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Investigating intrapreneurial activities

How is intrapreneurship carried out in an established firm?

Master's thesis in NTNU School of Entrepreneurship
Supervisor: Gunn-Berit Sæter
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Norwegian University of Science and Technology
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Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management

PREFACE

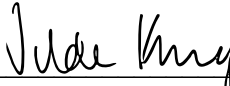
This master thesis is written as a part of the authors' master's degree at NTNU School of Entrepreneurship at the Department of Industrial Economics and Technology at NTNU, spring semester 2019. The authors have conducted a study of intrapreneurial activities in an established firm, investigating how it is carried out by the individual intrapreneur and influences by the context of the firm.

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Trondheim, June 5th



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ABSTRACT

In a rapidly changing global environment, the company's ability to stay intrapreneurial is considered an essential path to improved performance and competitive advantage. Intrapreneurship is carried out through intrapreneurial activities by the employees. However, despite an increasing amount of studies within the field of intrapreneurship, there is little knowledge regarding the activities performed by the intrapreneur. There is a gap in the literature regarding how the intrapreneur acts to be intrapreneurial. The purpose of this study is to examine how intrapreneurship is carried out through intrapreneurial activities in an established firm, by the individual intrapreneur. This is investigated through the research question: *How are intrapreneurial activities carried out by the intrapreneur in an established firm?*

The method chosen to investigate the phenomenon is a qualitative single case study, with embedded units. The studied case is the Norwegian bank, DNB, with four intrapreneurs and their respective middle managers as the embedded units. Empirical data has been retrieved through semi-structured interviews, supplied with illustrations. The data was analyzed using a theoretical framework based on theories of intrapreneurship and intrapreneurial activities.

Not all the intrapreneurial activities proposed by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) were identified in this case study. While Bosma et al. (2010) predict that the activities take place in a given order and follows phases, the activities identified in this case study did not follow a given order and was rather done in cycles. The most represented activities in the case study were opportunity perception, active information search, and idea generation. Also, it suggests a new element, iterations, to be a part of the intrapreneurial activities. In this thesis, the authors discuss how organizational antecedents, such as formal control, have a large influence on how the intrapreneurs carry out the intrapreneurial activities.

The study contributes to the intrapreneurship literature by extending the understanding of some of the identified intrapreneurial activities. Furthermore, it provides empirical examples of how the activities are related and how they depend on the organizational context. This is an important foundation for further research looking into how intrapreneurship is carried out within an established firm.

SAMMENDRAG

Som følge av globalisering og et stadig mer utfordrende konkurransebilde, avhenger selskapers overlevelse og konkurransedyktighet av evnen til å være intraprenøriell. Intraprenørskap i en bedrift skapes gjennom intraprenørielle aktiviteter, utført av de ansatte. Til tross for en økende mengde studier innenfor fagfeltet intraprenørskap, er det begrenset med litteratur som tar for seg hvilke aktiviteter intraprenøren utfører for å skape intraprenørskap. Formålet med denne masteroppgaven er derfor å undersøke hvordan intraprenørskap utføres gjennom intraprenørielle aktiviteter i et etablert selskap. Dette er undersøkt med problemstillingen: *Hvordan utføres intraprenørielle aktiviteter av intraprenøren, i et etablert selskap?*

Studiet benytter kvalitativ metode, nærmere bestemt en enkeltstående casestudie (single case study) med fire tilhørende enheter. Casen i studiet er det norske banksystemet DNB, med fire intraprenører og deres respektive mellomledere som undersøkte enheter. Empirisk data er innsamlet gjennom semistrukturerte intervjuer, utdypet med illustrasjoner. Den innsamlede dataen er deretter analysert ved hjelp av et teoretisk rammeverk basert på eksisterende litteratur innenfor intraprenørskap og intraprenørielle aktiviteter.

Studiet viser at ikke alle aktivitetene foreslått av De Jong og Wennekers (2008) ble utført i DNB. Selv om Bosma et al. (2010) foreslår at aktivitetene finner sted i en gitt rekkefølge, inndelt i to faser, viser denne studien at aktivitetene ikke nødvendigvis følger en gitt rekkefølge, og heller skjer i gjentakende sykluser. De mest representerte aktivitetene i studien var identifisering av muligheter, aktiv informasjonsinnhenting og idégenerering. I tillegg foreslår forfatterne et nytt element, iterasjoner, som en del av de intraprenørielle aktivitetene. I oppgaven diskuterer forfatterne hvorvidt de organisatoriske forutsetningene for intraprenørskap, som for eksempel kontroll, påvirker aktivitetene og hvorvidt de blir utført av intraprenørene.

Studien bidrar til den eksisterende litteraturen innenfor fagfeltet med å utvide forståelsen av noen av de identifiserte aktivitetene. Videre gir den konkrete empiriske eksempler på hvordan aktivitetene avhenger av hverandre og hvordan de blir påvirket av den organisatoriske konteksten. Dette er viktige byggeklosser for videre studier innenfor intraprenørskap, intraprenørielle aktiviteter og hvordan det utarter seg i et etablert selskap.

1. Introduction	7
1.1 Background and motivation	7
1.2 Research question	8
1.2 Contribution	9
1.3 Structure of the thesis	10
2. Theoretical background	11
2.1 Intrapreneurship	11
2.1.1 The intrapreneur	12
2.1.2 Antecedents for intrapreneurship	13
2.2 Intrapreneurship in practice	15
2.2.1 Intrapreneurial activities	15
2.2.2 Phases of intrapreneurship	16
2.3 Innovative work behavior	17
2.3.1 The dimensions of innovative work behavior	18
Opportunity exploration	18
Generativity/idea generation	19
Championing	19
Application/implementation	20
2.4 Theoretical framework	20
2.4.1 Theoretical framework applied	20
3. Method	23
3.1 Research design	23
3.1.1 Single-case with embedded units	23
3.1.2 Criteria for selecting the intrapreneurs	25
3.1.3 Middle managers	26
3.2 Data acquisition	26
3.3 Analysis of data	29
3.4 Reflections and evaluation of the method	31
4. Findings	33
4.1 Carrying out intrapreneurship	33
4.1.1 Searching for information	33
4.1.1.1 External information	33
4.1.1.2 Internal information	34

4.1.2 Identification of an opportunity or a problem	35
4.1.3 Information handling and idea development	36
4.1.4 Iterations and user-testing while forming the idea	37
4.1.5 The sequence of intrapreneurial activities	38
4.1.6 Summary - carrying out intrapreneurship	41
4.2 The intrapreneur	41
4.2.1 Driving force	41
4.2.2 Taking action	42
4.2.3 Taking charge	42
4.2.4 Fighting for the idea	43
4.2.5 Summary - The intrapreneur	43
4.3 Intrapreneurial context	44
4.3.2 Communication and access to information	44
4.3.3 Organizational structure and control	45
4.3.4 Organizational facilitation for intrapreneurship	45
4.3.5 Summary - intrapreneurial context	46
5. Analysis	47
5.1 Intrapreneurial activities	47
5.1.1 Opportunity perception	47
5.1.2 Active information search	48
5.1.3 Idea Generation	49
5.2 Sequence of the activities and phases of intrapreneurial activities	50
5.2.1 Example of intrapreneurial activities	50
5.3 The intrapreneur	52
5.3 Organizational antecedents	53
5.3.1 Communication openness	53
5.3.2 Formal control	53
5.3.3 Environmental scanning	54
5.3.4 Organizational support	55
5.3.5 Organizational values	55
5.4 Analysis summarized	56
6. Discussion	57
6.1 Presence of intrapreneurial Activities	57
6.1.1 Opportunity perception	59
6.1.2 Active information search	60

6.2.3 Idea generation and iteration	62
6.2 The sequence and relation of intrapreneurial activities	64
6.3 The influence of organizational antecedents	66
6.4 The intrapreneur	67
7. Conclusion	68
8. Implications and further research	70
9. Limitations	72
References	73

List of tables:

Table 1: <i>The two phases of intrapreneurial activities</i>	17
Table 2: <i>Codes used for the analysis</i>	30

List of figures:

Figure 1: <i>Theoretical framework</i>	21
Figure 2: <i>Case design</i>	24
Figure 3: <i>Interview guide for intrapreneurs</i>	28
Figure 4: <i>Interview guide for middle managers</i>	29
Figure 5: <i>Intrapreneur 1's illustration of the project</i>	38
Figure 6: <i>Intrapreneur 2's illustration of the project</i>	39
Figure 7: <i>Intrapreneur 3's illustration of the project</i>	40
Figure 8: <i>Intrapreneur 4's illustration of the project</i>	40
Figure 9: <i>Sequence of activities in an intrapreneurial project</i>	51
Figure 10: <i>How opportunity perception may be carried out</i>	60
Figure 11: <i>How active information search may be carried out</i>	61
Figure 12: <i>How idea generation may be carried out</i>	63
Figure 13: <i>Intrapreneurial activities carried out</i>	65

1. Introduction

In the following introductory chapter, the motivation of the thesis is presented. Also, the purpose of the thesis and the derived research question is presented. By the end of the chapter, the contribution and structure of the master thesis follow.

1.1 Background and motivation

In the context of increasing market globalization and free trade, firms must constantly innovate to improve their flexibility, competitiveness, and reactivity (Carrier, 1996). Intrapreneurship is defined as entrepreneurship within the context of an established firm and is described as what makes the firm innovative and a source to newness (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003). Intrapreneurship includes the creation of new business ventures, as well as other innovative activities such as the development of new products, services, and technologies (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003). The level of intrapreneurship is considered as an important predictor for the growth of a firm, both in relative terms (market share growth) and absolute terms (increased total sales and numbers of employees) (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Organizations with a high level of intrapreneurship are considered to more likely experience growth than organizations with a low level of intrapreneurship (ibid.) Therefore, it is important for the survival of a company to understand how the phenomenon of intrapreneurship plays out within the organization (Åmo, 2010). Through intrapreneurship, the organization's ability to innovate will be revitalized; one will be able to compete more effectively, increase the productivity of the employees, and, not least, create and secure jobs (Huse, 1994). Intrapreneurship is, therefore, essential to increase innovation in a firm and improve the chances of long-term survival.

The intrapreneur is the individual employee in the organization who carries out the intrapreneurial activities that leads to the innovation (Blanka, 2018). Some researchers on the field of intrapreneurship even point out how the intrapreneurs are essential for new product development projects. For instance, Pinchot (1985) refers to a study where all failed product initiatives lacked intrapreneurial individuals (Pinchot III, 1985). Thus, the intrapreneurial employees have a clear role in an intrapreneurial organization as these are the ones carrying out the intrapreneurship and forming the innovation and newness in the organization. The intrapreneur is characterized as an entrepreneur within the confines of an established firm

(Åmo, 2010). This meaning that the intrapreneurs have specific skills and characteristics that are seen as entrepreneurial, such as the ability to take the initiative, the pursuit of opportunity, and some element of 'newness' (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). These are all attributes that influence how the intrapreneur work and how they are innovative. According to Stevenson and Jarillo (1990), researchers argue that the level of intrapreneurship is dependent on the individuals below the top management ranks and that intrapreneurship for such reason should be investigated at the individual-level perspective. At the same time, the organizational context, such as the strategy of the firm, has a clear influence on the intrapreneurial employee's choices and activities (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Turro, Alvarez, & Urbano, 2016). Hence, the intrapreneur must be seen in the context of the organization.

Intrapreneurship is carried out through activities performed by the individual employee, the intrapreneur, in order to create innovation within the firm. These activities are often related to emergent behavioral intentions for improving or changing customary ways of doing business (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003). This involves the intrapreneur taking a creative idea to the next step where it becomes a new product or service (McFadzean, O'Loughlin, & Shaw, 2005). There are researchers within the field of intrapreneurship who has identified activities related to the role of the intrapreneur. However, the field of research is limited and not looking in-depth into the intrapreneurial activities performed by the intrapreneur. These intrapreneurial activities are highly important for the ability of the firm to stay intrapreneurial, as they are giving the organization a continuous focus on innovation and newness to be able to stay competitive (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). From this, there is a need to understand how these intrapreneurial activities take place and what determines their presence for an organization to stay competitive. The background for this thesis is to investigate how intrapreneurship is carried out in practice, by the intrapreneur in an established firm.

1.2 Research question

In order to obtain an in-depth understanding of how the activities are performed and to provide empirical evidence to the theory, it is of interest to look further into a case study of intrapreneurs in an organization with adequate facilities for intrapreneurship. To fully understand the intrapreneurial activities, related literature explaining the antecedents and prerequisites for intrapreneurship to happen will be seen in the context of the intrapreneurial activities. By doing

such, the aim is to understand how the intrapreneurial activities take place in practice. In addition, the authors seek to investigate how elements from related theories of intrapreneurship influence the activities. Thus, the authors have in this thesis investigated the research question:

How are intrapreneurial activities carried out by the intrapreneur in an established firm?

By *carried out* the authors emphasize the role of and activities performed by the intrapreneur, while still including the importance of the organizational context and the intrapreneurial characteristics. The intrapreneurial activities performed by the intrapreneur, which amount to the overall level of intrapreneurship within a firm, must be viewed in the context of the organization to understand determinants for the activities to take place. Also, the way they are carried out depends on the intrapreneurs' characteristics. Therefore, through this research question, the authors seek an in-depth understanding of the intrapreneurial activities, by matching the findings with the organizational antecedents for intrapreneurship and intrapreneurial characteristics.

To the authors' knowledge, there are so far no studies identifying the intrapreneurial activities in a real setting, explaining how the intrapreneur conducts the activities and how the organization influences their behavior. The authors believe that to fully understand how intrapreneurial activities take place in a corporate setting, it is necessary to look at the whole context, thus with the intrapreneur in focus. By such, the researchers seek to identify the presence of activities from the theory and how they are conducted by the intrapreneurs.

1.2 Contribution

This master thesis contributes to the field of literature of intrapreneurship by providing valuable insight into how activities are performed by the intrapreneur and identifying which activities are the most prominent in the daily intrapreneurial behavior. This contributes by both verifying the theories of intrapreneurial activities as well as giving clear examples and situations how the activities might be conducted. Also, this master thesis contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence to the relation between organizational antecedent of intrapreneurship and its influence of the intrapreneurial activities performed. This is important in order to understand how firms can facilitate for intrapreneurship. In addition, this thesis will be an essential

foundation for further research regarding intrapreneurship in established firms and a springboard for a further in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of intrapreneurial activities.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured in nine chapters. The first chapter consists of an introduction to the field of intrapreneurship proposing key concepts and the research question of the thesis. Chapter 2 includes theory regarding intrapreneurship, intrapreneurship in practice, and innovative work behavior. After presenting this theory, the researchers propose a theoretical framework. Further, in Chapter 3, the method used for answering the research question is presented. Chapter 4 presents the findings related to data acquisition. In Chapter 5, the findings are further analyzed by the framework presented in Chapter 2, identifying intrapreneurial activities. In Chapter 6, the presence of intrapreneurial activities, and the intrapreneurial activities identified are discussed. Chapter 7 present a conclusion to the research question, while Chapter 8 consists of implications and areas of further research. Lastly, Chapter 9 introduce limitations to the study.

2. Theoretical background

In this chapter, the theoretical background of the thesis will be described. The first section introduces intrapreneurship, including levels of analysis, the intrapreneur, and antecedents for intrapreneurship. Further on, the second section describes intrapreneurship in practice with intrapreneurial activities and the phases of intrapreneurship. The third section regards the theory of Innovative Work Behavior. Lastly, the theoretical framework for this thesis will be presented.

2.1 Intrapreneurship

Intrapreneurship is, in its broadest terms, defined as “entrepreneurship within an existing organization” (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003, p. 9). Therefore, entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship are not particularly distinct, the difference is that intrapreneurship takes place inside a company with the benefits of the resources that exist there. Intrapreneurship is seen as a sub-field of the entrepreneurship research and consists of two primary levels of analysis, namely, organizational and individual (Blanka, 2018). Either way, intrapreneurship is a phenomenon comprising behaviors and intentions of innovation and newness (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003).

From the organizational point of view, intrapreneurship is described as a process inside an existing organization where the organization is seen as a whole, regardless of its size (Donald F. Kuratko, Ireland, Covin, & Hornsby, 2005). At this level of analysis, intrapreneurship is moreover seen as a strategy for being innovative (Sharma & Chrisman, 2007). The organizational level divides intrapreneurship into eight components: new ventures, new businesses, product/service innovativeness, process innovativeness, self-renewal, risk taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003).

The individual level of analysis emphasizes intrapreneurship as a concept based on the entrepreneurial employees and the human capital within the existing organization. Researchers such as Blanka (2018) and Sundbo (1999) argue the need to focus on the individual level of analysis, due to the central role of the employee in the innovation process. Stevenson and Jarillo (1990) narrowed down the concept intrapreneurship as “a process by which individuals - either

on their own or within organizations - pursue opportunities” (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990, p. 23). This definition implies that the level of intrapreneurship in the organization is determined by the firm’s individuals (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990). This is supported by Menzel et al. (2007), who argues that innovation requires the involvement of individuals. Also, Åmo (2010) addresses the importance of employee behavior and the following effect on improvements or changes within the firm. Intrapreneurship is considered as a process where the individual employee or a team create a new firm or instigate renewal or innovation within an existing firm (Seshadri & Tripathy, 2006; Sharma & Chrisman, 2007). Therefore, intrapreneurship is considered dependent on the employees, where the individual employee implements innovations in a firm.

2.1.1 The intrapreneur

The intrapreneur is an essential part of the intrapreneurship theory, due to the essential role of innovating. Pinchot (1985), even states it like this: “Innovation almost never happens in large organizations without an individual or small group passionately dedicated to making it happen” (p.6), referring to the intrapreneurs as these individuals. As shown in the earlier section, intrapreneurship is closely linked to entrepreneurship. Likewise, the intrapreneur shares many similarities with the entrepreneur and Åmo (2010) even describes the intrapreneur as an entrepreneur within an organizational context. At the same time, Menzel, Aaltio, and Ulijn (2007) explain that the intrapreneur is an entrepreneurial employee conducting activities that create innovation within the organization. These activities are also found in Turro et al. (2016), describing intrapreneurship as entrepreneurial activities within a firm, conducted by the intrapreneur. This corresponds with Pinchot’s (1985) perception of the intrapreneur. He describes the intrapreneur as “a dreamer who do”, claiming that the intrapreneur is an individual who has his/her ideas and takes responsibility for putting these ideas into action, without regard to the corporate strategy, while having a high level of risk tolerance.

Regarding who the intrapreneur is, Blanka (2018) found several researchers who focus on intrapreneurs personality traits, personal characteristics, earlier knowledge, and experience. Zhu, Djurjagina, and Leker (2014) state creativity and proactivity to be essential characteristics for an intrapreneur while being experts on combining vision and action. Other researchers such as Bjornali and Støren (2012) found experience from entrepreneurship education programs to

increase the intrapreneurs' innovative actions in a firm. Further, opportunity recognition, networking skills, (Urbano & Turró, 2013), the ability to think across organizational boundaries (Pinchot III, 1985), are all considered as important aspects of the intrapreneur. De Jong and Wennekers (2008) identified some vital behavioral characteristics representative for both the intrapreneur and the entrepreneur. These are the ability to take initiative, the pursuit of opportunity, and some element of 'newness'. However, due to the differences of the intrapreneurial employee working in an organizational context, De Jong and Wennekers (2008) differentiated the characteristics of the intrapreneur by highlighting personal initiative, active information search, out of the box thinking, voicing, championing, taking charge, finding a way, and some degree of risk taking. Lumpkin (2007) also diversifies the intrapreneur and entrepreneur by different limitations and possibilities due to the context of the organization. For example, the hierarchy and routines of an organization may limit the intrapreneurial processes. At the same time, the financial and organizational support and lower level of risk may lead to more possibilities for the intrapreneur (Lumpkin, 2007). Also, the organization sits with the risk and therefore takes the financial reward, while the intrapreneur achieves reward in terms of independence and self-realization (Antoncic, 2003).

Åmo (2005) explains the motivation an intrapreneur has to perform intrapreneurial activities by economic compensation, the creation of intrinsic value and an opportunity for promotion. Pinchot (1985) believes that an intrapreneur innovates due to a personal need to perform, usually by giving the world new products and services that are meaningful to the intrapreneur him/herself and the market.

2.1.2 Antecedents for intrapreneurship

In general, the literature within intrapreneurship at the organizational level accentuate two main groups of antecedents for intrapreneurship to take place; the environmental and organizational conditions (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Turro et al., 2016). These conditions influence the level of intrapreneurship within the organization by being both stimulating and hindering. Therefore, they must be taken into consideration when investigating intrapreneurship.

The organizational conditions are considered as important determinants for intrapreneurship to take place, as it is within the organization the activities of intrapreneurship occur (Antoncic &

Hisrich, 2001). The intra-organizational environment can either hinder or stimulate for the firm's level of intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Pinchot III, 1985), and can be divided into five main categories.

1) Communication openness

The internal communication openness refers to the firm's process of information sharing and its openness (Pinchot III, 1985). The condition is considered as essential for intrapreneurial intentions and implementations in established firms (Zahra, 1991), and is assumed to have a positive influence towards intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001).

2) Formal controls

The mechanism of formal control is considered to be overall positively related to intrapreneurship by being a monitor of intrapreneurial activities (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Though, if too extensive use of formal control, the level of intrapreneurship can be inhibited (Zahra, 1991). It should, therefore, be considered as an element of evaluation and internal control of intrapreneurial activities and intrapreneurship.

3) Environmental scanning

Environmental scanning refers to the firm's ability to actively scan the industry environment and by such identify and forecast changes and necessary actions. This ability is highly important if operating in a hostile environment (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Identifying trends, changes, opportunities, and threats within the industry are essential drivers for the firm's innovativeness (Zahra, 1991). The firm's level of environmental scanning is thereby assumed to have a positive effect concerning intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001).

4) Organizational support

Organizational support involves management involvement and support, organizational commitment, training, and reward systems (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Also, there is an emphasis on the trust of the individual employee to discover opportunities (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990). The aspect of management and organizational support addresses the necessity for time availability and to some extent, lose intra-organizational boundaries (Donald F Kuratko, Montagno, & Hornsby, 1990). Sufficient organizational support is viewed as a crucial element due to the direct impact of intrapreneurship and therefore, considered as a positive stimulus for a firm's intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001).

5) Organizational values

The level of intrapreneurship in a firm is critically dependent on the characteristics, values, and visions of the strategic leaders (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990). Guth and Ginsberg (1990) argue the importance of the organizational values as facilitation for intrapreneurship. The relationship between organizational values and intrapreneurship is centered around the individual (Zahra, 1991), and positively related (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001).

2.2 Intrapreneurship in practice

Intrapreneurship is carried out through activities (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). Turro et al. (2016) define intrapreneurship as entrepreneurial activities within a firm, involving actions and activities performed by the individual employee. In this subsection, the different theoretical concepts addressing how the individual intrapreneur conducts intrapreneurship is presented.

2.2.1 Intrapreneurial activities

The existing literature addressing intrapreneurial activities is limited, partly due to the nature of a nascent concept (Abrell & Karjalainen, 2017; McFadzean et al., 2005). Nevertheless, there is a handful of studies that address the activities performed by the intrapreneur. The intrapreneurial activities can be defined as activities performed by the firm's employees, both daily and sporadically, which foster the intrapreneurial organization's growth. The intrapreneurial activities are by McFadzean et al. (2005) considered as events performed by the intrapreneur to take creative ideas a step further. Activities like this are, for example, opportunity recognition and resource configuration (ibid.). In a case study of intrapreneurship in a manufacturing company, Abrell and Karjalainen (2017) identified six activities related to innovation in established firms. The identified activities were opportunity identification, legitimacy building, business development, planning, funding, and seeking advice. The activities are highly related to the intrapreneurial activities presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008). De Jong and Wennekers (2008) suggests the intrapreneurial activities to consists of 15 activities, for example; opportunity perception, active information search, idea generation, design a new product or concept, voicing the idea, forming strategic alliances, and market research (see Table 1 for a complete list of activities).

Scholars within the field of intrapreneurial activities are not consistent regarding who performs the activities that are considered to lead to intrapreneurship and may as such be performed by both employees and managers. On the one hand, intrapreneurship at the individual level consists of activities performed by the intrapreneur (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008; Bosma et al., 2010). On the other hand, some researchers highlight the differentiation between activities performed by the managers (Pinchot III, 1985) and the employees (Bosma et al., 2010; Urban & Wood, 2015). Therefore, intrapreneurial activities can be conducted by both the intrapreneur and the manager.

2.2.2 Phases of intrapreneurship

The intrapreneurial activities presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) are by Bosma et al. (2010) divided into phases due to the nature of being a sequential process. The phases are namely the Visioning and imagination, and the Preparation and emerging exploitation phase (Bosma et al., 2010). The distinction stems from the understanding of intrapreneurs presented by Pinchot III (1985), where intrapreneurs are “dreamers that do.” This understanding involves both the phase of having a vision (*dream*) and exploitation (*do*) (Bosma et al., 2010). The distinguish separates intrapreneurial activities into two parts, both mutual determinant for intrapreneurship to take place.

Activities related to the emergence of an idea or opportunity are found in the Vision and imagination phase. Within this phase, activities such as opportunity perception, idea generation, active information search, and designing a new product or concept are placed. The second phase is referred to as the Preparation and the exploitation phase. This phase consists of voicing the idea with colleagues, convincing the management, identifying external relations and potential customers, forming strategic alliances both inside and outside the organization, conducting market research, preparing a project plan, developing and testing the product, and arranging finance. These are all activities oriented towards the execution of the idea, and necessary to prosecute the innovation process. The following part of the second phase, the emerging exploitation, consists of activities such as organizing a team, purchase of supplies, arranging production, marketing, and operationalizing the concept or product (Bosma et al., 2010).

Phase 1	Phase 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity perception - Active information search - Idea generation - Design a new product or concept - Voicing the idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forming strategic alliances - Market research - Developing and testing - Preparing a project plan - Organizing a team - Arranging financing from the firm - Purchase supplies - Arranging production - Operationalizing/first sale - Marketing

Table 1: The two phases of intrapreneurial activities as proposed by Bosma et al. (2010).

2.3 Innovative work behavior

Even though being both explanatory and complementary, the theory of the intrapreneurial activities (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008) does not provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and how it is carried out within the organization. There is also limited studies and theories explaining what the different activities involve in terms of actions, and whether they take place in different orders or multiple times during a project. The theory of innovative work behavior (Janssen, 2000; Kleysen & Street, 2001; De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010) is considered to cover more or less the same activities and behaviors. Therefore, in this thesis, the theory of innovative work behavior is used to identify and explain some of the intrapreneurial activities studied.

Intrapreneurial activities must be seen in the context of intrapreneurial behavior (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Intrapreneurial behavior is by many scholars also referred to as innovation behavior (Kanter, 1988) or innovative work behavior (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Janssen, 2000; Kleysen & Street, 2001). The concepts of intrapreneurship and innovative work behavior (IWB) is, according to De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) highly related where both refer to innovative initiatives with a meaning that goes beyond one's work, as well as overcoming barriers and acceptance of risk. IWB is defined as "the intentional creation, introduction, and application of new ideas within a work role, group or organization, to benefit the role performance, the group, or the organization" (Janssen, 2000, p. 288). By this definition, innovative behavior is restricted to the intentional efforts to provide beneficially original outcomes. De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) concretize IWB by defining the behavior to achieve initiation and intentional introduction of new and useful ideas, products, processes, or procedures.

The innovation behavior is considered to be a sequential process, that is, a multistage process in which the stages can overlap and vary (Kanter, 1988; Kleysen & Street, 2001; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Since the origin of the concept in the early 1980s, researchers within IWB have been more or less unanimous of the perception of IWB consisting of different stages, frequently referred to as dimensions (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). However, there are several theories regarding how many, and which, dimensions the concept involves, depending on the innovation process. Common for all is the perception of individual innovation being central and a part of the initial stage of the innovation process (Kleysen & Street, 2001; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Mumford (2000) claim that ultimately, the source of a new idea is the individual. Individual innovation is viewed as the adoption or production of useful ideas and idea implementation (Kanter, 1988), and encompasses the adaption of processes and products from both inside and outside the company (Scott and Bruce, 1994).

Some researchers emphasize the difference between employee creativity and employee innovation when regarding individual innovation, as these concepts are both related and frequently interchanged (Scott & Bruce, 1994; De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). Employee creativity is seen as the production of new and useful ideas concerning the operations of the company. However, employee innovation differs from creativity by the intent and purpose of creating some benefit, with a clear applied aim of resulting in an innovative output (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). In other words, the underlying reason for employee innovation is profit or some similar benefits for the company or the employee himself/herself.

2.3.1 The dimensions of innovative work behavior

The different perceptions of IWB are categorized into four main dimensions; Opportunity exploration, Idea generation, Championing and Application/implementation (Janssen, 2000; Kleysen & Street, 2001; De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010)

Opportunity exploration

The first stage of the innovation process is the stage of exploring and identifying opportunities. This stage involves problem recognition and is initiated by individual innovation (Scott and Bruce, 1994). In a literature review regarding IWB, Kleysen and Street (2001) identified four basic behaviors within the stage of exploring opportunities; Paying attention to opportunity

sources, looking for opportunities to innovate, recognizing opportunities and gathering information about opportunities. Opportunity recognition and the initiation of an innovation process can often be determined by chance as randomly discovering an opportunity or problem solving (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). Also, Drucker (1985) identified seven sources of opportunities, leading to opportunity exploration. These were, among others, changes in industrial- or/and market structures, changes in demographics, new knowledge, and opportunity recognition as a reaction to identified problems or causes of failure. Also, employee creativity can be considered as a crucial component of opportunity exploration and recognition, and a precipitating element for the initiation of the innovation process (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010).

Generativity/idea generation

The stage of idea generation is seen as the first step of exploiting the opportunities identified (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). It is the production of novel and useful ideas within any domain (Janssen, 2000). The behaviors identified within this stage are directed at generating and implementing a beneficial change of the company, its employees, products, services, and processes (Kleysen & Street, 2001). In other words, this stage involves taking the previously identified opportunity and turning it into an idea, concept, or solution (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Based on the existing literature, this stage can be considered to entail three basic behaviors encompassing generativity; generating ideas and solutions to opportunities, generating representations and categories of the opportunities, and generating associations and combinations of ideas and information (Kleysen & Street, 2001).

Championing

The stage of championing involves selling the idea and meeting the resistance to change by the company, other employees, and relevant people of interest (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Kleysen and Street (2001) argue that to champion the idea, it must be formed and defined. On this basis, the researchers propose an intermediate stage between idea generation and championing the idea, which is named the stage of the formative investigation. This stage involves behaviors regarding formulating, experimenting, and evaluating ideas and solutions before voicing the idea (Kleysen & Street, 2001).

The part of championing or promoting the idea is central to implement and push forward the idea. New products and services, representing an element of change, are by nature met by

resistance and skepticism (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). The promotion of an idea involves social engagement to find sponsors and backers for the idea, building a supportive coalition who will provide the necessary power for execution. A champion is described as a person who puts effort into realizing their ideas and bring them to life. The identified behaviors within this stage are directed towards execution and convincing and are categorized as mobilizing resources, persuading and influencing, pushing and negotiating, and challenging and risk-taking (Kleysen & Street, 2001).

Application/implementation

The last stage of IWB is where the idea is realized and put into practice (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Janssen, 2000). This can be done by building a mockup, model, or prototype, with the purpose of testing and experiencing, and after that ultimately be applied (Janssen, 2000; Kanter, 1988). This stage of applying the innovation consists of three main behaviors; implementing, modifying, and routinizing the product, service, or process (Kleysen & Street, 2001).

2.4 Theoretical framework

In order to capture all the relevant variables in the case study, the presented conceptualizations are summed up in a framework developed by the authors of this thesis.

2.4.1 Theoretical framework applied

The framework is a result of an extensive literature review conducted in 2018, where different scholars regarding intrapreneurship and activities were identified (Kristiansen & Kvarberg, 2018). By developing a framework comprising the related theories and putting them in the same context, the authors seek to present a complete overview of the intrapreneur and the conducted activities in an established firm.

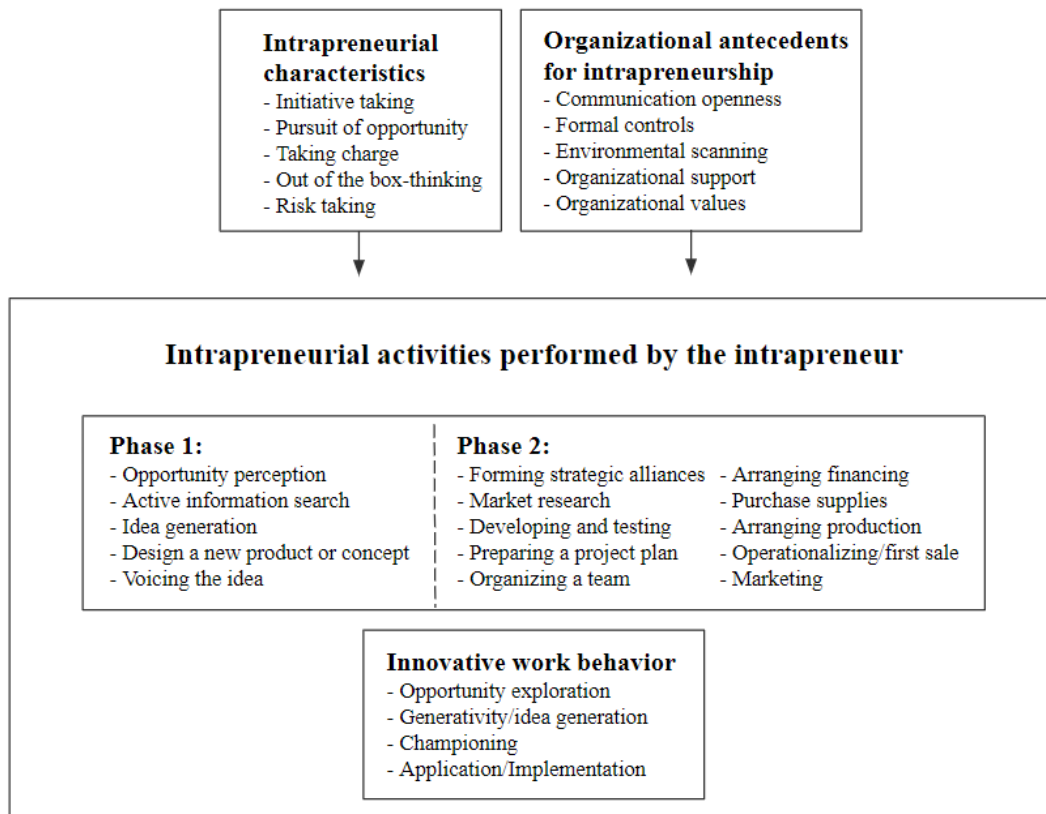


Figure 1: The figure shows the theoretical framework developed by the authors of this thesis. The arrows indicate that the intrapreneurial characteristic and organizational antecedents influence intrapreneurial activities.

The top of the figure shows two types of antecedents of intrapreneurship. The first is the intrapreneurial characteristics, which is the individual characteristics of the intrapreneur. How these characteristics and traits are part of the intrapreneur also have an impact on how the intrapreneur operates, and from this, how the intrapreneurial activities are carried out. The second antecedent is organizational, which are organizational enablers for intrapreneurship to take place. These antecedents are considered as the core of the organization, for example, involving how the communication in the firm is carried out or how the organization supports its employees. In this way, the intrapreneurial employees are influenced by how the firm they are working in operates.

The intrapreneurial activities that are carried out by the intrapreneur are shown as a part of the intrapreneur and divided into two phases. The theory of how the intrapreneurial activities look like is presented by Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Bosma et al., 2010) which shows how the theory suggests an intrapreneurial project to take place. Phase 1 shows the intrapreneurial activities as

the beginning of how an intrapreneurial project is carried out. It involves how the intrapreneur identifies an idea and the initiation of an intrapreneurial project. Further, phase 2 involves activities such as researching the market and finding a team who can work with this new idea.

This framework presents how the literature comprises the theory of the intrapreneur, what is considered to have an impact on how the intrapreneur conducts intrapreneurial activities, and what activities the intrapreneur is suggested to conduct. The concept of intrapreneurial activities presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) is by the authors' knowledge the only theory which intends to explain the activities performed by the intrapreneur. Therefore, it is used as the base for the applied framework in this study.

3. Method

In this chapter, the method and research design used for the thesis is explained. Further, the sources of evidence used in the research, as well as the acquisition of the empirical data, is presented. Finally, the quality of the findings is discussed.

3.1 Research design

The research question for this master thesis is: *how are intrapreneurial activities carried out by the intrapreneur in an established firm?* As the thesis involves “how” something works or takes place, a qualitative method is the most suitable choice (Yin, 2014). The research design for this study includes a single-case study with four embedded cases. The single-case is the Norwegian bank, DNB, while the embedded cases consist of four different intrapreneurs and their respective managers.

3.1.1 Single-case with embedded units

The research question for this thesis is focused on activities performed that cannot be controlled and are contemporary as they are still occurring and continuously evolving. In a situation like this, Yin (2009) suggests that a case study is the most applicable research method. Therefore, the researchers have conducted a single-case study. A single-case allows for a deeper understanding of an organization and its unique features, such as the organizational antecedents and the intrapreneurs. As the research question is directed towards intrapreneurs in an established firm, the case chosen was an organization with clear antecedents for intrapreneurship. The Norwegian bank DNB was considered as a highly relevant and ideal firm to explore, based on the theory of organizational antecedents. The organization has, during the past years, implemented a strategic development of moving from being a traditional banking system towards an innovative and forward-thinking complex banking system. This has led to several new products and services such as launching the payment application Vipps in 2015, changing the process of financial private transactions in Norway (DNB, 2019). These antecedents gave a clear indication of existing intrapreneurial activities. In addition, innovation is one of the outspoken focus of DNB, indicating a high level of innovation in the organization.

When defining a case study, it is essential to consider whether the case should be seen as a whole entity, or if the case should be seen with subunits and hereafter analyze these separately (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). According to Yin (2007), these different forms of case design are a holistic case approach and embedded case approach. The embedded case design is appropriate for descriptive studies where the aim is to describe the features, context, and the process of the phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Since the focus of the research question is on the intrapreneurs, an embedded case study was chosen. This use of the method has also shown clear similarities and differences of each unit for analysis. The chosen units consisted of four individual intrapreneurs and their respective middle managers in DNB, as illustrated in Figure 2. Although DNB is seen as an innovative organization with intrapreneurial antecedents, there are divisions within DNB that are not seemingly innovative. Therefore, the division of *Digital Innovation* was chosen as a context as this department has a clear focus on innovation in the everyday work.

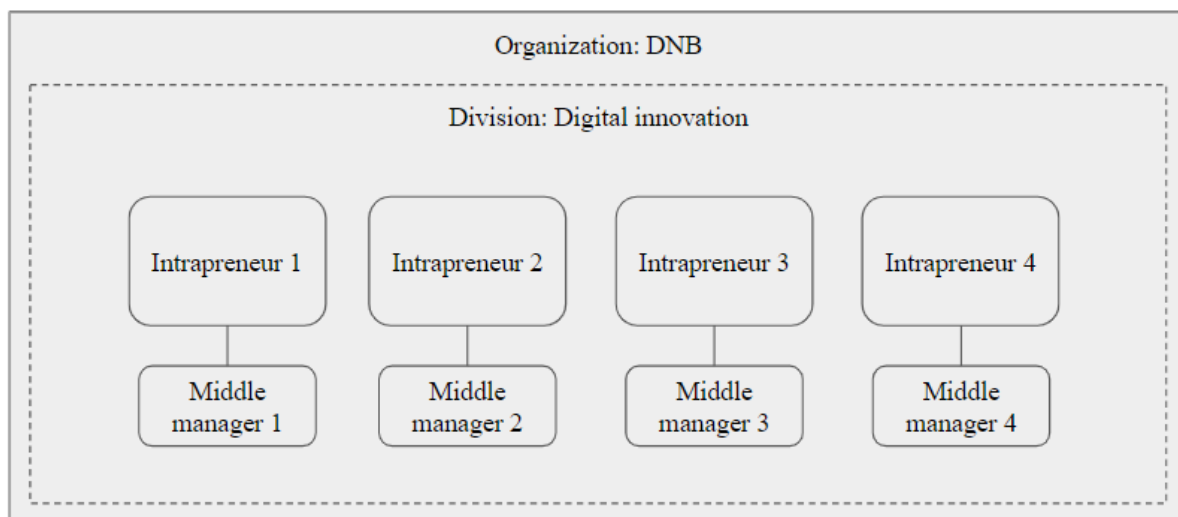


Figure 2: *The case design showing the case, DNB, and the intrapreneurs and middle managers as a part of the same division.*

DNB is the largest financial service group in Norway, offering a full range of financial services including savings, advisory services, loans, insurance, pension products, and corporate customers. With a history of 190 years within the financial service system, it ranks as the oldest private bank in Norway. The business areas of DNB are divided into three main categories; Customer areas, Product areas, and Staff and support units. In total, DNB has branches and representative offices in 23 locations internationally (DNB, 2019).

3.1.2 Criteria for selecting the intrapreneurs

In the literature of intrapreneurship, the intrapreneurs are explained as entrepreneurs in established firms (Åmo, 2010). From this, it was important for the sample to consist of people in DNB who had entrepreneurial traits, such as self-efficacy (Gielnik et al., 2015), and who could be said to be entrepreneurs from earlier experiences. By this, the sample had to consist of people who had experience from being a founder of a startup as well as possessing entrepreneurial traits. To find this kind of entrepreneur, the researchers contacted a Venture Creation program in Norway, as this is a study program aiming at educating entrepreneurs. The program teaches the students action-based entrepreneurship, and the expected outcome of this study program is considered to have a positive effect on the students' self-efficacy, action knowledge, and action planning - all entrepreneurial traits (Gielnik et al., 2015). A big part of the study program is for the students to create new ventures/startups themselves, making them entrepreneurs as they are founders of a new venture (Bjornali & Støren, 2012; Gartner, 1988)}. The entrepreneurs had to be employed in DNB and the department of Digital innovation. This meant that all intrapreneurs had the same antecedents and prerequisites for intrapreneurial activities to take place. However, the researchers set a criterion for the sample to consist of employees within different divisions to highlight variations in the organization as well as having a different experience from various startups, as these differences help to provide the study with a broader perspective (Palinkas et al., 2015). By contacting the faculty at the mentioned Venture Creation program, the researchers resulted in finding a sample of four intrapreneurs that fit the criteria, from now on called Intrapreneur 1, Intrapreneur 2, Intrapreneur 3, and Intrapreneur 4.

Intrapreneur 1 is working in the division of Strategic partnerships in DNB and has earlier experiences from founding a startup within water technology. Intrapreneur 2 is working in the division of Accelerate Innovation in DNB and has earlier experiences from founding a startup within education and learning. Intrapreneur 3 is working in the division of Retail in DNB and has earlier experiences from founding a startup within laser technology and Internet of Things. Intrapreneur 4 is working in the division of Operations Banking & Payments in DNB and has earlier experiences from founding a startup within artificial intelligence for media.

After selecting the sample of the intrapreneurs based on the criteria, the researchers did a short phone call with all four intrapreneurs, to get insight into their work and respective role in the

organization. This was done to verify that they could be considered within the criteria of being intrapreneurs. The phone call included questions about the intrapreneurs daily work and tasks and verifying their contribution to the study.

3.1.3 Middle managers

In addition to the selected intrapreneurs, the sample also consisted of the intrapreneurs' middle managers to get both a broader and deeper perspective of the intrapreneurial activities. The respective middle managers were chosen as they would provide the study with verifications of the intrapreneurs' statements and to contribute to the findings from a managers perspective (Robinson, 2014). The middle managers were contacted either by email or by phone. The researchers found the middle managers to assist with an in-depth interpretation of the activities conducted by the intrapreneurs as well as a different point of view, which together provided a new perspective for the analysis and deeper understanding of the activities.

3.2 Data acquisition

The data acquisition for this thesis has consisted of two sources of research, namely semi-structured interviews and illustrations of intrapreneurial projects. Both interviews and illustration can provide the original perception of subjects, and can, therefore, provide the study with both targeted and insightful data (Yin, 2009).

The interviews were conducted on both the intrapreneurs and their middle managers with two different interview guides. Dubois and Gadde (2002) explain semi-structured interviews helping the researchers of a thesis to expand their understanding of the research subjects. Therefore, the researchers found semi-structured interviews as the most suitable for the thesis. By interviewing in such a way, the in-depth discussion was enabled during the interviews. This was an effective way of discovering new information as well as to dig deeper into the intrapreneurial activities that the intrapreneurs would mention. The semi-structured method made it possible for the respondents to tell a story from their experience. Both authors were present during the interviews to complement each other, as recommended by Eisenhardt (1989). The interviews were audio recorded, and after that, transcribed. One researcher had the role as the primary interviewer and was responsible for bringing the conversation forward,

while the other researcher had the task of checking that every theme was approached and supplied with questions when necessary.

By having two different interview guides, the authors could more easily aim the interview directly to the respondents. Relevant literature from intrapreneurship theory, intrapreneurial antecedents, and innovative work behavior have assisted in the making of both interview guides as they were made with open and non-leading questions as recommended by Flick (2014). The researchers conducted two pilot interviews to test the interview guides. This is in line with what Yin (2009) suggests improving the interview guide. Based on each pilot testing, the interview guides were slightly altered and improved. Although the guides were different, they both consisted of three parts, as recommended by Tjora (2014). The first part consisted of questions regarding their working life. The second part contained questions that demanded a high degree of reflection from the interviewees (Tjora, 2012). This included questions where the focus was on getting an overall understanding of the projects they were working on. The last part consisted of items that normalized the situation, including information regarding what the researchers would do with the material.

As the intrapreneurs are considered to have specific knowledge and experience regarding the phenomenon, the intrapreneurs were the primary interview objects for this master thesis. The interview guide for the intrapreneurs included their working behavior and tasks, indirectly addressing elements from the framework without mentioning it explicitly. Also, the interview guide for the intrapreneurs included asking the intrapreneurs to illustrate a process of an intrapreneurial project. Illustrating and drawing as an interview technique is considered as an effective way of noticing differences and visualizing complex processes (Askheim & Grenness, 2008). This way of illustrating the working method of an intrapreneurial project gained insight into the study both for the intrapreneurs themselves as well as for the researchers. When illustrating a project, the intrapreneurs seemed to talk more freely, and it was easier to hold track of the whole project with a guideline to refer to. The illustration-method also made it easier to bring back already mentioned experiences, both for the intrapreneurs and the researchers as it was more visual and clearer from the drawing.

<p>Intrapreneur</p> <p><i>Part 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>How long have you worked in DNB?</i> - <i>Could you tell us about your employment?</i> - <i>A typical day at the job?</i> - <i>Typical work activities?</i> - <i>What is the most exciting about your job?</i> <p><i>Part 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Could you tell us about different projects you have been working on?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What kind of project, where did you start, where did it end?</i> - <i>What role did you have?</i> - <i>What was your most important work in this project?</i> - <i>Could you illustrate the timeline of the project while talking about it.</i> - <i>Have you ever found improvements (internal/external) and done something about it?</i> - <i>Have you ever done activities outside the confines of your working agreement?</i> <p><i>Part 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Can we keep the drawing for use in the thesis?</i> - <i>Is it possible to call you later in case of further questions?</i>

Figure 3: Parts of the interview guide for the intrapreneurs.

The interviews of the middle managers served as complementary and verification of the collected data from the intrapreneurs, as well as enlightening new aspects of the intrapreneurs. This interview guide included questions regarding the intrapreneurs as employees from the middle manager's point of view, as well as some questions regarding the organizational antecedents for intrapreneurship and how the managers facilitated for the intrapreneurs, as shown in Figure 4.

<p>Middle Manager</p> <p><i>Part 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What division are you leader for?</i> - <i>How long have you been the leader for Intrapreneur (name of intrapreneur).</i> <p><i>Part 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Could you explain how Intrapreneur is as an employee?</i> - <i>What kind of activities does he/she mostly perform in the job?</i> - <i>Are there things about Intrapreneur that distinguished him/her from other employees?</i> - <i>Ask about the project from the interview with Intrapreneur:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What was his/her most important role?</i> - <i>What activities did he/she do?</i> - <i>How did he/she perform these activities?</i> <p><i>Part 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Is it possible to call you later in case of further questions?</i>
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Figure 4: Parts of the interview guide for the middle managers.

3.3 Analysis of data

For the study to answer the research question, the analysis was with the theoretical framework from Chapter 2 as a base. The empirical data has been used to better understand the phenomenon of intrapreneurial activities.

All interviews were transcribed within one week. The transcription was done manually by the researchers themselves to ensure high quality and to ensure that all nuances from the interviews were taken into consideration. These nuances (tone of voice, stressed voice, irony, etc.) can be challenging to understand for someone who was not present during the interview, for example, if the interview object was smiling or laughing while making a statement. These are small and important clues ensuring a description of the data material that is consistent with the conversation that took place. The interviews were transcribed and uploaded to NVivo to analyze the data, as suggested by Dubois and Gadde (2002). By using NVivo, the researchers made codes based on the framework from Chapter 2 and structured and categorized the data. The researchers started this coding separately on each interview, and thereafter went through all the material and did the final coding together. This ensured that all elements of relevance

were included in the analysis ensuring that all coded references were by the definition of the codes and increasing the validity.

The coding of the transcripts was based on the framework from Chapter 2 with the underlying theories. The codes were mainly focused on the intrapreneur and the intrapreneurs' activities. These codes consisted of characteristics of the intrapreneur (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008), innovative work behavior (Janssen, 2000; Kleysen & Street, 2001; De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010), and the two phases of intrapreneurship (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008; Bosma et al., 2010), all shown in Table 1. However, as the theory of intrapreneurship also includes the context of the person and organization, the codes consisted of organizational antecedents (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Turro et al., 2016), as presented in Table 1. All of the theories of the underlying codes are described in Chapter 2 as well as presented in the framework from Section 2.4.1.

Categories of codes					
	Characteristics of the intrapreneur	Phase 1	Phase 2	Innovative work behavior	Antecedents for intrapreneurship
<i>Codes</i>	<i>Initiative taking</i>	<i>Opportunity perception</i>	<i>Forming strategic alliances</i>	<i>Opportunity exploration</i>	<i>Communication openness</i>
	<i>Pursuit of opportunity</i>	<i>Active information search</i>	<i>Market research</i>	<i>Idea generation</i>	<i>Formal controls</i>
	<i>Taking charge</i>	<i>Idea generation</i>	<i>Developing and testing</i>	<i>Championing</i>	<i>Environmental scanning</i>
	<i>Out of the box thinking</i>	<i>Design a new product or concept</i>	<i>Preparing a project plan</i>	<i>Application/ implement</i>	<i>Organizational support</i>
	<i>Risk-taking</i>	<i>Voicing the idea</i>	<i>Organizing a team</i>		<i>Organizational values</i>
			<i>Arranging finance</i>		
			<i>Arranging production</i>		
			<i>Purchase supplies</i>		
			<i>First sale</i>		
			<i>Marketing</i>		

Table 2: Table showing the codes used for the analysis of the data with the underlying theories behind them.

Some of the codes seemed to be highly relevant, recurring several times with all respondents, while some of the codes were irrelevant as they never occurred in any of the interviews. At the same time, some of the codes seemed to be overlapping and happening simultaneously. The researchers went through the most evident findings, looking at similarities and differences between the codes and discussed the results. The focus of the codes in the analysis was mostly directed to the intrapreneur's characteristics, the different activities in phase 1, and the antecedents for intrapreneurship, as these were the codes that could show apparent nuances or had a definite impact on the intrapreneurship in the established organization. This was the foundation for the study's findings and analysis.

3.4 Reflections and evaluation of the method

The quality of the method used for this thesis depends on the trustworthiness of the study (Halldorsson & Aastrup, 2003). The trustworthiness is specified into four components of *credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ensuring the *credibility* of the data is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness in a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The credibility can be seen as a parallel to the internal validity of the study (Halldorsson & Aastrup, 2003). The validity of a study depends on how/in what degree the study is covering the construct of interest (Yin, 2009). The researchers have collected data from various sources such as from the intrapreneurs, the middle managers, and by illustrations of intrapreneurial projects. In this study, the researchers have also cross-checked the data and interpretations. Both researchers went through the transcriptions to minimize the possibility of false reporting or to misrepresent a perspective.

Transferability is related to the external validity of a study and includes the study's ability to make general claims about the world (Halldorsson & Aastrup, 2003). The possibility to generalize by this case study is limited as the data is collected from a unique case. However, the intrapreneurs in this study are chosen by criteria set by the researchers. Also, the case is chosen from organizational antecedents. Hence, the study consists of a purposive sample which can gain relevance for the transferability of the study.

The *dependability* of the study is related to reliability and the stability of the data through time (Halldorsson & Aastrup, 2003). To make the collected data consistent, the interview guides and the pilot interviews, have contributed to limiting potential sources of error by adding the lead in the interviews to the respondents, while at the same time including the most important themes from the framework presented in Chapter 2.

Conformability is related to the researcher's bias, objectivity, and the degree of neutrality (Halldorsson & Aastrup, 2003). The researchers of this study were aware of their role as researchers and have also offered a detailed description of the methodology used for this thesis.

4. Findings

In this chapter, the empirical findings from the interviews are presented. Firstly, the findings related to the research question of how intrapreneurship seems to be carried out is presented, emphasizing on the activities referred to by the interviewees. Thereafter, other interesting findings related to the intrapreneur and the intrapreneurial context are presented.

4.1 Carrying out intrapreneurship

In this part, the empirical findings regarding how intrapreneurship is carried out by the intrapreneurs are elaborated. The findings show examples that most of the activities may take place several times during an intrapreneurial project. There are also examples of different manners in solving similar tasks, and by this, the activities are seemingly carried out in several ways.

4.1.1 Searching for information

The findings show that the information search is done actively by the intrapreneurs, both by using external sources and internal sources. This is done to gather enough information about an idea or problem, better understand the stakeholders' interest, and to structure further steps for carrying out the idea. The gathering and analyzing of information are done as preparatory work and as part of searching for ideas and opportunities, as well as a part of defining an idea and for development of a final product or service. In other words, the actions of information search take place several times during a project.

4.1.1.1 External information

The intrapreneurs explain the external information search as searching towards the relevant stakeholders, customers, and market outside the firm. Intrapreneur 1 referred to this as mapping out the field of existing solutions, and identifying the needs of both the subcontractor and the customer: "Finding information, what do they need? What isn't good enough today?". This is by Intrapreneur 1 considered to be important to further identify new opportunities. Middle Manager 1 explained identifying the customer problem as a highly valuable activity: "To dig

into the underlying problem, especially towards the customer”, and elaborated this as one of the core attributes of Intrapreneur 1. In addition, he explained another example of Intrapreneur 1 finding the core of the problem by talking to, interviewing, and observing the customer. Middle Manager 3 also addressed involving and focusing on the end-user or/and customer as an essential source of information: “Then we work structurally with finding the customer needs and who the customer is.”

Searching for external information also involves engaging other stakeholders, such as potential partners and experts. Intrapreneur 4 mentioned dialogue and meetings with experts within different fields of expertise to be an important source of information to identify needs and possible improvements. This also involves inviting external experts and engaging them throughout the intrapreneurial project. Intrapreneur 4 talked about getting information from experts: “We were inviting experts who we used for discussions, as well as draining them for information.” All intrapreneurs stated the time spent on speaking with stakeholders as a valuable source of information. As for Intrapreneur 3, being outside the office, engaging with customers, partners, and other relevant stakeholders is referred to as one of his main tasks at the workplace. This involves networking and gathering information, which is further used to identify possible collaborations, partnerships, new technology, and improvements in processes. Intrapreneur 3 referred to several cases: “We were out at Maxbo¹ and XXL², speaking directly to the customer,” where this had been the primary source of finding new opportunities and products.

4.1.1.2 Internal information

The other source of information is directed towards the internal sources of information. Based on feedback from Intrapreneur 1 and Intrapreneur 3, talking to internal resources is the first step when gathering information. Intrapreneur 1 highlights the benefits of being in the context of an established organization, by obtaining internal resources in terms of knowledge and experience: “We discuss internally.” The discussion is explained by several of the intrapreneurs as often taking place in a group of colleagues and teammates, but also on some occasions, the discussion includes the leaders. This is described as a valuable source of information by both

¹ Norwegian warehouse

² Norwegian sport store

the intrapreneurs and middle managers and is also referred to as an easily accessed source of information. Intrapreneur 3 explains the information flow provided by the leaders by: “We’ve taken it [the first draft of an idea] to the leader group, and then they have had the chance to discuss it and give us feedback and input.” Furthermore, the internal aspect of searching for information involves looking into internal processes and ways of doing things. Intrapreneur 2 referred to one example of this internal investigation by: “Mapping out the innovation portfolio in DNB,” where he was looking at the overall internal innovation performance.

4.1.2 Identification of an opportunity or a problem

The findings show that the intrapreneurial projects are initiated by firstly identifying an opportunity or problem, often as a result of acquiring some sort of new information. Regarding the source of opportunities, Middle Manager 2 emphasized the role of the customers and end-users as important: “We work structured by finding the customer needs and who the customer is.” Being out of the office, actively searching for information and inspiration is by Intrapreneur 3, the main source of opportunities identified. He described that meeting industry actors allowed him to see opportunities and explained a case where he found an opportunity outside the working place: “This one could be a good opportunity for us to join.” Intrapreneur 3 mostly focuses on external opportunities and is consequently seeking information that can lead to new collaborations, partnerships, products, or improvements in-house.

However, the origin of the opportunity varies between the intrapreneurs, and the findings indicate that not all intrapreneurs identify the opportunities or problems themselves. Intrapreneur 4 explained: “We have a system where there are plenty of ideas,” when speaking of the source of opportunities and new ideas. Therefore, some of the intrapreneurs appear to mostly work with ideas identified by others within the firm. Middle Manager 2 exemplifies the role of other employees in identifying opportunities or problems by: “We have people in our division who works with market insight and who follows trends and what is happening in the big world.” When addressing the identification of new opportunities, Intrapreneur 1 referred to her role as being moreover directed towards taking already identified opportunities to the next step and: “Not identifying them myself.”

As for the intrapreneurs who do identify opportunities or problems themselves, the majority involves identification of internal opportunities or problems and not external ones. Intrapreneur 2 stated the importance of not only focusing on innovation as the creation of new products: “[What is also important is] internal processes; how do we develop our co-workers.” Middle Manager 2 emphasized this to be one of the core attributes of Intrapreneur 2 and mentioned: “He is a bit [focused on] improving processes. What he does now (...) will affect the culture in DNB, so I think you can be intrapreneurial through changing the culture.” At the same time, Middle Manager 4 highlighted Intrapreneur 4 to continuously question decisions, methods, and processes as a vital source of identifying internal opportunities of improvement: “She is incredibly good at questioning and challenging others (...) she stops and wants to understand the whole situation before moving on”.

4.1.3 Information handling and idea development

Depending on the origin of the opportunity or problem identified, the intrapreneurs seem to handle the information and forming the ideas differently. In all cases, developing the idea based on gathered information involves several people and is not conducted solely by the intrapreneur him/herself. Intrapreneur 1 and 4 explained the information handling as mostly meaning actions related to sorting out the previously gathered information. In both cases, these actions were primarily conducted in teams of two to five people. Intrapreneur 1 described the information handling as discussing questions such as: “What do we include today? What do we know of that needs to be included? (...) what do we want, what do we know, and what do we think?” All intrapreneurs use the dynamics of teamwork, brainstorming, and discussions to define the elements of the idea, with the user-perspective in focus.

After gathering the information, the intrapreneurs emphasize the need for structuring the information and building a basis of the different elements to start forming the idea. Intrapreneur 1 described this activity as forming a logical structure and finding a way to present it by: “creating texts and content proposal, [and] making rough drafts.” Intrapreneur 4 described the same sort of actions including sketches and storyboards, as a phase before making a prototype, where this should include: “What you in detail picture for the prototype.” This illustrates how the intrapreneurs work in a structured way by building the idea and forming the concept from the collected information. For all intrapreneurs, constant dialogue with relevant stakeholders,

such as customers, developers, and the leaderboard is a highly necessary action when structuring the relevant information and forming the idea. Intrapreneur 2 described how he interviewed 15 participants in an acceleration program, 15 stakeholders as well as members of an executive team to understand the user-perspective fully. Intrapreneur 1 stated: “There are several processes to be done before you end up with a final idea,” referring to the information handling and involvement of customers, leaderboards and other relevant stakeholders. She explained it as a highly important part, while also being very resource demanding. However, the process of involving relevant stakeholders as well as structuring information is present in all cases.

4.1.4 Iterations and user-testing while forming the idea

When designing a new product or concept, the involvement of users and potential customers is the largest common denominator within the findings. The feedback from the users and customers are used for further iterations of an idea and is by far one of the most frequent actions of the daily work of the intrapreneurs. Intrapreneur 3 even emphasized the amount of time spent on the users and prototyping in his everyday work: “What I do the most is to design user surveys and to try to create some prototypes.” The activities of obtaining feedback from the users and customers are done in several manners by the intrapreneurs such as interviews, observations, and user-testing.

Intrapreneur 4 explained how she and her team tested a prototype: “By filming with a mobile phone, and also the face of the test person. Then, some of the others are in another room taking notes.” Intrapreneur 1, 3, and 4 referred to quantitative testing as the most conducted method. Intrapreneur 2, on the other hand, said: “So, in the end, it turned out to be nine months where we conducted experiments and gathered data,” when explaining the designing process of a new concept. Here, he used a moreover qualitative approach when gathering information towards designing the concept and making iterations.

After collecting feedback from users and customers by interviews, tests, or observation, the next step for all the intrapreneurs is to use this feedback for further iteration of the idea. Intrapreneur 4 described the iteration as: “Just narrowing and focusing the prototype even further.” Intrapreneur 1 explained this necessity of iterating several times by: “Based on this

feedback, right, we had to do iterations, many iterations.” This context of feedback and iteration is conducted in a loop by all intrapreneurs and is hardly something that takes place only once.

4.1.5 The sequence of intrapreneurial activities

All of the four intrapreneurs were asked to illustrate an intrapreneurial project in which they had participated. The findings show that no intrapreneurial project is identical. Hence, the activities do not follow a specific order and may take place several times during a project. However, there are similarities between the different projects, such as starting with information search or idea generation. At times the intrapreneurs referred to the activities as overlapping, taking place simultaneously or even complimenting each other. The illustrations are digitized by the researchers to make them comparable. The illustrations show the project from the point where the intrapreneurs started until leaving the project. Solely Intrapreneur 2 referred to a project in which he got to the point where the project was implemented. The other intrapreneurs are either still working on the project or left the project before it was finished.

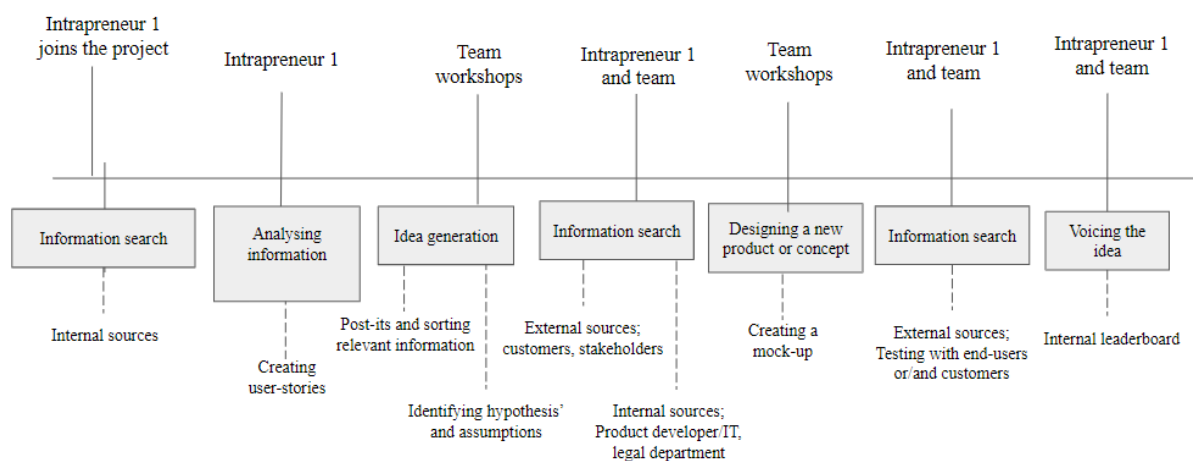


Figure 5: Intrapreneur 1's illustration of the intrapreneurial project.

As shown in Figure 5, Intrapreneur 1 joined the project after the other teammates conducted the first stages. She started by finding information from internal resources and explained this as: “To get an overview of the project.” She then began creating a user-story by analyzing all the information collected by both herself and from her teammates. The team continued with sorting out relevant information and identifying hypothesis and assumptions as a part of the idea generation. Further, they conducted another information search, based on the premises which were identified, both from external and internal resources. When obtaining sufficient

and relevant information, the next activity was designing the new product by creating a mock-up. Further, this was tested by end-users. After the testing, the concept was presented to an internal leaderboard for further feedback and iterations.

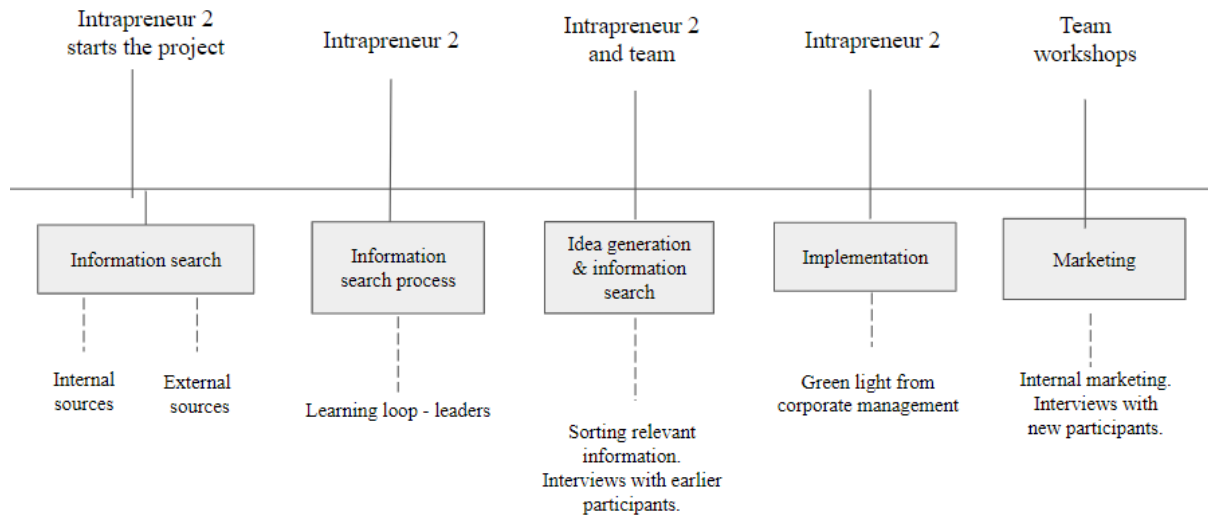


Figure 6: Intrapreneur 2's illustration of the intrapreneurial project.

Figure 6 illustrates how Intrapreneur 2 started the project by doing extensive information search, both internally and externally. The team started by consisting of several people including the intrapreneur: “A startup (...) and two others and me”. However, during the process, the other teammates left the project due to different reasons. Intrapreneur 2 then collected the necessary information and took the project further by involving his respective leaders. Further, Intrapreneur 2 started interviewing stakeholders and earlier participants of the project to gather all information and relevant elements for the project. When receiving the green light from the upper management to implement the idea and take the project further, Intrapreneur 2 initiates an internal marketing process. This activity was undertaken to generate internal support and engagement regarding the project, as well as implementing the idea.

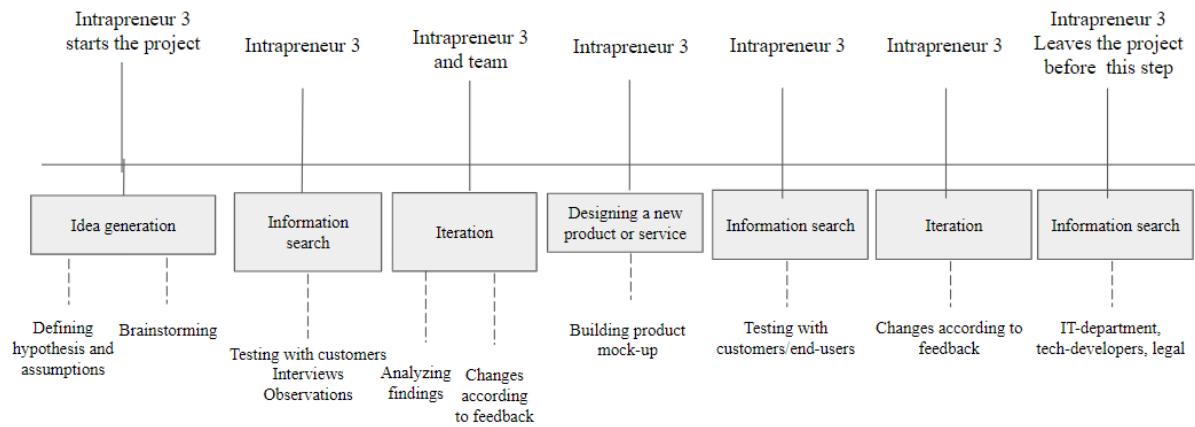


Figure 7: Intrapreneur 3’s illustration of the intrapreneurial project.

In Figure 7 it is illustrated how Intrapreneur 3 started with idea generation, including: “A billion post-it with lots of assumptions.” After noting assumptions and hypothesis, Intrapreneur 3 conducted an external information search by testing and doing interviews and observations with potential customers. Intrapreneur 3 and his team used this information for further iterations and started building a product mock-up. Further, the iterations were tested with customers and led to the next iterations and changes according to the feedback from the customers. Intrapreneur 3 left the project before even more information search was conducted.

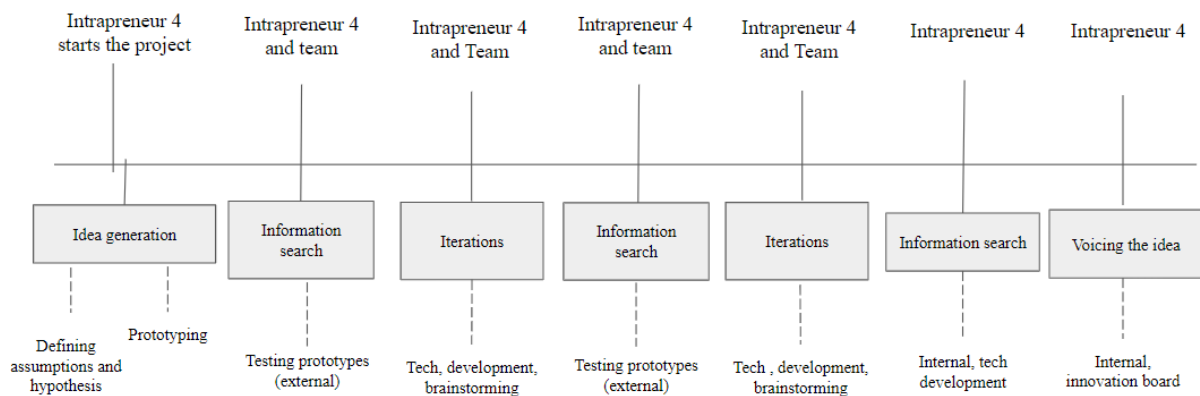


Figure 8: Intrapreneur 4’s illustration of the intrapreneurial project.

Figure 8 shows that Intrapreneur 4 started with idea generation and defining assumptions while also making early basic prototypes. She and her team continued with information search by testing with customers: “Actually making a prototype, finding customers and then testing with five customers.” Intrapreneur 4 worked closely with her team throughout the project and

continued with iterations based on the feedback from the testing. After the iteration and brainstorming were done, they would go out and test the new prototype with the customers once again. Iterations were done once more before Intrapreneur 4 took the next step to gather information internally within the organization. At last, she and her leader presented the idea and result of the testing for the internal innovation board.

4.1.6 Summary - carrying out intrapreneurship

The findings show the information search to happen regularly among all of the intrapreneurs, both internally and externally, to gain all information needed for further developing an idea. As for identifying opportunities or problems, the intrapreneurs most often identify internal problems within the organization. However, the organization does facilitate the intrapreneurs to work with external opportunities identified by others. When forming these opportunities into ideas, based on the information gathered, this often involves a team and is not conducted solely by the intrapreneur. Feedback from users and customers is a highly important part of the intrapreneurs work and is used as a base by the intrapreneurs to conduct iterations and make several prototypes and tests. Every intrapreneurial project is different, but there are similarities regarding the cycles between information search, idea generation, and iterations.

4.2 The intrapreneur

In this part, the findings related to the commonalities identified between the intrapreneurs are presented. The findings show similarities in actions and behaviors exhibited by the intrapreneurs and are considered as related to how they carry out intrapreneurship.

4.2.1 Driving force

Common for all intrapreneurs are the many examples of leading forward, by either taking initiative or taking charge. Here, the findings reveal that all intrapreneurs take actions beyond what is expected from their respective employment. However, the way it is done varies by occurring in different manners. Mostly, the initiatives involve internal actions, such as suggestions for improvements. For example, Intrapreneur 1 emphasizes her initiative by

“getting things done,” something her manager is impressed by: “she takes challenges way beyond what to expect, especially considering her just being here for half a year.”

The findings indicate differences between the intrapreneurs and other employees regarding the driving force. Middle Manager 2 states the difference between the employees as the intrapreneur being more active with a driving force: “Some are more passive. So [Intrapreneur 2] is one of the active ones, I feel. He has a will, a driving force.” Both Intrapreneur 2 and 4 were referred to like people who ask questions regarding how things are done, not accepting things the way they are, and by this continuous initiating change. Intrapreneur 2 explained himself as challenging the everyday work: “I’m all about challenging things and doing them differently.”

4.2.2 Taking action

Another commonality of the intrapreneurs is the initiative taken by themselves. The intrapreneurs speak freely about initiatives they have taken on their own. For example, Intrapreneur 4 mentioned an initiative taken outside her role in the company when arranging a flash mob in the cafeteria: “This is the sort of thing where I said, ‘we should just do it,’ and then we started recruiting and engaging people.” The initiatives taken by the intrapreneurs range from arranging workshops and implementing new working methods, to changing internal meeting routines. The findings give several examples of the intrapreneurs finding solutions for a better working place, taking action, and doing something about it.

4.2.3 Taking charge

From the findings, the intrapreneurs seem to be comfortable having responsibility and taking charge. Although, there is little evidence of them taking charge when not assigned to, or when not given the role as a leader. To make things happen, all intrapreneurs referred to cases in which they unsolicited had taken charge in different situations. However, in many of the cases, they were assigned the responsibility as a part of their job. Intrapreneur 4 explained her level of responsibility: “I already had the responsibility of ensuring that the project went well.” Intrapreneur 3 said: “You may say that I work a lot with coordinating initiatives,” as an example of being in charge of several elements. Both intrapreneurs referred to cases where the

responsibility of taking charge already was assigned. Nevertheless, they appear to be comfortable having responsibility and taking charge of the situation. There are also some examples of them taking charge unsolicited. Middle Manager 1 described Intrapreneur 1 as a leader by saying: “She, being a leader, and I think it’s just as much about taking responsibility and taking charge in getting things done.”

4.2.4 Fighting for the idea

Another central finding discovered throughout the interviews was the intrapreneurs ability to seem unafraid and to share their opinions and fight for them willingly. Intrapreneur 2 described a case where the leaders had discontinued a project. He disagreed to the decision and explained: “So then, a situation occurred, in which I didn’t necessarily do things without permission. I was originally allowed to do it before, but things had changed, therefore, we had to meet in the middle.” Middle Manager 2 emphasized Intrapreneur 2 as finding ways of doing things, not being easily stopped: “He has been working with trying to get a certain area of competence on the agenda, in which he has received some resistance.” Middle Manager 2 also referred to a case in which Intrapreneur 2 had gone behind her back and directly to the upper leader, to push the idea forward. Middle Manager 4 draws a similar picture of Intrapreneur 4, an employee who is not afraid of going up against her manager. He explained: “We’ve had our fights. And that is how it is supposed to be.” All middle managers refer to the persistence of the intrapreneurs as an important ability in creating an innovative culture. Middle Manager 2 even states the resistance the intrapreneurs meet as: “a bit healthy.”

4.2.5 Summary - The intrapreneur

The findings show that the intrapreneurs easily take the initiative, action, or charge in different settings. This is also emphasized by the middle managers as they seem impressed by how the intrapreneurs take action beyond what is expected by the employment. However, the findings show that they rarely take charge when not assigned to. Meanwhile, all intrapreneurs were referred to as natural leaders and were willing to fight for their ideas and share their opinions; in some cases, they even go untraditional ways for pushing their ideas forward.

4.3 Intrapreneurial context

Several organizational elements appear to have an influence on the level of intrapreneurship and how the intrapreneurs exhibit intrapreneurial activities. Some are referred to as positive drivers by the intrapreneurs while others are considered as hinders.

4.3.2 Communication and access to information

The context of a large organization is referred to as an important source of information and access to resources are described as highly valuable by both the intrapreneurs and the middle managers. The organization is described as full of internal resources, and Middle Manager 2 emphasized the value of easy access to a lot of internal competence. Intrapreneur 1 referred to internal sources of information as the first step in a new project. She also referred to the process of finding new information and getting an overview of what had been done earlier in similar settings as useful. All though internal resources are seen as a major source of information, there are examples that indicate difficulties utilizing all the internal resources, due to its broad scope. Intrapreneur 3 explained the difficulties of finding the right resources in a big and complex organization: “You have to find the right people to contact within the organization. That is challenging. There are many thousand employees and a bunch of different divisions.” This was addressed as at times a hinder of effective processes. At the same time, he expressed the good feedback when finding the right sources of information: “They are very open, at least among the ones I’ve met there has been a high degree of openness regarding new things.”

Learning is another element occurring in the context of information sharing. Some of the intrapreneurs highlight the value and importance of the focus on development and learning as a part of accessing information. Another way of sharing knowledge and information is described through an initiative called *Max out Mondays*, by Middle Manager 4: “Because when several of us are located at different projects everywhere, we try to get one day together where we work with stuff like how to improve the processes we work with, what does the pipeline look like, how do the idea generation look.”

4.3.3 Organizational structure and control

The mechanism of a large organization with an extensive hierarchy and stakeholders is referred to as both positive and negative towards intrapreneurial activities.

When explaining how decisions are made on a strategical foundation, more or less without regard to the actual idea or problem identified, Intrapreneur 1 elaborated: “You have to deal with what the leaderboard says.” The intrapreneurs further explain the elements regarding the organizational control as frustrating, and Intrapreneur 3 exemplified it as: “Complicated, a lot of politics and several stakeholders.” The main supervisory board the intrapreneurs are affected by is the *Innovation board*. Intrapreneur 4 described this board as prioritizing the focus of the intrapreneurs and what to consider of strategic importance.

All intrapreneurs had been in contact with the Innovation board, with both good and bad experiences. Intrapreneur 3 referred to a case in which the Innovation board was not ready for the idea they had been working on: “We had to postpone everything.” In this case, the slowness of the Innovation board served a hindering role in the project. It was discussed by several intrapreneurs that the bureaucracy and politics within the organization were extremely time demanding. At the same time, Intrapreneur 1 highlighted a case in which the leaderboard had come through and forced the project to move one. This was referred to as an example of constructive formal control and organizational structure.

Also, some intrapreneurs referred to initiatives taken to utilize the benefits of being in the context of a large organization. Middle Manager 4 even explained the structure in his division as: “Totally flat. Sometimes, Intrapreneur 4 can come to me and comment on how I spend my time.” This was highlighted as a positive element of the organizational structure, and facilitation for intrapreneurship.

4.3.4 Organizational facilitation for intrapreneurship

The intrapreneurial activities seem to depend on how the organization facilitates for them to take place. An essential element throughout the findings is that the intrapreneurs can move around within the organization and have the freedom to try out new things. Middle Manager 1 explained how this freedom could make the intrapreneurs more independent with a broader

network and experiences, leading Intrapreneur 1 to: “Be as efficient as possible in the role she will have in the long term.” Intrapreneur 3 referred to the work situation as: “Autonomy and the possibility to run by ourselves.” At the same time, the middle managers also explained the structural support for intrapreneurship as important for it to take place. Middle Manager 2 explained the freedom for the intrapreneurs to find their ways of doing things as: “Letting them be the intrapreneurs.” She also highlighted room for failure and encouraging new projects as necessary for the intrapreneurial initiatives. As a result of the facilitation, the main work task of Intrapreneur 2 is to facilitate intrapreneurial activities for others within the organization. Therefore, it appears to be outspoken openness and willingness for intrapreneurial activities from the organizational perspective, being an area of focus from a strategic perspective.

4.3.5 Summary - intrapreneurial context

The intrapreneurial activities seem to depend on how the organization facilitates for them to take place. The findings show that the intrapreneurs benefit from the context of a large organization as to the easy access to resources and information. Learning within the organization is also highlighted as a crucial part of organizational support. Meanwhile, the context of a large organization with its hierarchy and many stakeholders is referred to as both positive and negative towards intrapreneurial activities.

5. Analysis

In this chapter, the framework presented in Chapter 2 will be used to analyze some of the most interesting findings from the conducted study. By applying the theoretical framework to the empirical findings, the authors aim to identify to what extent the proposed theory is applicable for the case study of DNB. The analysis will be done in accordance with the framework, firstly looking into the intrapreneurial activities and the way the findings suggest that they are carried out. Thereafter, the other elements in the framework regarding intrapreneurial characteristics and organizational antecedents are analyzed.

5.1 Intrapreneurial activities

The theory of intrapreneurial activities proposed by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) involves 15 activities leading to intrapreneurship. The findings indicate that in the case of DNB, not all activities were present in the work of the intrapreneurs. Mainly activities found in Phase 1 (Visioning and imagination) were the most performed activities, whereas barely any activities found in Phase 2 (Preparation and emerging exploitation) were identified. Activities from Phase 2, such as organizing a team, marketing, purchasing supplies, and operationalizing/the first sale was not identified at any of the cases mentioned by the intrapreneurs or their middle managers. At the same time, activities found in Phase 1, such as active information search and idea generation was identified at several times and in several cases. In the following subsection, the findings from some of the most conducted activities will be further analyzed.

5.1.1 Opportunity perception

De Jong and Wennekers (2008) considers the activity of opportunity perception to involve identifying a new opportunity or problem and can be done through, for example, randomly discovering an opportunity or as a result of problem-solving (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). According to Kleysen and Street (2001), exploring opportunities involves paying attention and recognizing opportunity sources and gathering information about opportunities. The findings indicate that the intrapreneurs in DNB do identify problems and opportunities both externally and internally. Zahra (1991) emphasizes an overall focus on environmental scanning as an organizational driver for innovation and intrapreneurship. The external environment was

highlighted as an area of focus for the intrapreneurs, especially Intrapreneur 3 who had this as his main work task. As for the internal opportunities, these were mostly related to upgrading solutions, internal methods, and processes within DNB.

In the theory of intrapreneurial activities, the intrapreneur is expected to identify opportunities to initiate an intrapreneurial project (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). However, researchers such as Antoncic and Hisrich (2001) take into account that intrapreneurship also involves situations in which the intrapreneurs work with cases based on ideas that are not generated by the intrapreneurs themselves. The findings indicate that the intrapreneurs in the context of DNB do not perform the activity of opportunity perception as much as suggested by the literature of De Jong and Wennekers (2010). Both Intrapreneur 2 and Intrapreneur 4 referred to some examples of ideas which were identified and initiated by themselves. However, most of the projects involving the intrapreneurs were originated by other sources within the organization. This was a result of the organizational focus of environmental scanning. In this case, the intrapreneurs often carry out intrapreneurship and activities based on ideas which are not necessarily initiated and originated by themselves. This is in line with the view of the intrapreneur as performing activities to take ideas a step further, focusing on the activities of the intrapreneur and not necessarily where the ideas come from (McFadzean et al., 2005).

5.1.2 Active information search

According to Kleysen and Street (2001), the information search in the early phase of a project is done in order to explore opportunities. The activity is found in the initial phase of a project (Bosma et al., 2010; De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). This is aligned with how the intrapreneurs in DNB initiate a project. The activity was in all cases identified and described as an important part of an intrapreneurial project. Intrapreneur 1 and 3 explicitly mentioned the activity as one of the most important tasks during their workday, whereas Intrapreneur 2 and 4 referred to actions and activities which involved several elements of active information search. However, the source of information varied between the intrapreneurs in DNB.

The external environment may be one of the largest sources of opportunity for a firm (Drucker, 1985). Paying attention to new opportunities outside the firm might be an important driver for intrapreneurial projects to be initiated (Kleysen & Street, 2001), especially in the manner of

recognizing new opportunities (Shaw, 2015; Urban, 2015; Abrell & Karjalainen, 2017). The intrapreneurs confirm the relevance of the theory in this case by highlighting the importance of using external sources of information referring to industrial and market structures, knowledge retrieved through external partners, and technological development as important sources of information. For example, Intrapreneur 3 mostly addressed the activity of actively searching for information as identifying external sources, through dialogue with customers and looking at market changes and trends. At the same time, internal sources of information are also an important part of the active information search. The internal source of information was by the intrapreneur referred to as internal knowledge and experience and was explained as highly valuable to initiate further investigation related to a problem or new opportunity.

5.1.3 Idea Generation

Idea generation is by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) described as forming the idea by turning it into a more concrete idea, concept, or solution. However, in this case study, this activity was mostly done in collaboration with team members, which is an element not mentioned in the literature. Structuring and analyzing the gathered information regarding the identified opportunity is considered as a part of the activity (Kleysen & Street, 2001). The intrapreneurs, in this case, described the activity to involve workshops in teams, including activities such as organizing information, questioning hypothesis, and uncovering assumptions. Teamwork in such an early phase of the project is not mentioned in the theory of intrapreneurial activities, whereas organizing a team is an activity proposed to be done in Phase 2 by Bosma et al. (2010). However, there are cases in which the intrapreneur carries out the activity without a team. Intrapreneur 2 mostly did this on his own, which is aligned with the proposed literature. Nevertheless, in all examples mentioned by the intrapreneurs, the activity includes the involvement of relevant stakeholders, both inside and outside DNB.

Designing and forming an idea into a more communicative concept or product is an essential part of the intrapreneurial project (Kleysen & Street, 2001). This activity is by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) and Bosma et al. (2010) suggested to take place later in the intrapreneurial project, namely in Phase 2. However, the intrapreneurs, in this case, all referred to the activity to be done at a much earlier stage, while generating the idea. The findings illustrate this to be done through activities involving creating a basic prototype, testing and getting feedback from

customers and other relevant stakeholders. After that, changes based on feedback were implemented and further tested again. This was frequently referred to as iterations by the intrapreneurs. The findings indicate that in the case of DNB, iterations are considered to be a large part of the intrapreneurial projects, which is not aligned with the theory proposed by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) or Bosma et al. (2010).

5.2 Sequence of the activities and phases of intrapreneurial activities

Bosma et al. (2010) divide the activities presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) into two phases, suggesting that the activities in Phase 1 lead to activities carried out in Phase 2. However, Bosma et al. (2010) consider that the activities might occur in different orders not necessarily following the proposed sequence. The findings of the study demonstrate, both by descriptions from the intrapreneurs and the drawings of intrapreneurial projects, that none of the intrapreneurial projects are identical. Hence, the sequence of the activities varies within each project. The intrapreneurial activities, in this case, appear to not follow the proposed phases of Bosma et al. (2010). For example, as elaborated in section 5.1.3 the activity of designing and forming the idea is identified in the initial phase of a project, and not in what would be considered as Phase 2.

The theory of De Jong and Wennekers (2008) and Bosma et al. (2010) does not explicitly address whether the activities are only done once or if they occur several times during a project. Thus, Bosma et al. (2010) propose that some of the activities may overlap or even happen simultaneously. However, there are several examples in the findings of this study that indicate some activities to occur several times during a project. For example, active information search is conducted both at the very beginning of a project and after that several times throughout the project. Also, the intrapreneurs explained situations where the activities are performed in cycles, and that these cycles may be ongoing for a while during a project. This phenomenon is neither mentioned in the theory of De Jong and Wennekers (2008) nor by Bosma et al. (2010).

5.2.1 Example of intrapreneurial activities

De Jong and Wennekers (2008) and Bosma et al. (2010) suggest that the intrapreneurial projects are initiated by identifying an opportunity. This is in accordance with the findings from

the conducted study, all though the opportunity is not necessarily identified by the intrapreneur him or herself. The following activities are actively searching for information and thereafter generating the idea (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008; Bosma et al. 2010). In the case of DNB, the findings indicate that these following activities rather occur in overlapping cycles than as sequential activities. The findings from this study also suggest that the following activities often involve teamwork in the context of DNB, which is not addressed in the literature of intrapreneurial activities.

An example of the sequence of an intrapreneurial project is presented in Figure 9, illustrating which activities the identified cycles may include. The top layer shows who the findings suggest are conducting the activities, while the bottom layer illustrates how and with which stakeholders the activity is conducted.

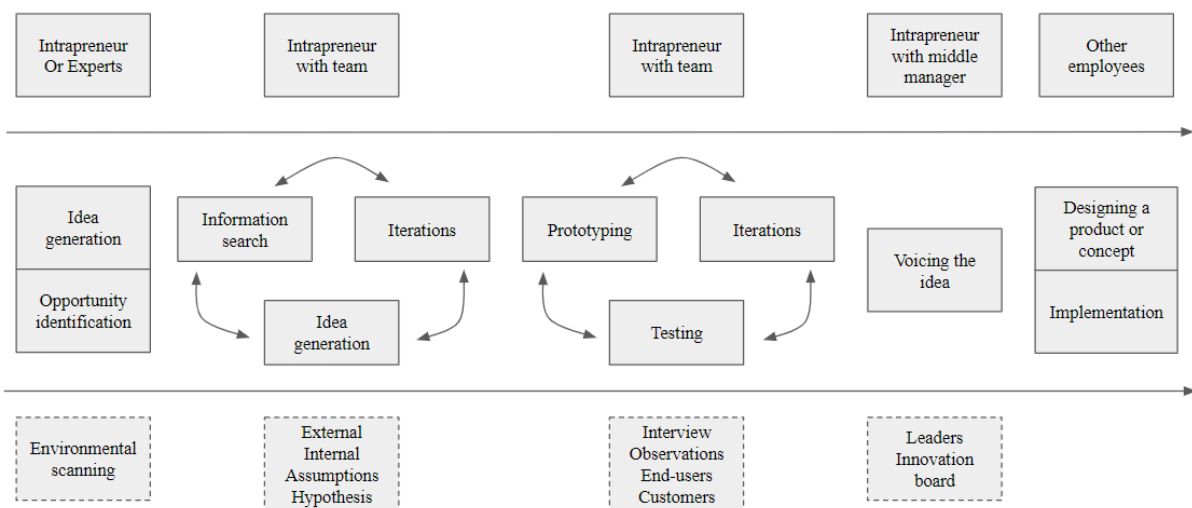


Figure 9: Illustrating the sequence of activities in an intrapreneurial project from the start until the end. The top layer illustrates who/what roles are conducting the activities, the mid layer shows which activities are conducted, while the bottom layer illustrates how and where the activities are conducted.

According to De Jong and Wennekers (2010), the intrapreneur is supposed to work with the idea until it is a more or less commercialized product. However, as illustrated through Figure 9 this is not the case of the intrapreneurs in DNB. The findings indicate that in most of the cases, the intrapreneurs do not continue with the project after the idea has been presented and defended. Even if approved by the innovation board and respective leaders, the intrapreneurs do rarely continue carrying out the intrapreneurial activities related to finalizing the idea,

arranging production launching and implementing the new idea. If accepted and approved, the prototype will be upgraded to designing a new product by other departments, such as experts on the field of legal or tech-division (Brigic & Umihanic, 2015).

5.3 The intrapreneur

The intrapreneur is assumed to be similar to the entrepreneur with the same elements of behavioral characteristics (Menzel et al., 2007), only separated by being in a corporate context (Åmo, 2010). The intrapreneur is expected to take initiative, pursue opportunities and have some element of 'newness' (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). While other characteristics suggested are out of the box thinking, championing, taking charge and some degree of risk taking (ibid.), the findings identified mostly characteristics considered as examples of initiative taking and taking charge by the intrapreneurs in DNB. The findings suggest initiative taking as a highly represented characteristic by the intrapreneurs, being demonstrated through concrete examples of projects in which the intrapreneurs themselves had initiated changes in processes or working methods. Commonly for all instances was that the intrapreneur had taken the initiative unsolicited, without being encouraged to do so.

In addition, there were several cases of the intrapreneurs taking charge in different situations. This was referred by examples in which the intrapreneurs consciously had taken charge in order to initiate a project or drive a project forward. At the same time, the findings suggest that this also happens unconsciously, whereas the intrapreneurs had either been assigned the responsibility and therefore took charge, or as a natural consequence of lack of leadership. Both characteristics were supported by the respective middle managers, which strengthens the findings.

However, through the study, there were few examples of the intrapreneurs conducting out of the box thinking and taking risk, as the literature suggests that an intrapreneur would do (De Jong & Wennekers, 2008). At the same time, Lumpkin (2007) suggests that there is less need for risk-taking due to a lower level of personal risk for the intrapreneur, compared with an entrepreneur. Solely one finding from the study of the four intrapreneurs indicates examples of taking a risk, which involved acting against the management instructions. On this basis, all of

the characteristics of the intrapreneur suggested by the literature were not identified in the case of the intrapreneurs working in DNB.

5.3 Organizational antecedents

For intrapreneurs to conduct intrapreneurial activities, the organizational antecedents facilitating and driving the activities are considered as highly relevant (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). The organizational antecedents can be both positive and negative for intrapreneurial activities to take place (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Pinchot III, 1985), which the findings from the case study indicate to be accurate in the case of DNB.

5.3.1 Communication openness

The firm's process of information sharing and the level of openness is referred to by its communication openness (Pinchot III, 1985). Ensuring well-established communication processes and openness throughout the organization is expected to have a positive influence on intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). The findings suggest that as a consequence of being a large, well-established firm, the internal amount of knowledge, experience, and expertise is considered by the intrapreneurs and middle managers as highly valuable as well as related to conducting intrapreneurial activities. Seeking internal information and advice is in multiple cases the first activity conducted when initiating a new project. For this to be effective and useful, it relies on knowledge regarding who to contact, as well as the willingness of sharing and cooperation internally. Intrapreneur 4 referred to the action of contacting internal resources as challenging due to the large scope of employees and divisions, but highly valuable when reaching the right person. In this case, the findings indicate that the extent of a sufficient level of communication openness influences how the intrapreneurial activities are carried out in the case of DNB, with examples of being both positive and negative.

5.3.2 Formal control

According to Antoncic and Hisrich (2001), the level of the organizational formal control may be an overall positive driver for intrapreneurship, if done in correct manners. Too extensive use of formal control may inhibit the level of intrapreneurship (Zahra, 1991). In the findings, there

are examples in which formal control have a positive influence on the intrapreneurial project. For example, Intrapreneur 1 referred to a case in which the level of formal control had pushed the project forward in a constructive way, with positive results for the project. In such a manner, the level of formal control is in the findings represented as positive for the intrapreneurial activities without hindering the project.

At the same time, there are examples of over-extensive use of formal control inhibiting the level of intrapreneurship. This is aligned with the theory proposed by Zahra (1991), suggesting that formal control may hinder intrapreneurship and innovation. Findings related to this indicates, for example, the involvement of several stakeholders making the decision process too extensive and thereby hindering the intrapreneurial project. Nevertheless, the findings are in line with the idea that the level of formal control influences the intrapreneurial activities as suggested by Antoncic and Hisrich (2001) and Zahra (1991).

5.3.3 Environmental scanning

Through environmental scanning, the organization scan the industrial environment and thereby identify changes requiring actions from the firm (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). This can be new technology, trends, changes in the competitive environment, and emerging threats (Zahra, 1991). The findings indicate that environmental scanning is conducted several times in DNB, both by the intrapreneurs as well as in dedicated divisions within the firm. Some of the intrapreneurs referred to other parts of the organization analyzing the external environment as a way of initiating new projects, and often as the source of finding new opportunities. Therefore, environmental scanning is thought to have an impact on the way further intrapreneurial activities are conducted. Another interesting finding is that this is also done by some of the intrapreneurs while conducting other activities such as actively searching for information and looking for opportunities. However, this is not included in the proposed theory by Antoncic and Hisrich (2001) and Zahra (1991). Therefore, the environmental scanning can also be seen as an activity conducted by the intrapreneurs, but rather than an antecedent it is included in the activity of information search in an intrapreneurial project. Nevertheless, the environmental scanning is by the findings suggested to influence the level of intrapreneurship and considered as a determinant for the intrapreneurial activities performed by the intrapreneurs in DNB.

5.3.4 Organizational support

The organizational support addresses how the intrapreneurs and their initiatives are facilitated for and supported by the organization (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). This includes management involvement (*ibid.*), which is an outspoken field of focus within DNB. Middle Manager 4 emphasized his role as being a facilitator for autonomy, enabling the employees to work as freely as possible within the frames of the division. This involved being a “buffer” between the upper management and the intrapreneurs, ensuring room for experimenting and failure without being punished or stopped by the upper management. This is by the middle managers expressed as crucial for intrapreneurship to be adequately carried out within a large organization, and by this as a necessity for intrapreneurial activities to take place.

Stevenson and Jarillo (1990) emphasize trust towards the intrapreneurs and an open-minded organization as important for intrapreneurship to take place. Two other vital elements supporting intrapreneurial activities is the allocation of sufficient time availability and loose intra-organizational boundaries (Kuratko, Montagno, & Hornsby, 1990). The intrapreneurs expressed that these were facilitated for at times, but also mentioned intrapreneurial activities to be hindered by upper management priorities and resource limitations. Also, there were examples of cases where ideas were stopped due to constraints of resources and priorities. Hence, this organizational support was shown to have a clear role in some of the intrapreneurial activities and influences the way the intrapreneurs carries out the activities.

5.3.5 Organizational values

The organizational values are considered as essential for the level of intrapreneurship and address the characteristics, values, and visions of the upper management (Guth and Ginsberg, 1990). This implies whether the organizational culture and values are conducive towards fostering intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). The findings suggest that DNB, as an organization, has a high level of willingness and intention to facilitate and foster intrapreneurship. Intrapreneur 4 characterized the organization as having a high willingness to change, whereas the organizational culture had a generally positive attitude to newness. However, there were also examples of a lack of realization and implementation of the intrapreneurial initiatives, which was by the intrapreneurs referred to as a hinder for further intrapreneurial activities in DNB. This was also supported by some of the middle managers.

Therefore, the findings indicate that there is a link between the organizational support for intrapreneurship and how it is carried out, providing examples of both positive and negative influences.

5.4 Analysis summarized

The analysis suggests that some of the intrapreneurial activities proposed by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) are not performed by the intrapreneurs in DNB. Barely any of the activities found in what Bosma et al. (2010) views as Phase 2 is in this case represented. However, based on the identified activities in the findings, the analysis indicates that the activity in Phase 2 which involves designing and testing the prototype, in this case, occurs in Phase 1. Also, the findings indicate that the activities do not necessarily follow a given order and may occur in cycles, which is illustrated in Figure 9. The analysis also shows that the most conducted activities by the intrapreneurs in DNB seems to be opportunity perception, active information search and idea generation.

The characteristics of the intrapreneurs in DNB is through the analysis of the findings suggested being mostly taking charge and initiative. Some of the suggested characteristics of the literature were not identified in the study at all. All the organizational antecedents were identified in the findings and indicated to influence how the intrapreneurs in DNB conducts intrapreneurial activities. In addition, there were interesting findings addressing the antecedents of environmental scanning, which could be considered as a part of the intrapreneurial activities, namely active information search. Throughout the analysis, there were examples confirming the antecedents to be both hindering and stimulating for intrapreneurial activities in the context of DNB.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, the analysis of the findings will be discussed based on the research question presented in Chapter 1: *How are intrapreneurial activities carried out by the intrapreneur within an established firm?* Through the analysis, some of the most interesting findings were related to a few of the activities from the framework, and how they appear to be related to and influenced by the organizational antecedents. This will be further discussed in this chapter.

6.1 Presence of intrapreneurial Activities

The analysis shows that some intrapreneurial activities are more present than others. The most identified activities were related to phase 1, being opportunity perception, active information search, and idea generation. In the case of DNB, activities such as marketing, implementation, and arranging the first sale were not done by the intrapreneurs. In this case, the theory of De Jong and Wennekers (2008), suggesting that the intrapreneurs conduct all 15 listed activities were not fully applicable. The organizational context of the intrapreneurs may explain why these activities were not present, such as working in a large organization with heavy internal resources. For example, the intrapreneurs addressed the work related to production, marketing, and sales as a task for a dedicated internal division with expertise within the discipline. Therefore, it makes little sense for the intrapreneur themselves to be involved in the process of production and sales. This could be considered as an example of a situation where the organizational context of having dedicated divisions for several of the intrapreneurial activities results in the intrapreneurs not conducting the activities as suggested by the literature. This context is not considered in the proposed literature of De Jong and Wennekers (2008).

The relevance of all the activities may on such basis be thought to depend on the organization. On one hand, to what extent the intrapreneur is needed throughout the intrapreneurial project and needs to perform the activities found in Phase 2 depends on whether the intrapreneur works in a large resourceful organization or not. On the other hand, as a part of being “dreamers who do” (Pinchot, 1985), one may expect the intrapreneur to continue with the project until realization. Thus, this could be considered to depend on the organizational context. Therefore, when looking into which activities the intrapreneur performs to carry out intrapreneurship, the context of the organization may influence to which extent the activities are performed.

At the same time, the identified activities turned out to be a major part of the work of the intrapreneurs and frequently conducted several times during a project. Also, the ability to perform the activities were by the middle managers addressed as some of the most valuable attributes by the intrapreneurs. As stated, most of the activities identified were activities from what Bosma et al. (2010) categorize as Phase 1-activities. These were activities such as opportunity perception, active information search, and idea generation. As previously discussed, this could partly be explained by the circumstances of being a part of a large organization. However, it could also be explained by the nature of the activities. While activities such as marketing and sales can be considered as defined tasks, in which there are dedicated educations and job titles addressing. Activities such as opportunity perception are rather vague and are not captured by any job title or education. The nature of the activities found in Phase 1 proposed by Bosma et al. (2010) can be considered as more of a way of acting, rather than as a dedicated job. In other words, one may interpret the activities found in Phase 1 as more undefined and vaguer than the ones in Phase 2, whereas whether it is carried out or not depends on the situation rather than a defined work description.

The theory of intrapreneurship is not consistent in terms of who performs the activities. The researchers within the field disagree whether it is the employees or the managers who perform the intrapreneurial activities. Pinchot III (1985) has a focus towards the manager's role in performing activities that lead to intrapreneurship, while Bosma et al. (2010), and Urban and Wood (2015) comprises the employee's role in these activities. This explanation of intrapreneurial activities performed by both employees and managers might also be an explanation of why some of the activities are not identified in DNB. As the focus of this study has been on the employees, this might have led to a loss of identified intrapreneurial activities done by the managers. Therefore, intrapreneurship may be thought to be carried out through several joints within the organization, not solely by the intrapreneurs. However, this is not mentioned in the theory of De Jong and Wennekers (2008), which could make the theory less applicable in the context of a large firm where several employees and stakeholders are involved in the intrapreneurial project. By including this in the theory, considering the activities to be a part of a project which involves more than just the intrapreneur, one could perhaps obtain a more detailed picture and in-depth understanding of intrapreneurship and how it is carried out.

6.1.1 Opportunity perception

While the literature of intrapreneurship suggests the intrapreneur to be the one to find new ideas and opportunities (Pinchot, 1985), the analysis of this study indicates that the ideas and opportunities that the intrapreneurs in DNB work with does not necessarily come from the intrapreneurs themselves. On the contrary, the analysis shows that most of the intrapreneurial projects are originated by opportunities and ideas originated from other employees within the firm. Although actively looking for opportunities and searching for information, the intrapreneurs appear to rarely work with ideas they found themselves. This is in line with the theory regarding IWB, as to the role of the intrapreneur in adopting an idea, not necessarily being the mastermind behind the idea (Kanter, 1988; Scott & Bruce, 1994). This could mean that rather than being the generator of the idea, the ability to establish ownership of the idea is more important in order to continue with the intrapreneurial activities. In the case of the intrapreneurs in DNB, the theory of IWB appears to be more applicable as it comprises the possibility of the intrapreneur not being the source of the idea him or herself. By taking this into account the theory presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) may be applicable for a broader extent of cases, as it of today, in principle, only accounts for the intrapreneurial cases in which the intrapreneur identify the opportunity.

As to why the intrapreneurs do not find the ideas or opportunities themselves, this can be explained by several reasons. The intrapreneurs are often assigned projects, rather than selecting the projects themselves. This may limit the chances of having time and capacity to explore new possibilities and identify ideas themselves. Also, because of being a part of a large established firm, there are dedicated internal resources for environmental scanning to identify opportunities. In this way, DNB ensures that the projects initiated are aligned with the organizational strategy and grounded in market trends and industry development. This could be considered as an example of how the organizational antecedents influence how, and if, the intrapreneurial activities are carried out, both being hindering and stimulating for intrapreneurship as proposed by Zahra (1991) and Antoncic and Hisrich (2001). In the case of DNB, the intrapreneurs are not expected to, and neither facilitated to, conduct investigation and exploration, which may be needed to identify new opportunities and ideas. The intrapreneurs are in this case not given sufficient resources and time to freely look for opportunities as the literature suggests (Zahra, 1991; Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Thus it does not necessarily imply that by doing so the intrapreneurs would identify more opportunities. Therefore, when looking

into why the studied intrapreneurs barely identify ideas and opportunities themselves, the organizational context appears to be determinant. To illustrate the findings of intrapreneurial activities in DNB, Figure 10 suggests that the activity involves two sources of opportunities; opportunities identified by the intrapreneur and opportunities identified by others in the firm. The figure shows that for the former mentioned, the opportunities can be identified both internally and externally, which is in line with the theory of Drucker (1985) considering sources of opportunities. For the latter mentioned, the opportunities identified by others are suggested to be a result of the organizational environmental scanning. This also comprises the external sources of opportunities suggested by Drucker (1985), as well as Zahra's (1991) proposal of market trends, industry changes, and development to influence the firm's innovativeness.

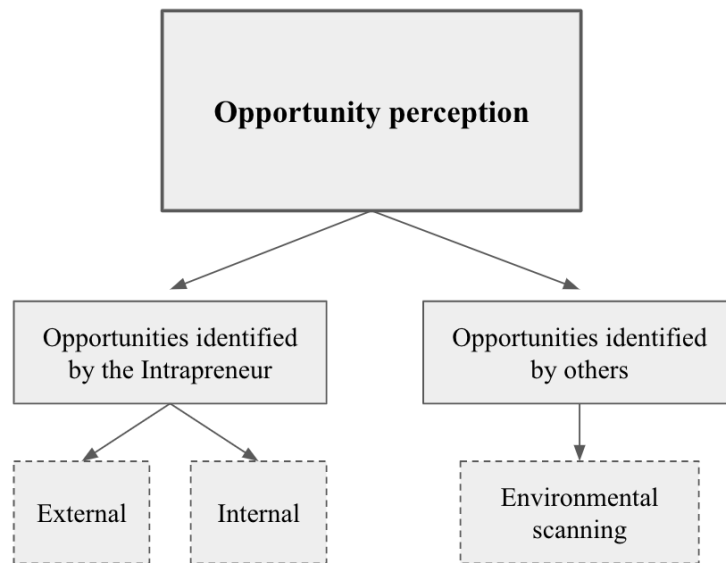


Figure 10: an illustration of how the activity of opportunity perception may be carried out by the intrapreneurs in the case study, showing two main sources of opportunities.

6.1.2 Active information search

What De Jong and Wennekers (2008) presents as the activity of active information search, is the most referred to activity by the intrapreneurs. However, it is at times moreover considered as a constant and ongoing task, rather than a concrete activity. This implies that the activity is recurring and conducted continuously throughout a project, and sometimes referred to as an

enabler for further intrapreneurial activities to take place. This may be due to its broadness, and that new information often leads to further actions, such as prototyping or voicing the idea.

Within the literature of intrapreneurial activities presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) and Bosma et al. (2010), as well as IWB by De Jong and Den Hartog (2010), there are few specific examples of what actively searching for information involves. This is through the study addressed by the investigated intrapreneurs in DNB, which has provided several examples of what the activity may involve. For example, the intrapreneurs frequently referred to dialogue with the end-user as a way of acquiring new and relevant information. At the same time, the activity consists of speaking with internal resources and experts. This was aligned with the perception of Abrell and Karjalainen (2017), suggesting the activity to involve seeking advice. Seeking advice can for such reason be considered as a subcategory of the active information search and applies mainly in cases where the intrapreneur has sought advice and information from the management or employees, being an internal source of information. Based on the presented findings and analysis, one may consider extending the model of active information search by distinguishing between internal and external sources, such as presented in Figure 11. By providing the extension of the activity, one may obtain a more tangible and identifiable perception of the activity, making it easier to interpret both in practice and for further research. The figure shows examples of identified sources of information through this study, both internally and externally. This will assumably differ between each case and intrapreneurial project but can within reason be thought as representative for relevant sources of information.



Figure 11: an illustration of how the activity of active information search may be carried out by the intrapreneurs in the case of DNB, showing two main sources of information.

6.2.3 Idea generation and iteration

After identifying an idea or opportunity, or being assigned a project, the activity of forming the idea is in the case of DNB often conducted. This is in line with the theory of De Jong & Wennekers (2010). The activity is by the intrapreneurs, in this case, described as processing the acquired information, analyzing it and turning it into something more specific. However, the analysis indicates that the activity to a large extent comprises the involvement of relevant stakeholders and that the activity mostly is done in collaboration with teammates. The intrapreneurs have a high focus on involving end-users' feedback when concretizing the idea. This is referred to as a way to ensure that the decisions and initial forming of the idea are done based on the end-users needs and requirements, and not the perceptions of the intrapreneurs themselves. The element of teamwork and involving relevant stakeholders in the activity of idea generation is not mentioned in the theory proposed by De Jong and Wennekers (2008). By not addressing this relation, one may fail to capture central elements of how the activity is carried out, as it appears as a large part of conducting the activity and being intrapreneurial in DNB. Being able to do so requires an element of organizational facilitation for the intrapreneur to work with qualified team members and not at least access to relevant stakeholders. In such a manner, Kuratko's (1990) suggestion of the importance of management and organizational support in the regard of granting necessary time and resources, may be considered as relevant. In other words, it is in this case reason to consider the organizational antecedent of organizational support as important when discussing how the activity is carried out.

De Jong and Wennekers (2008) consider the activity of developing and testing as an independent intrapreneurial activity, which Bosma et al. (2010) suggest takes place in Phase 2. However, the findings and analysis of the conducted study indicate that this is not applicable in the case of the intrapreneurs in DNB. In all projects involving the intrapreneur, the activity of developing and testing was addressed as a part of generating the idea. This was by the intrapreneurs referred to as iterations, which is not mentioned in any of the literature of intrapreneurial activities. This was addressed as one of the most important activities by both the intrapreneurs and middle managers and indicated a clear lack within the theory of De Jong and Wennekers (2008). By not including this activity in the theory, one will not capture what is considered as an essential element of carrying out intrapreneurship in DNB.

Whereas De Jong and Wennekers (2008) suggest the activity of testing and developing to be a separate activity, the analysis of the activities performed in DNB proposes this to be considered as a part of the idea generation. Figure 12 is an illustration of how the activity may be carried out in DNB, based on the presented analysis. The figure is not aligned with the suggested activity by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) by merging two originally distinguished activities. It also proposes the activity to take place in the initial phase of a project, which is on the contrary to what Bosma et al. (2010) suggest. In the case of intrapreneurial activities in DNB, the activity can be considered to contain two main actions; firstly, analyzing the information gathered when identifying the idea. This is in DNB often done in collaboration with teammates, through workshops. This may lead to the second part of the activity, the cycle of iterations, involving development, testing, and implementing feedback. Although, there are examples in the findings indicating that this may also happen directly after identifying the idea, without conducting a comprehensive analysis of the gathered information.

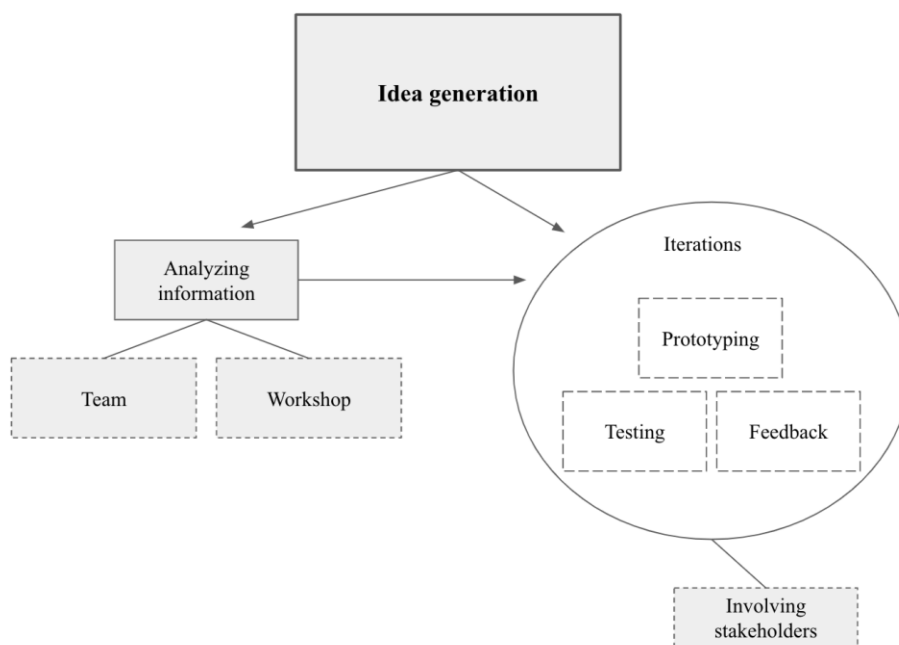


Figure 12: an illustration of how the activity of idea generation may be carried out by the intrapreneurs in the case study, including the element of doing iterations.

6.2 The sequence and relation of intrapreneurial activities

The illustrations of different intrapreneurial projects provided through the interviews show that every project is different, with different activities occurring in different orders. In the case of intrapreneurial activities in DNB, the theory of Bosma et al. (2010) distinguishing the activities into phases, appear to not be applicable. This is demonstrated by the illustrations as well as through the descriptions of the intrapreneurs. The analysis shows that some activities take place more than others and that some occur several times during a project. For example, the activity of searching for information and forming the idea is in multiple cases referred to as activities conducted more than one time, rather in a loop. Therefore, it seems like the activities may not be considered as a sequential process as suggested by Bosma et al. (2010), but rather overlapping and recurring activities occurring in cycles.

However, in the theory presented by Bosma et al. (2010), the authors do make reservations for the possibility of the activities being overlapping or happening simultaneously, due to the nature of the activities. For example, the activity of iterations and testing the new idea often involves searching for new information at several points. In this case, it is difficult to separate the activities by drawing a definite line between where one activity ends, and where the next is initiated. Also, the activity of searching for information is something the intrapreneurs emphasizes performing continuously, not necessarily being a specific activity or task. At the same time, activities that are related to prototyping and development have a more concrete time scope, whereas one activity leads to another. For example, iteration often leads to product development, which is further tested with the customer when implemented. These activities can more easily be considered as sequential and concrete activities. In contrast, active information search can be viewed as an ongoing activity throughout the project, almost like an enabler for the following activities of the project and without any specific starting and ending points. By seeing the activities and their occurrence in relation, a more complex and perhaps more realistic picture of the way the intrapreneurs carry out intrapreneurship is drawn. Seeing the activities as a part of cycles may provide a more in-depth understanding of how the activities are related. Also, this allows for the possibility of the activities being enablers for the next intrapreneurial activity to take place. For example, being able to develop a proper prototype for testing in an early phase of the project may be determinant for real feedback when testing it and further iterations of the idea. Failing to do so may affect the whole project, which

argues for the need of seeing the activities as related elements and not independent activities. The interdependency which can be identified in the cycles should, therefore, not be neglected.

Based on the conducted study and presented discussion, the authors propose a figure which illustrates an example of how the activities can be related. As the findings represent intrapreneurship in the context of DNB, it is not said that the elements and activities excluded from the figure are irrelevant or not valid in other cases, or regarding intrapreneurship in general. Thus, the figure may provide an in-depth understanding of the identified activities from the conducted study of intrapreneurial activities in DNB.

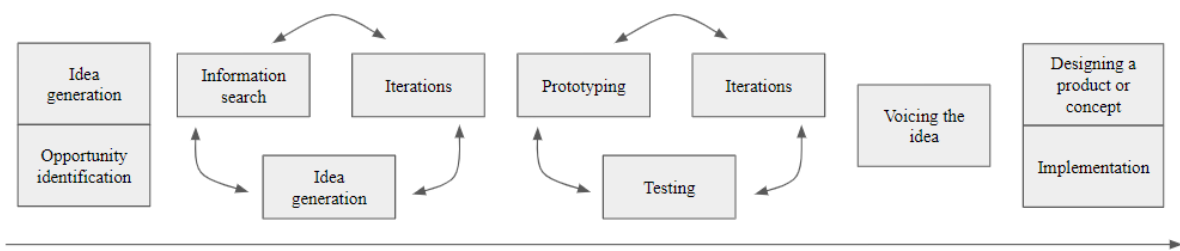


Figure 13: an example of how intrapreneurial activities may be carried out in an established firm, based on the key findings from this case study.

Figure 13 shows how the intrapreneurial activities are likely to appear in a sequential process. The start of an intrapreneurial project often concerns ideas or problems identified, and from this, the activities of idea generation and opportunity identification are considered as important as these activities often result in an idea to take further. As the intrapreneurs start to work with the idea, information is collected, and further idea generation and iterations are conducted in cycles. The cycle shows how the activities are performed several times and that the activities rely on one another. For example, the information provided through the information search will have an impact on the iteration, and further how the idea generation is conducted. After this, the model shows yet another cycle involving testing and prototyping. Also, here, the significance of iterations in the intrapreneurial project are illustrated and highlighted. In this cycle, the activities are all important to conduct to be able to take the step further in voicing the idea and “selling” the idea to the management. If the upper management approves the idea, the next and last step is finishing of the product or concept and implementing it.

As shown in the figure, the activities are separated from the phases proposed by Bosma et al. (2010). Several of the activities from Phase 2 is excluded, such as the activities regarding further development of the idea. This is, as previously discussed, due to the context of a large established organization as DNB, which contains specific departments with core expertise within the following stages of the development. The intrapreneurs, in this case, do not perform these activities, which distinguishes Figure 13 from the theory proposed by Bosma et al. (2010).

Based on four given examples of intrapreneurial projects from the interviews, there is no indication of certain orders or phases of the activities, all though some cases do follow a similar sequence due to the nature of the activities as presented in Figure 13. One may, for example, often find iterations as a product of user-testing and active information search. Thus, there is no given order or sequence of the activities, however, based on the analysis of this case, they tend to occur in cycles. The activities may occur in different orders, and the cycles are likely to involve different activities depending on the intrapreneur, the given project, and the involved stakeholders.

6.3 The influence of organizational antecedents

Based on the intrapreneurs explanation of the working environment and the organizational structure, there is a need to acknowledge the possible relation between how the organization facilitates for intrapreneurship and to what extent the intrapreneurs perform intrapreneurial activities. The findings of the study support the statement of Turro et al. (2016) that the organizational context influences the intrapreneurial employee's activities. The analysis suggests that the literature regarding organizational antecedents for intrapreneurship, supported by Antoncic and Hisrich (2001) and Zahra (1991), has relevance when looking into the intrapreneurial activities. This is reflected through how the organization facilitates and supports the intrapreneurs when conducting the activities, which there are several examples of in the findings. For example, to freely conduct active information search when needed to, there is a need for organizational support to do so. As described in the literature of intrapreneurial antecedents, the level of formal control may both be positive and inhibiting for the firm's level of intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Zahra, 1991). In this case, a thin line between the constructive and too extensive level of formal control is drawn by the intrapreneurs. For example, one cannot expect the intrapreneur to perform complex activities such as iterations

without adequately organizational support in terms of allocation of resources and time. Overall, due to the context of being an employee with guidelines and directions through the employment, the organizational facilitation is in this case determinant for the intrapreneurs.

By not taking the organizational antecedents into account, the literature does not acknowledge the context of the intrapreneur, which in this case appears to have an influence to which extent the intrapreneur can conduct the activities. For a firm to facilitate for intrapreneurship and to foster intrapreneurial activities, the influence of the antecedents should not be ignored, and perhaps rather viewed as an enabler for intrapreneurial activities to be carried out.

6.4 The intrapreneur

The assumption of intrapreneurs being entrepreneurs in a corporate setting is one of the most debated issues within the literature of intrapreneurship. This is due to the context of an intrapreneur being a part of an established firm and is according to researchers, such as Lumpkin (2007), influenced by organizational hierarchy and routines. The literature emphasizes that the intrapreneur is distinguished from the entrepreneur by being somewhat less risk-taking (Pinchot III, 1985; De Jong & Wennekers, 2008), as well as drawing benefits from the organizational support such as financial resources and company branding (Pinchot III, 1985; Blanka, 2018). In the case of DNB, the intrapreneurs seem to share some of the characteristics of an entrepreneur, showing a high level of taking initiative and having a natural behavior towards taking charge in multiple situations. At the same time, the analysis shows that the intrapreneurs in DNB barely obtain any risk throughout the intrapreneurial projects. Based on this, one can discuss to what extent the entrepreneurial characteristics are applicable in this case.

Most of the literature within the field of intrapreneurship is based on the assumption of the intrapreneur being equal to the entrepreneur, which may have influenced the interpretations of the situations identified, both in previous research and in this study. Uncovering the characteristics of the intrapreneur without the perception of them being entrepreneurs, could also affect the suggested intrapreneurial activities by De Jong and Wennekers (2008). In this case, it could possibly contribute to explaining why certain activities were not identified or providing a more in-depth understanding of how the activities are carried out.

7. Conclusion

In this master thesis, the authors have explored intrapreneurial activities, carried out by the intrapreneur within a firm, by looking at four different intrapreneurs and how they conduct the activities in the context of the Norwegian bank, DNB. In order to identify the activities and to explain the element of influence, relevant theories regarding intrapreneurship have been applied to the study. By this, the authors have aimed to answer the research question: *How are intrapreneurial activities carried out by the intrapreneur within an established firm?*

The study shows that in this case, the most conducted activities by the intrapreneurs was opportunity perception, active information search and idea generation. Through the study, the activities are looked into in-depth, giving concrete examples of how the activities are carried out, as well as suggestions of a more complex understanding of the activities identified. Based on the findings from the study and the following analysis, the element of iteration is proposed to comprise some of the activities identified, which the existing literature does not capture.

In this study, not all intrapreneurial activities presented by De Jong and Wennekers (2008) was conducted. The study shows that the activities do not necessarily follow the order proposed by Bosma et al. (2010). For the theory to be applicable in this case, the authors suggest the activities not to occur in a given order. Also, the activities are suggested to be conducted in cycles. In addition, the analysis of the findings, in this case, proposes a relationship between the activities, meaning that one activity may be considered as an enabler for the next to be conducted.

Through the study, the possible influence of the organizational antecedents, as well as the intrapreneurial characteristics, have been taken into account when looking at the intrapreneurial activities. The findings of the study indicate that the theory regarding the intrapreneurial characteristics was not highly reflected through the performance of the intrapreneurial activities. Nevertheless, the organizational antecedents appeared to have a higher level of influence on the way the activities were carried out.

In order to understand in-depth how the activities are carried out, the organizational antecedents have been taken into account when looking at the intrapreneurial activities performed in DNB. By doing this, the authors have sought to identify whether organizational antecedents influence

the level of intrapreneurial activities. In this study, the way the organization facilitates for intrapreneurship appeared as evident for the intrapreneurs to carry out intrapreneurship. The level of organizational formal control and support was highlighted as a determinant for the intrapreneurial activities to take place in this case study. Therefore, the authors suggest that the organizational antecedents for intrapreneurship should not be neglected when looking into how and whether intrapreneurial activities are performed in a firm. The influence of the organizational antecedents has, in the case of DNB, shown to be both a prerequisite for its existence as well as explanatory for how the activities are carried out.

8. Implications and further research

This thesis has investigated intrapreneurial activities in an established firm, performed by the intrapreneur. The literature addressing intrapreneurial activities is limited, with a lack of empirical evidence (McFadzean et al., 2005; Abrell & Karjalainen, 2017). Thus, related literature of Innovative Work Behavior (Janssen, 2000; Kleysen & Street, 2001; De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010) and organizational antecedents for intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Turro et al., 2016) has been utilized to identify and map out the field of study, as well as explaining the retrieved findings. There are to the author's knowledge no previous studies combining the different theories of intrapreneurship included in the framework presented by the authors of this thesis. Therefore, this thesis does extend the existing theories of intrapreneurial activities by providing detailed figures and concrete empirical examples of how some of the activities are carried out in practice, based on the gathered empirical materials.

The thesis shows that the intrapreneur in the context of a large and established firm, such as DNB, creates intrapreneurship by performing certain intrapreneurial activities. This turned out to be somewhat distinguished from the existing literature proposed by De Jong and Wennekers (2007) and Bosma et al. (2010). The thesis provides specific examples of how the identified activities are carried out by the intrapreneur, as well as proposing a new element of iterations. It offers figures which illustrate how the activities are carried out, including the involved stakeholders, as well as examples of actions done when conducting the activity. It also gives an example of how an intrapreneurial project is carried out, based on empirical evidence from the study. By this, the study extends the existing literature with concrete figures and provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

In addition, it shows how the activities depend on the organizational context and how the organization influences the extent of intrapreneurship performed by the intrapreneur. The study shows that organizational formal control and organizational support has a high level of influence on the intrapreneurial activities.

The authors of this thesis have some suggestions for further studies on the research area of intrapreneurial activities and the intrapreneur. Through the study it has become evident that the intrapreneurs tend to work more in teams than what the existing literature of intrapreneurship suggests. The dynamics of teamwork appears to have a large impact on both which and how

activities are performed. Overall, there are indications that working as an intrapreneurial team influences the intrapreneurial activities, and that it is a common way of working within the context of an established firm. Investigating the relationship between team dynamics and intrapreneurial activities would be a step towards better understanding of intrapreneurship and how it is carried out.

Furthermore, the authors perceive it as valuable to further investigate why some of the intrapreneurial activities are not performed by the intrapreneurs. This could be investigated by looking into the activities performed by others within the organization. For example, there is from this study reason to believe that the middle managers have a central role in the intrapreneurial projects, participating in the overall level of intrapreneurial activities. A deeper investigation into the middle manager's intrapreneurial role would provide a better understanding of intrapreneurial activities and could also possibly be an explanation to why some of the activities proposed by the literature were not identified in this study.

To extend the theory of intrapreneurial activities and thereby better understand the phenomenon, it would be of value to look further into activities which in this study is not investigated in-depth. By doing so, an absolute understanding of the total intrapreneurial activities would be established. As the thesis contains a limited amount of material, further investigation of the studied activities with a larger population would be of value to verify and test the figures suggested in Chapter 6. Also, as activities may be considered to take place over a longer period, it would be of interest to conduct a longitudinal study including observations, to investigate the development of the activities in-depth.

9. Limitations

The organization studied in this thesis has a strategically grounded and outspoken focus on innovation and being intrapreneurial, and the intrapreneurs investigated in the case are hired to be innovative. Therefore, based on previous experience and education, they have some prerequisites to be innovative. However, in order to recognize activities which can be challenging to identify or not even present in “regular” working situations, the prerequisites were considered necessary. Thus, these premises weaken the transferability of the study to other established firms. The case could from this be considered as intrapreneurship put into system.

There are also concerns regarding the method of collecting data. When studying activities performed by individuals, it would in some cases, be seen as beneficial to conduct observational studies. In this case, the authors made a choice not to conduct observations, as it would require a too significant amount of time as the intrapreneurial activities may not happen on an everyday basis. Similarly, the number of interviewees (8) were seen as appropriate considering the limited time period. Two of the intrapreneurs had only been in DNB for about seven months when conducting the interviews. This could affect the depth of the study and the number of intrapreneurial activities performed by these two intrapreneurs. However, the chosen intrapreneurs did all fit in the criteria set for the selected sample and were from this entrepreneurial enough to conduct intrapreneurial activities within the established organization.

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