, 2007). Both at the corporate and population level, everyone “does gender” (Lorber & Farrell, 1991; Acker, 1998; Arenius, 2003; Lewis, 2006; Foss et al., 2013) and from that perspective the changing of cultures and gendered roles is likely to be a complex and long-term process.

Paper IV is about different intrapreneurs and varying corporate conditions. The idea of this paper originated from Pinchot (1985), who sees the intrapreneur as a “dreamer” but also considers the context around this individual. The findings in this fourth paper speculate that various corporate conditions produce different types of intrapreneurs. Such speculations are in line with recent research that emphasize how understanding corporate conditions is necessary for identifying the intrapreneurs (Bhardwaj, 2012; Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013; Hornsby et al., 2013; Kuratko et al., 2015; Neesseen et al., 2019). It is perhaps not unreasonable to assume that the conditions that create certain types of intrapreneurs also impinge on the selection of variation in the intra-corporate environment. If that is the case, intrapreneurs must find it difficult to escape from sometimes harsh organizational conditions, with lasting effects on both individual well-being and long-term performance at the corporate level.

Reflections on the Findings and Practical Relevance

The main findings of this thesis suggest practical implications for corporations as well as for policy makers working with intrapreneurship. First, knowledge about the characteristics of an intrapreneur is important from a recruitment point of view as corporations need to recruit individuals with the capacity to generate renewal and growth in the long-term¹⁷ (Salimath, 2018; Neessen et al., 2019; Kuratko et al., 2021). We know from previous research that

¹⁷ Talent management has been seen as an important contributor to sustainable competitive advantage (Ashton & Morton, 2005; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Adams, Jeanrenaud, Bessant, Denyer, & Overy, 2016).

corporations that recruit, retain, and support individuals to behave intrapreneurially tend to perform better than others (Schollhammer, 1981, 1982; Zahra, 1991, 1993; Zahra & Covin, 1995; Gautam & Verma, 1997; Daley, 2012; Bierwerth et al., 2015).

From a gender point of view, there is a larger proportion of male than female intrapreneurs, despite the fact that all individuals have the potential to behave intrapreneurially (Ireland et al., 2006; Lyngsie & Foss, 2017; Biju & Pathak, 2020). Together with the finding that males and females are triggered by different components in corporate cultures, this suggests the gender perspective could be stressed more in the strategy and recruitment processes as well as in university education in order to create the opportunity for more gender equal corporations (Lorber & Farrell, 1991; Ireland, Covin, & Kuratko, 2009; Åmo, 2010; Lukes & Stephan, 2017). Hopefully, the findings in this thesis can create awareness and motivation to work with gender equality in established corporations.

Any corporation may choose to include intrapreneurship in their vision and strategy, and there is a design element to the internal environment that can facilitate the ideation and generation of this intrapreneurial ideas (Kuratko & Morris, 2018). Corporations want sources of intentional variation initiatives (Miner, 1994), in order to ultimately have more successful selected new products and services (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Delmar & Shane, 2004). This thesis highlights the importance of autonomous individuals taking an active role in the corporation's renewal process and providing them with mandates and resources to generate, prototype, and test an idea (Bloodgood et al., 2015).

Beyond blind variation, the introduction of new products and services is in part created by top management support and by giving individuals incentives and resources and to initiate new products and services (Kuratko, Hornsby, Naffziger, & Montagno, 1993; Aldrich, 1999; Yariv & Galit, 2017). This thesis further emphasizes the importance of recognizing and awarding personal achievements, maintaining a creative and risk-taking culture, and the presence of intrapreneurial role models. Collectivistic values, organizational acceptance of failure, and time availability are more intricate matters; here, corporations need to proceed more cautiously to establish the most productive balancing point (Puech & Durand, 2017). Managers do have the opportunity to design the internal conditions in a way that encourages individuals to act intrapreneurially (Kuratko & Morris, 2018). Keeping this in mind, if intrapreneurs are not supported, developed, and maintained by the organization, they will probably leave or perform poorly (Govindarajan & Desai, 2013).

From an individual point of view, the intrapreneur may have to fight for a new idea or initiative against the company's already successful products and services. In other words, intrapreneurship is hard work, which often times is carried out in addition to regular tasks and duties, and the intrapreneur often faces resistance and internal bureaucracy (Hlavacek, & Thompson, 1973; Stringer, 2000). The findings in this thesis are reflective of the challenges typically faced by the intrapreneur in the selection processes (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Delmar & Shane, 2004; Buskes, 2013). One example is hierarchical structure and top management support (MacMillan, 1986; Merrifield, 1993; Foss et al., 2013; Yariv & Galit, 2017). If there is a decentralized structure and an interest from management, individuals are more likely to behave intrapreneurially. If the reverse conditions apply, it is also likely that the intrapreneur will face a harsh selection environment in the attempt to develop and implement new products and services in the host corporation.

Understanding intrapreneurship from an evolutionary perspective through the mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention (Campbell, 1969; Aldrich et al., 2008) provides overarching practical guidance to corporations. By offering structures that include resources, corporate culture, management support, and autonomy, more initiatives can be provided for the selection process. The mechanisms that operate to select these initiatives are similarly affected by the corporate structures, routines, and the culture that exists within the corporation; they either support or hinder initiatives to become a finished product or service. Lastly, the mechanism of retention maintains the selected variation, as selected initiatives are retained and kept over time. In sum, how the mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention work are and can be influenced by how the intra-organizational factors combined interact with each other and the individual.

Limitations

This thesis aims to explore the intrapreneur characteristics and the role of corporate conditions for intrapreneurial behavior. However, like all research endeavors, it suffers from a number of limitations. Below, I elaborate on the limitations pertaining to concepts, data, and focus within the boundaries of the organization that run across all four papers. Additional limitations are presented and discussed in each paper separately.

With regard to the concept of intrapreneurship, it should be noted that the chosen definition of an intrapreneur, i.e., "*I am currently leading the development of a new product or service in our corporation,*" may not have captured the whole phenomena. It would be useful for future research to

expand the definition to include perspectives other than the introduction of new products and services. For example, intrapreneurship can take place in the realm of management and management innovation (Birkinshaw, Hamel, & Mol, 2008), which is an important way to effect sustainable competitive advantage (Adams et al., 2016; Salimath, 2018). Corporations nevertheless often have an incremental and ad hoc approach to management innovation, rather than a systematic process or guiding strategy. In fact, new management practices are seen as forms of intrapreneurship. Concentrated efforts to understand “management intrapreneurs” and what drives them could be a useful avenue for future research. The same line of thinking could also apply to “strategy intrapreneurs” or those organizational members to take an active role in changing organizational strategy.

A second significant limitation concerns data issues. It must be emphasized that measures of financial outcomes, investments, patents, assets, and other performance variables were missing in the data. Thus, the financial effects on intrapreneurship are not considered in the thesis. To add these factors would have made the data richer and possibly reduced omitted variable bias. There could also have been more data on a set of factors that may influence the behavior and actions of the intrapreneur, for example, questions related to top managers’ focus of attention, leadership styles, and organizational resources that can stimulate intrapreneurial intentions and behavior (Ridge, Johnson, Hill, & Bolton, 2017). Also, it would have been interesting to have data on self-selected intrapreneurs and assigned intrapreneurs (Felin, Zenger & Tomsik, 2009). Information about this could offer interesting insights into the perhaps surprisingly large number of intrapreneurs in the top management and management levels. Yet, the survey format places significant limitation in the number of questions that could be asked.

It is also a fact that the studies in this thesis have mostly concerned individual intrapreneurs (Robinson, 2001; Pinchot, 1985, 2021). How intrapreneurs form teams and informal ties in order to collaborate and overcome internal obstacles remain hidden, to date. This has to be studied and understood further in corporate entrepreneurship research (Burgers, Jansen, Van den Bosch, Frans, & Volberda, 2009; Hill & Birkinshaw, 2014; Klotz, Hmieleski, Bradley, & Busenitz, 2014; Neessen et al., 2019). To increase our understanding of the phenomena intrapreneurship, future research would benefit from exploring intrapreneurial teams as well as the extent to which teams are influenced by corporate conditions.

Last, this thesis does not provide any insights into external conditions offered by the larger and extreme business environments. For example, political factors or national culture are unaccounted for in the data. Including these factors in the analyses would allow for a broader understanding of the internal

factors that influence intrapreneurship. This would open up the broader question of how the patterns and associations identified in this thesis also apply in other country contexts.

Directions for Future Research

I have for the most part taken a positive view to the phenomenon intrapreneurship. There is a general agreement among researchers and practitioners that intrapreneurship is something positive for economic growth and for corporate profitability (Zahra, 1991, 1993; Zahra & Covin, 1995; Rauch, Wiklund, & Frese, 2009; Bierwerth et al., 2015; Alam et al., 2020). However, little is known about the negative aspects of the phenomenon. It would be interesting to investigate if intrapreneurship is always beneficial, and the extent to which it might be positive for the individual but not the corporation, or vice versa. By asking such more critical questions, interesting areas for research might be revealed (Elert & Stenkula, 2020).

As indicated before, the data used in this thesis makes no distinction between intrapreneurs who are self-selected and those who were assigned intrapreneurial activities (e.g., assigned the development of a new product or service by a manager). The more intricate motives behind an individual's choice to behave intrapreneurially remains hidden, which is an interesting area for future research (Ireland et al., 2006; Maier, 2014; Reuther et al., 2018). For example, it would be interesting to study the differences in drivers and corporate conditions between intrapreneurs who are self-selected versus those who carry out assigned intrapreneurial activities. It is reasonable to assume that these groups have different drivers and corporate conditions. Do self-selected intrapreneurs have more autonomy than intrapreneurs that carry out assigned intrapreneurial activities? Investigating these groups and their perceptions of corporate conditions is an interesting area for future research.

Martiarena (2013) suggests that some individuals become intrapreneurs because of self-selection rather than because of variation in internal corporate conditions or the working tasks. According to Martiarena, these individuals might become intrapreneurs regardless of the working conditions. They have potential and simply select a competitive and challenging environment that fits their individual preferences and behavior (Salop & Salop, 1976; Cartwright & Cooper, 1993; Cooper, Kirkaldy, & Brown, 1994; Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001; Wunderer, 2001; Ireland et al., 2006) and beyond that may not necessarily depend on management support or the presence of intrapreneurial role models. Does the environment select the intrapreneur or does the intrapreneur select the most suitable environment? Is intrapreneurial behavior something transient or time-invariant? There are

currently no answers to these questions; hence, these are some of the many interesting questions and areas for future research.

The presence of different types of intrapreneurs raises the question of working conditions and intrapreneurial well-being. This is an important yet under-researched question in the corporate entrepreneurship literature (Shir, Nikolaev, & Wincent, 2019; Nikolaev, Boudreaux, & Wood, 2020). Most of what is known concerns general working conditions and how they affect entrepreneurial behavior (Zahra, 1993; Kuratko et al., 2014), or how employee well-being is associated with employee retention (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2018). This thesis speculates that working conditions can influence individuals' well-being but how and to what extent, are still unknown (Ura, Alkire, Zangmo, & Wangdi, 2012; Aiswarya & Bhattathiripad, 2019). It would be particularly interesting to make the connection between types of intrapreneurs and their well-being, and how this affects their performance and success as intrapreneurs.

Working conditions should nevertheless be approached with caution. There is a possibility that perceptions of internal conditions develop and change over time, depending on how the corporation interacts with its external business environment. Also, individual preferences of working conditions might differ from person to person and may also change over time. Overall, we still know surprisingly little about what makes intrapreneurs step forward in the first place, and about the individual and organizational factors that drive both intrapreneurial intentions and actual pursuit of new product and service development. The results presented in this thesis could be seen as a small step to the opening up of this large box of unknowns.

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Appendix A

The Intrapreneurship Compass Survey

1. Din ålder, år	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-	
2. Kön	Man	Kvinna	Annat				
3. Högsta avlagda examen	Grundskole-examen	Gymnasie-examen	Universitets-examen				
4. Anställningstid i nuvarande företag, antal år	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-
5. Nuvarande position	Högre chef: (Verkställande Direktör/medlem i lednings-grupp)	Mellanchef: (Produktchef, gruppchef, etc.)	Medarbetare:				
6. Arbetsområde	Sälj/Marknad:	Företagsledning:	Tillverkning:				
	Forskning/utveckling:	HR:	IT:				
	Inköp/Logistik:	Finans/Juridik:	Redovisning /Admin:				
	Annat:						
7. Företagsstorlek, antal anställda	9-49	50-249	Fler än 249				
8. Bransch	1-22						

Ange i vilken grad du instämmer med följande påståenden:

(1 = instämmer inte alls; 7 =instämmer helt, -9=vet ej)

Vårt företag är starkt decentraliserat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag är noggrant med att de anställda följer bestämda regler och rutiner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag är det vanligt att de anställda arbetar med kollegor som är verksamma inom andra områden och delar av företaget	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Min chef ger mig extra erkännande om min arbetsprestation är mycket bra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Min chef berättar för sin chef om min arbetsprestation är mycket bra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag får prestationsbaserad belöning på mitt arbete	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag finns det ofta gott om pengar för att utveckla nya produkter och tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag har anställda formellt avsatt tid för att arbeta med utvecklandet av nya produkter och tjänster	Ja:						Nej:	
I vårt företag finns det en separat enhet vars huvuduppgift är att utveckla nya produkter och tjänster (t.ex. inkubator, affärsutvecklingsenhet, eller liknande)	Ja:						Nej:	
Vårt företag lägger särskild vikt på att rekrytera personal med kompetens att utveckla nya produkter eller tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I mitt företag visar mellancheferna stort intresse för utvecklandet av nya produkter och tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I mitt företag visar företagsledningen stort intresse för utvecklandet av nya produkter och tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag uppmuntras anställda att komma med förslag på nya produkter och tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag belönas personer som hjälper andra medarbetare i deras arbete	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9

I vårt företag belönas personer som utvecklar nya produkter och tjänster med: <i>Markera alla relevanta alternativ</i>	Pengar / Royalty	Mer tid för eget arbete	Intern synlighet	Befordran					
I vårt företag är vi förlåtande ifall någon misslyckas med sitt arbete		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag finns en kultur av att hjälpa andra anställda med sitt arbete		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag har vi en informell arbetskultur		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag kan vem som helst ta initiativ till att utveckla nya produkter och tjänster		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag ses all företagskunskap som gemensam egendom		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag ser man positivt på utvecklandet av nya produkter och tjänster		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag är vi måna om att alltid ligga ett steg före våra konkurrenter		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag kännetecknas av ett auktoritärt beslutsfattande		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag kännetecknas av en hög grad av risktagande		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag kännetecknas av långsiktiga strategier		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag finns det många kvinnliga förebilder vad gäller utvecklingen av nya produkter och tjänster		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag finns det många manliga förebilder vad gäller utvecklingen av nya produkter och tjänster		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag har stor frihet att bestämma hur jag lägger upp min arbetsdag		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag känner att jag är min egen chef och att jag inte behöver dubbelkontrollera mina beslut med andra		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag kan arbeta mycket självständigt och har stor frihet att utföra mitt jobb som jag vill		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag känner att jag alltid arbetar under tidspress		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9

Jag och mina kollegor kan alltid hitta tid för att komma på lösningar på långsiktiga problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Under de senaste tre månaderna har min arbetsbörda hindrat mig från att lägga tid på utvecklandet av nya idéer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Mitt företag stödjer många små och experimentella projekt samtidigt som man förstår att några av dessa utan tvekan kommer att misslyckas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag finns det en formell och standardiserad process som beskriver hur projekt går från idé till färdig produkt eller tjänst	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Företagsledningen uppmuntrar innovatörer att tänja på regler och rutiner för att kunna hålla lovande nya idéer vid liv	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag sker utvecklandet av nya produkter eller tjänster under noggrann kontroll, rapportering, och utvärdering från företagsledningen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
När vårt företag utvecklar nya produkter eller tjänster ställs det höga krav på att de ger snabb avkastning på investerade pengar och resurser	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag är det företagsledningen som kommer på de flesta nya produkter och tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag skapas nya produkter och tjänster internt inom företaget	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I vårt företag skapas nya produkter och tjänster genom förvärv av andra bolag	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag skapar nya produkter och tjänster genom gemensamma projekt med våra leverantörer eller kunder	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag skapar nya produkter och tjänster genom att investera riskkapital i nystartade företag	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag skapar nya produkter och tjänster genom samägda bolag eller allianser med andra företag	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jämfört med våra konkurrenter lanserar vårt företag många nya produkter eller tjänster på marknaden	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Vårt företag är ofta det första i sin bransch att lansera nya produkter eller tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9

Vårt företag utvecklar ofta produkter eller tjänster som bygger på vår existerande produkt- och tjänsteportfölj	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
De produkter och tjänster vårt företag utvecklar är ofta banbrytande och nya för världen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag anser mig ha tillräcklig kompetens och förmåga för att inom ramen av min anställning kunna utveckla en ny produkt eller tjänst	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag har goda möjligheter att inom ramen för min anställning kunna utveckla en ny produkt eller tjänst	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
Jag upplever att rädsla för att misslyckas hindrar mig från att inom ramen för min anställning utveckla en ny produkt eller tjänst	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I Sverige är det bra för den framtida karriären om man inom ramen för sin anställning utvecklat nya produkter och tjänster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I Sverige åtnjuter de som inom ramen för sin anställning lyckas utveckla nya produkter och tjänster hög status och respekt	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
I Sverige hör man ofta om framgångsrikt intraprenörskap i media	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9

På en skala 1 till 7, hur pass bra anser du att ditt företag är på utveckla nya produkter och tjänster?

(1 = mycket dåligt; 7=mycket bra, -9=vet ej)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-9
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Jag är för närvarande <i>aktivt delaktig</i> i utvecklandet av en ny produkt eller tjänst i vårt företag	Ja:	Nej:
Jag <i>leder</i> för närvarande utvecklandet av en ny produkt eller tjänst i vårt företag	Ja:	Nej:
Jag har under de tre senaste åren någon gång varit <i>aktivt delaktig</i> i utvecklandet av en ny produkt eller tjänst i vårt företa	Ja:	Nej:
Jag har under de tre senaste åren någon gång varit <i>ledande</i> i utvecklandet av en ny produkt eller tjänst i vårt företag	Ja:	Nej:
Om du svarat, ja, på att du är delaktig eller har varit delaktig i utvecklandet av en ny produkt eller tjänst får vi kontakta dig för en follow-up intervju?	Ja:	Nej:

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