

# A Review on Intrapreneurship: Individual Level With an HRD Focus

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## Abstract

This systematic review on intrapreneurship - individual level, HRD focus - addresses three research questions: What is the definition of intrapreneurship? What are its antecedents and outcomes? And how can it be integrated into HRD practices? Following the PRISMA protocol, twenty-six articles were included (peer review, English written, Q1 or Q2). Using the analysis matrix method, intrapreneurship was defined as an employee-initiated behavior comprising six core dimensions: communication and information, innovativeness, networking and influence, new ventures and opportunities, personal initiative, and risk-taking. Antecedents emerged from personal capabilities, perceptions, personality, self-attitudes and relational contexts. Outcomes included increased knowledge, performance, and participation in innovative projects. Theoretically, positions intrapreneurship as a developmental mechanism central to HRD, offering a novel and original conceptual framework supported by McLagan's (1989) seven HRD dimensions. For practice, provides HRD professionals with a strategic tool to intentionally integrate intrapreneurial behavior into their learning and development practices.

## Keywords

intrapreneurship, systematic review, bottom-up, individual approach, HRD

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## Introduction

Pinchot (1985) coined the term intrapreneurship, as a contraction of the term intra-organizational entrepreneurship. Intrapreneurs can be presented as in-house entrepreneurs, dreamers that are focused on doing (Pinchot, 1987), within a suitable organizational framework, where employees can benefit from the organizational innovative climate (Farrukh et al., 2021). Nowadays, organizations are facing challenging times in a very competitive economic environment (Blanka, 2019) and need to be more entrepreneurial to remain competitive (business motivation) and to develop and retain entrepreneurial collaborators (in a human-centered perspective). This argument is reinforced by Duradoni and Di Fabio (2019) that recognize that organizations actively search for workers who continually adapt to change by innovating, to deal with the XXI century challenges, to ensure organizational longevity and success, and therefore, explaining the need for more proactive human resources development (HRD) approaches, developing employee expertise, demonstrating its effectiveness, aligning learning and development with organizational strategy.

However, the human resource (HR) function but has been, traditionally, perceived as adding less value in comparison to other business areas - even though it integrates the HRD and the human resources management (HRM), with HRD focusing on learning and development, while HRM programs have a major managerial perspective (Alagaraja, 2013).

Considering this context, the objective of this study is to define intrapreneurship, identify its antecedents and consequents, at the individual level, under a HRD lens (developmental) - contributing for HRD as a discipline "firmly established as both a field of research and a practice globally" (Garavan, 2023, p. 475). For this purpose, a systematic literature review was conducted. A clearer alignment between intrapreneurship and HRD will enhance the advancement in individual (and, consequently, organizational) learning agendas, particularly to deal with criticisms of the lack of strategic alignment of HRD, which considers that HRD offers programs of marginal value at the expense of those that address important business and workforce needs (Torraco & Lundgren, 2019). Regarding the intrapreneurship literature, two major gaps were identified in. First, the existing conceptual confusion (Blanka, 2019; Neessen et al., 2019), between intrapreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship (CE) - different constructs that can be found in the literature as synonyms (Åmo, 2010; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Neessen et al., 2019). Intrapreneurship is a bottom-up approach (individual level), focused on the employees' behavior, while CE is a top-down approach (corporate level), supported by the companies' initiatives (Åmo, 2010). Second, intrapreneurship as a research field has been under the management and entrepreneurship literature umbrella and not it the HR or organizational development (OD) disciplines, but as evidenced by Seo et al. (2021) research "the empirical research in HRD, relied mainly on theories and frameworks from two disciplines, management and psychology" (p.402).

What do we know? In this challenging scenario, the intrapreneurial employees' skills and competencies gain in importance (Blanka, 2019) and justifies the focus on

HRD, here defined as the process of developing and unleashing expertise for the purpose of improving individual, team, work process, and organizational system performance (Swanson & Holton, 2009). According to Wang and Doty (2022), the shaping function of HRD plays a critical role in promoting intrapreneurial mindsets and values - for example, through participative change initiatives, organizational development (OD), and value alignment, encouraging individuals to perceive innovation as aligned with institutional purpose. Strategically, intrapreneurship can be seen as a “tool” to justify the need for investment in HRD, for instance in self-development initiatives (Garavan et al., 1999).

Learning activities are moving away from formal HRD (Poell, 2017) toward initiatives focused on employee self-reflection, proactivity, and experience-based learning (Poell et al., 2018), in a bottom-up approach that centers employees as active agents in their own learning, development, and innovation. HRD professionals are also encouraged to adopt a business partner mindset by prioritizing programs and by promoting employee learning and development in ways that promote the overall growth of the business (Torraco & Lundgren, 2019). Thus, intrapreneurship can thrive where HRD practices balance skilling (learning autonomy, problem-solving, opportunity recognition) with shaping processes that encourage experimentation and trust (Wang & Doty, 2022).

What do we not know and search for? We aim to answer the following research questions:

- (1) What is the definition of intrapreneurship, considering the individual as the unit of analysis?
- (2) What are the antecedents and the outcomes of intrapreneurship, at an individual level?
- (3) How can intrapreneurship be integrated into HRD practices?

This research makes a novel and original contribution by: (1) conceptualizing intrapreneurship explicitly at the individual level and integrated in the HRD process dimension, meaning the impacts of HRD on employee attitudes and behaviors (Hamlin & Stewart, 2011), and (2) positioning intrapreneurship as a people-centered construct within the domain of HRD, rather than a peripheral concern of management or entrepreneurship studies - aiming to understand how intrapreneurial behaviors can be cultivated through HRD practices such as learning design, career development, and participative organizational development (Wang & Doty, 2022).

The article is structured as follows: the subsequent section contextualizes Intrapreneurship Theoretical Background and its relationship with HRD; the Method section details the systematic review protocol, and the overview of the included studies; the Results section presents the main observations, synthesis and analysis of the outcomes; The Discussion and Implications for HRD section highlights the theoretical and practical implications for HRD; the section of Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research gives directions for setting out a research agenda for intrapreneurship/HRD and, in the last section, the Conclusion of the study is presented.

## Intrapreneurship Theoretical Background

Since the term was coined by [Pinchot \(1985\)](#), the literature presented several definitions for intrapreneurship, some focusing on the individual employee, some others on the organization, bringing conceptual confusion to this research area ([Blanka, 2019](#)). Initially, intrapreneuring was considered the process of managing and supporting employees within a company who have the vision and ability to turn ideas into successful innovations ([Pinchot, 1987](#)). According to [Antonci and Hisrich \(2003\)](#) the intrapreneurship research has evolved into three focal areas - the individual intrapreneurs, the formation of new corporate ventures and the entrepreneurial organization - but mainly with an organizational level of analysis. [Åmo \(2006a\)](#) was one of the first authors to suggest an integrated perspective, considering corporate entrepreneurship as an organisational encouragement to intrapreneurship, and intrapreneurship as the employee proactivity; in common, both are promoting the employee innovation behaviour. Corporate entrepreneurship can be recognised as a strategy that organisations can exercise to achieve innovation and growth, and intrapreneurship is recognised as a tool for employees who want to realise their entrepreneurial vision ([Åmo, 2010](#)). However, the terms intrapreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship are still commonly used as synonyms ([Mahmoud et al., 2020](#); [Neessen et al., 2019](#)), reinforcing the identified lack of conceptual clarity expressed by [Gawke et al. \(2017\)](#).

To avoid this semantic confusion, that has been expressed in the literature, over the years, [Gawke et al. \(2017\)](#) coined the concept employee intrapreneurship (EI): an agentic and strategic work behavior needed for new venture creation and strategic renewal; more recently, [Chouchane et al. \(2021\)](#) defined the term employee intrapreneurial behavior (EIB), considering three dimensions: innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness. Also based in a behavioral perspective, [Park et al. \(2014\)](#) emphasize employees' formal and informal information behaviors as employees are not merely the nuts and bolts of an organization and should be considered informational agents and communicative actors, which aligns with [Åmo \(2006b\)](#) early findings, outlining the importance of the individual motivation for intrapreneurship, because each individual employee decides the level of involvement and energy to put into innovation behaviour, even if the employee is assigned by the management to participate in innovation-related tasks.

[Åmo \(2010\)](#) was one of the first authors to recognize the literature on employees' entrepreneurial behavior as underrated and under-explored; however, and no matter its relevance, as exposed, the research concentrating on individual intrapreneurial employees is still rare ([Blanka, 2019](#)); likewise, the research on how these intrapreneurial activities affect employee outcomes is scarce and has received less scrutiny ([Gawke et al., 2017](#)), specifically, the research on the personal costs and benefits of engaging in intrapreneurial activities ([Gawke et al., 2018](#)). Even considering the state-of-the-art and the increased interest in intrapreneurship, as a research topic (as we will see in the review), due to its crucial role in innovation, organizational performance, and employee career planning, the contributions in the field are fragmented ([Huang et al., 2021](#)).

The most recent literature emphasises intrapreneurship as a voluntarily behavior, a bottom-up expression that can be supported by organizations, working as platforms to create the best conditions for their employees to be innovative, developing aligned top-down strategies and through the relationship with the organization, supervisor or colleagues (Farrukh et al., 2021; Neessen et al., 2019; Park et al., 2014; Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023), or the perception of the organizational support (POS) (Chouchane et al., 2021).

In summary, the main aspects of intrapreneurship conceptualization are presented in Table 1.

Synthetizing, we suggest a more comprehensive definition of intrapreneurship, as a set of agentic, strategic, and innovation-oriented behaviors exhibited by employees who proactively seek to initiate, develop, and implement novel ideas within an existing organizational context. It involves employees acting as internal entrepreneurs - not necessarily bound by formal job descriptions who take calculated risks, demonstrate innovativeness, and engage in forward-looking, opportunity-driven actions. After clarifying this definition, we need to address the gaps found, within a HRD perspective.

**Table 1.** Conceptualization of Intrapreneurship

Conceptualization of intrapreneurship	References
Intrapreneurship as individual behavior/action Proactive, self-initiated behavior where employees voluntarily engage in innovation, risk-taking, and strategic renewal without formal mandates. Reflects individual agency, rooted in autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and alignment with organizational goals	Åmo (2006a), Chouchane et al. (2021), Di Fabio and Duradoni (2019), Do and Luu (2020), Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2013), Escribá-Carda et al. (2020), Gawke et al. (2017), Farrukh et al. (2021), Park et al. (2014), Neessen et al. (2019)
Intrapreneurship as a bottom-up process Evolves from individual behavior into an emergent bottom-up process. Employees identify operational gaps or innovation opportunities and drive change upward through continuous learning, adaptive responses, and strategic use of resources, challenging the top-down innovation paradigm	Åmo (2010), Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2013), Gawke et al. (2019), Huang et al. (2021), Nasaj et al. (2022), Neessen et al. (2019), Park et al. (2014)
Intrapreneurship as an integrated organizational system Intrapreneurship is part of a larger, multi-level system involving individual traits and organizational infrastructures. It is sustained through HRD mechanisms like high-performance working systems, mobility, mentoring, and rewards that align personal initiative with strategic innovation goals	Do and Luu (2020), Farrukh et al. (2021), Neessen et al. (2019), Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023), Revuelto-Taboada et al. (2023)

### *Intrapreneurship and HRD: Gap Problematisation*

Throughout the literature, several gaps were identified and justify the need for sustained research on intrapreneurship, using a HRD lens, more specifically, a “Micro HRD” lens, in the words of Wang and Doty (2022), to deal with research and practices at the individual level. Despite the growing interest in intrapreneurship, research over the past decades reveals consistent gaps that position HRD as a critical, yet underutilized, field for advancing intrapreneurial capacity at the individual level. Early foundational work by Pinchot (1985, 1987) introduced the concept of intrapreneurship as in-house entrepreneurship but lacked empirical focus on its behavioral components and developmental implications. As noted by Antoncic and Hisrich (2003), much of the literature remained focused on the organizational level, neglecting the individual employee as a unit of analysis. This gap is particularly relevant to HRD, which centers on the growth and development of individuals within organizational systems. Subsequent studies began to emphasize the role of individual motivation and employee discretion in intrapreneurial behavior. Åmo (2006a, 2006b, 2010) argued that intrapreneurship is an agentic, voluntary behavior influenced by personal initiative and contextual encouragement - both of which are central concerns of HRD. Similarly, Park et al. (2014) and Rigtering and Weitzel (2013) and underscored the need to better understand the factors that prompt employees to engage in innovation, particularly informal knowledge sharing and communication behaviors. These observations reinforce the idea that HRD can create environments that stimulate intrapreneurship by fostering autonomy, learning, and motivation. Gawke et al. (2017, 2018) and Blanka (2019) contributed further by highlighting the need to differentiate employee-level intrapreneurship from corporate entrepreneurship and to investigate its personal costs and benefits. Such takeaways align closely with HRD’s focus on developmental outcomes, suggesting that intrapreneurship should be viewed not only as a behavior but as a pathway for strategic self-development, career growth, and psychological empowerment (Garavan, 2023). However, as noted by Duradoni and Di Fabio (2019), while organizations increasingly seek adaptable and innovative employees, they often lack HRD strategies explicitly designed to nurture such qualities. Recent research has also emphasized the role of perceived organizational and supervisory support in encouraging intrapreneurial behavior (Chouchane et al., 2021; Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023). HRD plays a vital role here, as it is responsible for designing learning systems, feedback mechanisms, and cultural reinforcements that shape employee behavior. Nevertheless, the field still lacks a standardized framework to assess and develop intrapreneurial competencies - despite initial attempts by Neessen et al. (2019) and calls for conceptual clarity from Mahmoud et al. (2020).

In summary, while intrapreneurship is increasingly recognized as a strategic capability for innovation and renewal, through employees’ development, its integration into HRD theory and practice remains limited (Yoon & Chae, 2022). As Garavan (2023) argues, HRD must move beyond peripheral engagement and embrace intrapreneurship as a core construct - embedding it within employee learning, workplace development, and long-term career trajectories - theoretically framed as main areas of

McLagan (1989) HRD model. Ultimately, intrapreneurship represents both a behavior and a developmental opportunity, as we will support in the next section.

### *The Relationship Between Intrapreneurship and HRD*

Yoon and Chae (2022) have observed that “specially in the last decade the contexts of HRD work and research topics have greatly expanded and have become more diverse” (p. 42), and that’s where we found the opportunity to position intrapreneurship in the HRD literature, aligned with two of the five HRD research areas identified by Shirmohammadi et al. (2020), namely: (1) the focus on HRD interventions and outcomes, considering individual level variables, such as autonomy, attitude, employee’s perception, self-efficacy and (2) career development concepts: adaptation, advancement, personal development and social network, to name a few. Even though the word intrapreneurship is not used, building upon this overview, the relationship between intrapreneurship and HRD can be framed in the HRD research streams mentioned above.

The research also evidences that HRD practices that enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment can lead to higher levels of intrapreneurial behavior (Okyireh et al., 2021). This means HRD also addresses the social and organizational environment, which is critical for fostering creativity and innovation, as these processes depend on the interaction between individuals and their surroundings (Loewenberger, 2013). In this sense, the relationship between employee commitment and HRD is fundamental for sustaining intrapreneurship.

Grounded in a recent HRD theory view, Wang and Doty (2022), explore how the Host Institutional System (HIS) creates the governance environment that frames both the opportunities and constraints for intrapreneurial behavior. In open HIS contexts, characterized by decentralized power, autonomous decision-making, and transparent information flow, HRD fosters skilling processes that empower individuals with the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) necessary for creative agency (Swanson & Holton, 2009). Here, HRD enables intrapreneurship not only through competence development (training and career growth), but also by cultivating accountability systems based on performance and initiative-taking, supported by McLagan (1989) model. In contrast, in closed HIS environments where power is centralized and loyalty is rewarded over performance, HRD practices may suppress intrapreneurial behavior by emphasizing compliance, censorship, and fear-based shaping. Therefore, it justifies the research needed for bridging the two concepts.

From a psychological perspective, it is framed by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), focusing on how HRD can foster intrapreneurial behavior, strengthening employees perceived behavioral control, thereby increasing their likelihood of engaging in intrapreneurship (Ajzen, 1991). At the job level, this connection is further reinforced by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014), which emphasizes the importance of providing adequate resources to enhance employee engagement and performance, ultimately facilitating intrapreneurial activities (Gawke et al., 2017). At the social level, HRD also plays a pivotal role. The Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Blau, 1964) provides a useful framework for understanding

how HRD strategies can encourage employees to engage in intrapreneurial activities by emphasizing reciprocal relationships between employees and their organizations (Mahmoud et al., 2022a; Portalanza-Chavarría & Revuelto-Taboada, 2023; Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013). Likewise, within the Social Capital Theory (SCT) (Thompson, 2005), it's evidenced that strong interpersonal networks within organizations enhance collaboration and trust, which are crucial for the successful implementation of innovative ideas (Ben Hador & Klein, 2019; Nasaj et al., 2022).

For what matters to the HRD research agenda, this review on intrapreneurship brings a novel and relational perspective with HRD, while answering to Yoon and Chae (2022) call of overcoming the lack of topics of recent interest on employee experiences. This relationship can be summarized in Figure 1.

Why is this relevant? As noticed by Wang and Doty (2022), “the individual is the actor, target, and carrier, either as a beneficiary or as a victim, of the HRD activities in the HIS context” (p.418). Theoretically, the HRD Wheel Model (McLagan, 1989) provides a foundational structure for fostering intrapreneurship within organizations, with its three core interdependent domains, namely, Training & Development (T&D), Organization Development (OD), and Career Development (CD). The T&D domain directly supports this by equipping employees with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to recognize and act on innovative opportunities. The OD domain enhances intrapreneurial potential by shaping a culture that values experimentation, teamwork, and adaptive change - critical conditions for employees to challenge the status quo, and

1. INTRAPRENEURSHIP	2. HRD	3. INTRAPRENEURSHIP-HRD INTEGRATION
<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>A set of <b>agentic, strategic, and innovation-oriented behaviors</b> demonstrated by employees within an organizational structure. It involves proactive development and implementation of new ideas, not necessarily bound by formal job roles. Emphasizes risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness</p>	<p><b>Definition</b></p> <p>The structured set of activities aimed at improving individual and organizational learning, performance, and adaptability, through the enhancement of employee knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors.</p>	<p><b>Purpose of Integration</b></p> <p>HRD enables self-development and individual innovation as a natural outcome of learning, and strategic career positioning. HRD as a driver of intrapreneurship within organizations.</p>
<p><b>Levels of Analysis</b></p> <p><b>Individual level (Primary Focus):</b> Employees as intrapreneurs – initiative-takers, innovators, and internal change agents (bottom-up approach)</p> <p><b>Team level:</b> Collaboration in initiating innovation projects.</p> <p><b>Organizational level:</b> Corporate entrepreneurship – structures and culture that support innovation.</p>	<p><b>Scope</b></p> <p>Development at multiple levels: individual, team, organizational.</p> <p>Encompasses both formal (training, coaching programs) and informal ( feedback) learning and growth processes.</p> <p><b>Institutional context:</b> Governance environment shaped by the Host Institutional System (HIS)</p>	<p><b>Intrapreneurship &amp; HRD Main Areas</b></p> <p><b>Specific Training &amp; Development in intrapreneurship :</b> Empowers employees with the knowledge and skills, to identify and act on opportunities.</p> <p><b>Organization Development supporting intrapreneurship:</b> Shapes the structural and cultural context necessary for entrepreneurial freedom.</p> <p><b>Career Development focused in intrapreneurship:</b> Directly linked to individual innovation behavior and proactive career strategies.</p>
<p><b>Individual Antecedents</b></p> <p><b>Personal factors:</b> Self-efficacy, motivation, perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991), career aspirations, autonomy</p> <p><b>Social environment:</b> Support from leaders, organizational culture, peer influence</p>	<p><b>The HRD Wheel (McLagan, 1989) - Main Areas</b></p> <p><b>1. Training and Development</b></p> <p>Skill building and development, technical learning, mentoring and coaching</p> <p><b>2. Organization Development (OD)</b></p> <p>Change initiatives. Values alignment, innovation climate.</p> <p><b>3. Career Development</b></p> <p>Career pathing, Individual growth &amp; empowerment, progression opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Value Proposition</b></p> <p>Embedding intrapreneurship into HRD practices enhances the strategic role of HRD.</p> <p>It offers a <b>relational and integrated model</b>, aligning individual agency with organizational adaptability.</p>
<p><b>Individual Outcomes</b></p> <p>Enhanced employee engagement, career development, and psychological empowerment.</p> <p>Potential personal costs (e.g., burnout, conflict with formal roles)</p>		

Figure 1. Summary of the relationship between intrapreneurship and HRD

the CD domain aligns intrapreneurial activities with individual growth pathways, reinforcing motivation and long-term engagement. When these domains operate in synergy, HRD becomes a catalyst for intrapreneurship, ensuring that employees are better skilled, not only to innovate, but also strategically supported in doing so through aligned learning systems, cultural frameworks, and career paths.

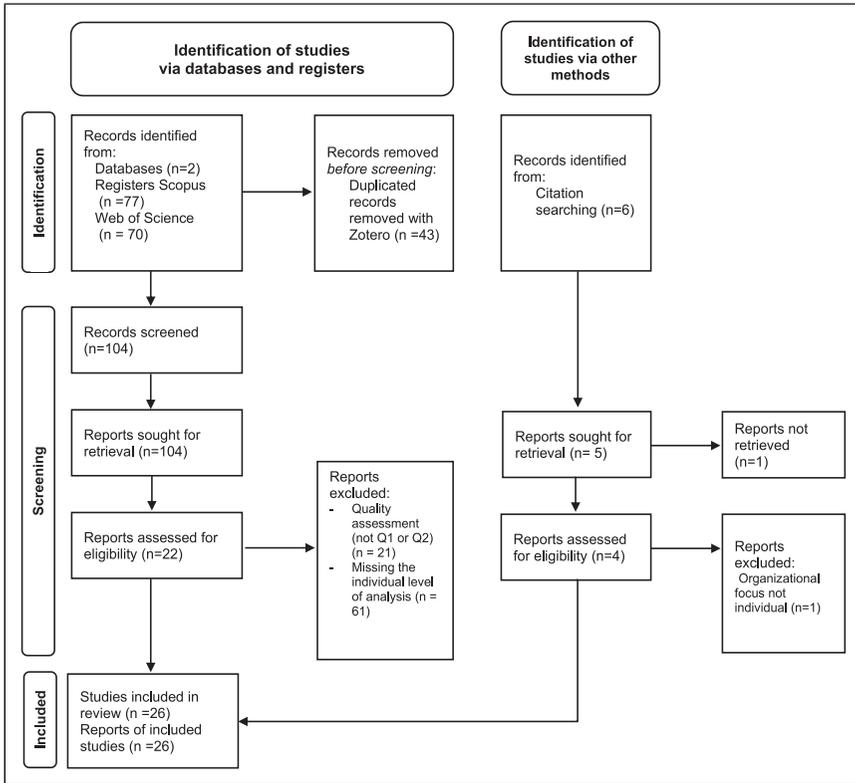
## Method

Literature reviews are useful tools that represent the first step in theory development models (Callahan, 2014; Rocco et al., 2022; Snyder, 2019), being considered an important way of structuring and presenting research findings on a meta-level and to uncover research needs and discover new ones (Snyder, 2019). A systematic literature review (SLR) was the chosen method for this research, following the PRISMA statement (Page et al., 2021) and recognizing that “SLR is a review method HRD researchers should add to their repertoire” (Rocco et al., 2023, p. 109), and also considering that SLRs can provide syntheses of the state of knowledge in a field (Cooper, 1988) and are frequently used in social sciences (Cho, 2022). By following procedures, it brings rigor, comprehension and transparency to this method, alongside the possibility of being replicable (Siddaway et al., 2019), while minimizing biases (Briner & Walshe, 2014). The type of literature review chosen was the domain-based review (Paul et al., 2023). Particularly in emergent topics, like this one, where the literature is rare and fragmented, as noticed previously, and also considering that the relationship between intrapreneurship and HRD has not been made yet, there’s an urgent need to collect evidence and build new knowledge.

### *Literature Search Flow*

Regarding the need to define, specify and clarify the concept of intrapreneurship at the individual level (and not at the corporate level), the search strategy involved using Boolean search strings in academic databases with the following keyword combinations: “intrapreneur\*” AND “individual\*”, OR “intrapreneur\*” AND “bottom-up\*”, OR “intrapreneur\*” AND “employee\*”, OR “intrapreneur\*” AND “behavior\*”, to focus specifically at the individual level of intrapreneurship.

The research was conducted in two high-impact scientific databases relevant to the social sciences, specifically SCOPUS, covering human sciences, business & management, and psychology, and Web of Science (WoS), focusing on business & economics, psychology, and education - the intention of using two relevant databases was to get a wider coverage of articles. It resulted into 147 initial articles (Scopus = 77 + WoS = 70). No time range was defined to expand the research outreach, in order to get a better coverage and all the possible articles about the topic. The data collection, analysis, synthesis, and integration were carried out by a single author to minimize reviewer bias, over approximately six months, from August 2023 to January 2024. The reference manager ZOTERO was used to remove duplicated records (in this case, 43) and 104 were screened (Scopus = 55 + WoS = 49). All the details can be found in [Figure 2](#).



**Figure 2.** PRISMA 2020 flow diagram (adapted from [Page et al., 2021](#))

The inclusion criteria required articles to be peer-reviewed and written in English, while quality assessment ensured that only articles ranked in Q1 and Q2 of the Journal Citation Reports were considered - especially due to the lack of conceptual clarity previously identified, regarding intrapreneurship and some other concepts used as synonyms (e.g. corporate entrepreneurship). Studies were excluded if they did not focus on the individual level, or lacked an employee-centered perspective (i.e., articles referring top-down organizational approaches were not included).

After this process, 22 articles were considered (Scopus = 13 + WoS = 9) and four more were included through citation searching, totaling 26 articles to be included in the SLR. At first, the articles were summarized and analysed regarding their main insights and theoretical focus. As a second step, we proceeded to a content analysis, using the matrix-method ([Garrard, 2004](#)). Finally, with the identified relevant research subjects, the content was organized into a novel conceptual framework, integrating intrapreneurship and HRD, at the individual level.

## Results

### *Overview of Included Studies*

The 26 articles considered for the SLR were written between 2006 and 2023 (data collected in August), with a peak in 2019. Interestingly, 69% of the articles were written in the last five years (since 2019), revealing the growing interest in this research area. The articles were published in 22 different journals, with the *European Journal of Innovation Management* and the *Frontiers in Psychology* having represented two articles each. The *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal* registered three articles. These three journals represent 27% of the total. It can be observed that most of the journals are positioned in the management & entrepreneurship category and only four of them cover specifically the human resources area (*Employee Relations*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*), representing only 19% of the total. This reinforces the need for researching intrapreneurship in a human-centred approach, at an individual level, producing relevant knowledge for the speciality journals, considering intrapreneurship as an “emerging phenomena from practice that is not yet theorized or conceptualized in the (HR) literature” (Garavan, 2023, p. 479). Table 2 presents these results.

### *Insights for Intrapreneurship and HRD Theory*

As a first step, to present, synthesise and report results, a framework-based review was used (Paul et al., 2023). Within a total of 26 studies, only six are qualitative (23%), with three literature reviews included, reinforcing the need for more qualitative research on the topic. The main insights/method/theory per article can be observed in Table 3.

### *What are the New Angles that These Results Introduce to Our Review?*

*Intrapreneurship as a Learning and Development Process.* Several studies (e.g., Di Fabio & Duradoni, 2019; Gawke et al., 2017; Kim & Beehr, 2023) emphasize intrapreneurial behavior as a form of learning-in-action. It requires the development of personal resources such as self-efficacy, resilience, and psychological empowerment - all central to HRD's training and development dimension. Through strategic learning interventions (formal and informal), HRD builds the capabilities necessary for employees to engage in innovation, idea generation, and opportunity realization.

*HRD as an Enabler of Proactive Work Behavior.* HRD enhances key antecedents of intrapreneurship - capabilities (Åmo, 2006b), motivation (Duradoni & Di Fabio, 2019), self-confidence (Chouchane et al., 2021), and knowledge sharing (Escribá-Carda et al., 2020). This aligns closely with the HRD bottom-up approach that emphasizes self-initiated behavior and individual agency. Career development systems, when well-designed, empower employees to align personal aspirations with organizational opportunity.

**Table 2.** Included Articles/Journal, Chronological Order

Authors	Journal	Year	% / Total
Åmo (2006a)	International journal of innovation and learning	2006	7.69%
Åmo (2006b)	International journal of knowledge management studies		
Åmo (2010)	International journal of entrepreneurial venturing	2010	3.85%
Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2013)	Small business economics	2013	7.69%
Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)	International entrepreneurship and management journal		
Park et al. (2014)	Management communication quarterly	2014	3.85%
Gawke et al. (2017)	European management journal	2017	3.85%
Gawke et al. (2018)	Journal of occupational health psychology	2018	3.85%
Ben Hador and Klein (2019)	Employee relations	2019	23.08%
Blanka (2019)	Review of managerial science		
Di Fabio and Duradoni (2019)	Frontiers in psychology		
Duradoni and Di Fabio (2019)	Sustainability - MDPI		
Gawke et al. (2019)	Journal of vocational behavior		
Neessen et al. (2019)	International entrepreneurship and management journal		
Do and Luu (2020)	International journal of contemporary hospitality management	2020	11.54%
Escribá-Carda et al. (2020)	Baltic journal of management		
Mahmoud et al. (2020)	Management research review		
Chouchane et al. (2021)	Journal of management & organization	2021	11.54%
Farrukh et al. (2021)	European journal of innovation management		
Huang et al. (2021)	Frontiers in psychology		
Mahmoud et al. (2022a)	International journal of productivity and performance management	2022	11.54%
Mahmoud et al. (2022b)	European journal of innovation management		
Nasaj et al. (2022)	International journal of innovation management		
Kim and Beehr (2023)	International journal of entrepreneurial behavior & research	2023	11.54%
Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023)	International entrepreneurship and management journal		
Revuelto-Taboada et al. (2023)	Service business		

*Organizational Development & Context Sensitivity.* Studies grounded in Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) - the most cited theory to frame intrapreneurship - and Social Exchange Theory (SET) stress the importance of managerial trust, support, and organizational climate. HRD practices that promote reciprocity, cultivate psychological

**Table 3.** Articles Characterization, Chronological Order

Authors	Insights/Key concepts	Method	Theory
Åmo (2006a)	Employees are more likely to exhibit innovation behavior in organizations where there is a higher perceived desire for innovation behavior. The proactive nature of employees positively correlates with their innovation behavior	Quantitative	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
Åmo (2006b)	Understanding the link between intellectual capital, personal intellectual capital, and rewards can foster more and better aligned employee innovation behavior in organizations	Qualitative (case studies)	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
Åmo (2010)	Differentiates intrapreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship. Intrapreneurship focuses on overcoming resistance from the organization, while corporate entrepreneurship emphasizes persuading employees to bring new business ideas to management for approval	Qualitative (case studies)	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2013)	Intrapreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial intentions are distinct constructs with different antecedents, with self-efficacy is related to both intentions. Attitudes to income, ownership, and autonomy relate only to entrepreneurial intentions while attitude to risk relates only to intrapreneurial intentions	Quantitative	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)	Formal (task specialization: Horizontal and vertical participation; formalization) and informal (social exchange) work context affect employees' intrapreneurial behavior. Trust in the direct manager is an important informal factor. Innovativeness and personal initiative but not risk-taking play a role in translating behavior into intrapreneurial projects	Quantitative	Social exchange theory (SET)

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

Authors	Insights/Key concepts	Method	Theory
Park et al. (2014)	Organizations can increase employee intrapreneurship and scouting through relationship building. Employees' perception on managerial receptiveness, employee empowerment, and communication symmetry affect the quality of organization-employee relationship (OER)	Quantitative	Social exchange theory (SET)
Gawke et al. (2017)	Employee intrapreneurship increases personal resources over time and personal-resources lead to higher and more stable work engagement. - Employee intrapreneurship, personal resources, and work engagement form a "resources gain cycle", meaning proactive work behaviors are expected to influence (personal) resources, which in turn influence work engagement	Quantitative	Job Demands-resources (JD-R), conservation of resources theories (COR)
Gawke et al. (2018)	Employee intrapreneurship (EI) has personal costs and benefits. It relates positively to work engagement for employees high (vs. low) in sensitivity to rewards (BAS), which subsequently related positively to innovativeness and in-role performance and negatively to work avoidance. In contrast, EI relates positively to exhaustion for employees high (vs. low) in sensitivity to punishments (BIS), which subsequently related positively to work avoidance and negatively to in-role performance (but not to innovativeness)	Quantitative	Job Demands-resources (JD-R), reinforcement sensitivity theory (RST)
Blanka (2019)	Presents an integrated framework for intrapreneurship at an individual level with 5 streams: (1) individual and (2) organizational-level perspective, (3) context orientation in research; (4) possible outcomes of intrapreneurship; (5) factors promoting intrapreneurial activities	Qualitative (systematic literature review - SLR)	Several - SLR

(continued)

**Table 3.** (continued)

Authors	Insights/Key concepts	Method	Theory
<b>Di Fabio and Duradoni (2019)</b>	Intrapreneurial self-capital (ISC) is a core of individual resources) that includes seven first-order constructs: Core self-evaluation, hardiness, creative self-efficacy, resilience, goal mastery, decisiveness, and vigilance. ISC is identified as a primary preventive resource for effectively dealing with the complexity of the current entrepreneurial environment; being connected to employability, career decision making, innovative behavior, and well-being	Qualitative (adapted version of systematic qualitative review)	Conservation of resources theories (COR)
<b>Duradoni and Di Fabio (2019)</b>	Intrapreneurial self-capital (ISC) mediates the effect of extraversion on employees' innovative behavior and ISC mediates the effect of extraversion on employees' innovative implementation behavior	Quantitative	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
<b>Gawke et al. (2019)</b>	Definition of the employee intrapreneurship scale (EIS) as a valid measurement instrument. Employee intrapreneurship consists of venture behavior and strategic renewal behavior (the two sub-dimensions of employee intrapreneurship)	Quantitative	Reinforcement sensitivity theory (RST), behavior based approach
<b>Neessen et al. (2019)</b>	Intrapreneurship is a complex, multilevel construct, including innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, opportunity recognition/exploitation, and networking. Organizational factors can moderate the relationship between intrapreneurial behavior and organizational outcomes	Qualitative (systematic literature review)	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
<b>Ben Hador and Klein (2019)</b>	Intrapreneurial behaviors moderate the positive connection between age and performance. Age is negatively connected to intrapreneurial activities, mediated by intra-organizational social capital	Quantitative	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

Authors	Insights/Key concepts	Method	Theory
<a href="#">Do and Luu (2020)</a>	Employee behavioral factors ((subjective norms, attitude towards intrapreneurship and perceived behavioural control) and perception of firm entrepreneurial orientation (innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking) have a significant impact on venture behavior and strategic renewal behavior and firm performance	Quantitative	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
<a href="#">Escribá-Carda et al. (2020)</a>	Employees' perceptions of high-performance work systems (HPWS) do not have a direct effect on intrapreneurial behavior (IPB) but instead have an indirect effect when mediated by knowledge sharing	Quantitative	Theory of planned behavior (TPB)
<a href="#">Mahmoud et al. (2020)</a>	Conscientiousness, disagreeableness, and emotional stability have a direct relationship with intrapreneurial behavior (IB). IB positively mediates the relationship between conscientiousness, disagreeableness, and emotional stability with individual performance (IP). - Extraversion and openness to experience do not have a significant relationship with IB.	Quantitative	Traits theory and the psychological entrepreneurship theory (PET)
<a href="#">Chouchane et al. (2021)</a>	Perceptions of organizational support contribute to employees' intrapreneurial intentions and behaviors, but only when employees feel confident about their intrapreneurial skills (intrapreneurial self-efficacy)	Quantitative	Social cognitive theory (SCT), theory of planned behavior (TPB)
<a href="#">Huang et al. (2021)</a>	Framework to cultivate intrapreneurship at individual and organizational levels, identifying enablers and facilitating mechanisms for intrapreneurship. Demonstrates the intertwined relationships among intrapreneurship, innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainability	Qualitative	Theoretical view of sustainability

(continued)

**Table 3.** (continued)

Authors	Insights/Key concepts	Method	Theory
<a href="#">Farrukh et al. (2021)</a>	Leader-member exchange (LMX) and leaders' expectations have a positive impact on employees' intrapreneurial behavior (IB), and this association is mediated by organizational climate for innovation	Quantitative	Behavioral plasticity theory, social exchange theory (SET)
<a href="#">Nasaj et al. (2022)</a>	Intrapreneurial personality (IP) has a direct relationship with idea realization stage, but no direct relationship between idea generation and idea promotion. Network building ability mediates the relationship between intrapreneurial personality and innovation	Quantitative	Social capital theory (SCT)
<a href="#">Mahmoud et al. (2022a)</a>	Psychological safety (PS) has a significant direct relationship with both individual performance (IP) and intrapreneurial behavior (IB). IB mediates the relationship between PS and IP.	Quantitative	Social exchange theory (SET), psychological entrepreneurship theory (PET)
<a href="#">Mahmoud et al. (2022b)</a>	Psychological empowerment (PE) has a significant direct relationship with individual performance (IP). Intrapreneurial behavior (IB) has a positive significant impact on IP. IB mediates the relationship between PE and IP.	Quantitative	Empowerment theory
<a href="#">Kim and Beehr (2023)</a>	Empowering leadership predicts employees' resources of role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) and meaningful work. Increased person-job fit enhances employees' role breadth self-efficacy and meaningful work and RBSE and meaningful work predict entrepreneurial behaviors	Quantitative	Job Demands-resources (JD-R), conservation of resources theories (COR)

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

Authors	Insights/Key concepts	Method	Theory
Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023)	Human resource management (HRM) strength moderates the relationships between high-performance work systems (HPWS) and intrapreneurial behavior and between knowledge management and intrapreneurial behavior. However, in the second of these relationships, the effect is the opposite of what is to be expected	Quantitative	Social exchange theory (SET), ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO)
Revuelto-Taboada et al. (2023)	The positive influence of high-performance work systems (HPWS) on intrapreneurial behavior (IB) is indirect and occurs through knowledge management processes (KMP). Supervisor support (SS) moderates the relationships between HPWS and IB and between HPWS and KMP. The greater the SS the greater the effect of HPWS on IB, however the effects of HPWS on KMP become slightly smaller as SS increases, contrary to the expectations	Quantitative	Social exchange theory (SET), ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO)

safety, and promote open communication systems are crucial in fostering an environment where intrapreneurial actions are encouraged and valued.

*Performance Management and Resource Cycles.* The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) and Conservation of Resources (COR) theories (Gawke et al., 2017, 2018; Kim & Beehr, 2023) highlight how intrapreneurship functions within feedback loops of personal and organizational energy. HRD contributes by designing performance management systems that recognize, reward, and recycle innovation energy into sustainable engagement and resource growth. The result is a “resource gain cycle” that enhances both performance and well-being.

*Strategic HRD and Organizational Competitiveness.* Intrapreneurial behavior has clear ties to strategic renewal and organizational transformation (Do & Luu, 2020; Gawke et al., 2019), which HRD supports by aligning talent systems with innovation goals. When HRD integrates Human Resource Planning and Performance Management it ensures the long-term sustainability and strategic alignment of intrapreneurial outcomes.

*High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and HRD Leverage.* Research by Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023) and Revuelto-Taboada et al. (2023) shows that HRM system strength and supervisor support significantly moderate intrapreneurial outcomes. HRD must thus work in tandem with HRM to structure high-impact systems that support knowledge management, innovation flow, and behavioral autonomy.

In synthesis, intrapreneurship can be perceived as a form of applied HRD. It translates individual learning, motivation, and support into innovation and value creation within organizations.

## *Thematic Results*

To structure the analysis results, we followed the Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes (ADO) framework (Paul & Benito, 2018), theoretically supported on the HRD Wheel Model (McLagan, 1989). Our analysis framework outlines a developmental pathway: Antecedents - What HRD Supports → Intrapreneurship definition (Behavior) - What HRD Enables → Individual Outcomes - What HRD Measures and Sustains.

This framework directly addresses the identified literature gaps. First, it presents intrapreneurship as a deliberate behavioral choice driven by individual antecedents and resulting in meaningful personal outcomes. It brings clarity, to close the identified gap of conceptual confusion between intrapreneurship (bottom-up approach) and corporate entrepreneurship (top-down approach) (Åmo, 2010; Blanka, 2019; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Neessen et al. 2019). Second, it positions intrapreneurship under a HRD lens. The pathway identified in the model represents a developmental opportunity and a point of strategic intervention to support employees’ awareness, learning and growth. HRD acts as the enabling system of intrapreneurship, across this continuum, as observed in Figure 3.

After this theoretical framing, the results, per question, are now presented.

### Intrapreneurship Definition

The analysis of the intrapreneurship definition matrix presents intrapreneurship as a behavior, composed by six dimensions that emerged organically from the literature mapping. Table 4 presents the definition of the six dimensions, supported by the literature.

Each dimension was analysed, within the specific HRD taxonomy, as follows.

**Communication and Information.** This dimension aligns primarily with Training & Development, as it reflects the cultivation of interpersonal skills, assertive communication, and active knowledge exchange. These capabilities enhance employee collaboration and support continuous learning environments (Escribá-Carda et al., 2020; Farrukh et al., 2021; Neessen et al., 2019; Park et al., 2014).

**Innovativeness.** Defined as the ability to generate and implement new ideas - fits directly into Organizational Development, as it enhances adaptability and fuels systemic innovation. It may also be supported through targeted Training & Development interventions aimed at creative problem-solving and ideation (Gawke et al., 2019; Nasaj et al., 2022; Neessen et al., 2019; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013; Åmo, 2010).

**Networking and Influence.** This dimension facilitates Career Development, enabling employees to navigate professional environments, access resources, and gain visibility. Building social capital and exercising influence are vital for personal advancement and mobility (Nasaj et al., 2022; Neessen et al., 2019; Park et al., 2014).

**New Ventures and Opportunities.** By encouraging entrepreneurial thinking and initiatives within the organization, this dimension strengthens Organizational Development.

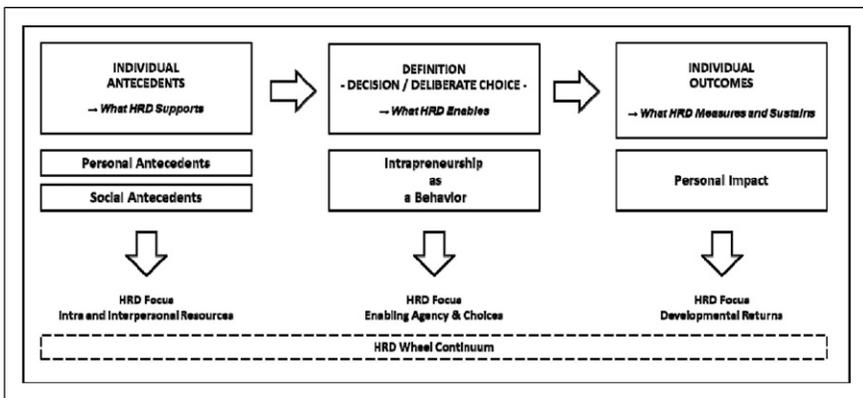


Figure 3. Intrapreneurship/HRD theoretical framework

**Table 4.** Intrapreneurship Definition Matrix

Dimensions	Definition	Reference
Communication and information	The practice of a clear and objective communication (assertiveness) and the ability to express and accept different ideas and opinions; also the search, management and active sharing of information relevant to the organization	Escribá-Carda et al. (2020) Farrukh et al. (2021) Neessen et al. (2019) Park et al. (2014)
Innovativeness	Individual practice of generating, promoting, and implementing new ideas in the organization, with or even without the support of the organization. Related to creativity and the ability to see beyond the obvious (out of the box)	Åmo (2010); Gawke et al. (2019); Nasaj et al. (2022) Neessen et al. (2019) Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)
Networking and influence	The act of developing professional relationships and manage networks of influence, inside and outside the organization, with a view to achieving and leveraging social influence within the organization	Nasaj et al. (2022) Neessen et al. (2019) Park et al. (2014)
New ventures and opportunities	The ability and related actions to create and exploit business opportunities, not only within the organization, but also outside. An approach that allows to strategically leverage the business, through the development of new products, services or procedures, or even new markets	Do and Luu (2020) Gawke et al. (2019) Neessen et al. (2019)
Personal initiative	Employees' proactivity with extra-role behaviors, using their own individual resources/skills. It includes personal motivation and orientation towards action and the results achievement	Farrukh et al. (2021) Gawke et al. (2019) Nasaj et al. (2022) Neessen et al. (2019) Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)
Risk-taking	Risk level that individuals take in the daily work - risk-aversion or tolerance; also linked with the fear of failing, dealing with uncertainty, and the willingness to try new approaches or solutions	Gawke et al. (2019) Neessen et al. (2019) Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)

It drives renewal and innovation by tapping into internal and external opportunities. It also supports long-term strategic capacity (Do & Luu, 2020; Gawke et al., 2019; Neessen et al., 2019).

*Personal Initiative.* This self-directed behavior supports both Career Development and Organizational Development. On one hand, it enables employees to take ownership of their career goals; on the other, it contributes to organizational change and innovation

(Farrukh et al., 2021; Gawke et al., 2019; Nasaj et al., 2022; Neessen et al., 2019; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013).

**Risk-Taking.** Risk-taking enhances Organizational Development by fostering adaptability and experimentation. It also relates to Training & Development, as employees need structured support to build confidence and decision-making under uncertainty (Gawke et al., 2019; Neessen et al., 2019; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013).

In sum, intrapreneurship thrives when HRD practices are intentionally designed to support the personal, relational, and strategic capacities that underlie each of its core dimensions. By aligning training, career development, and organizational culture initiatives with intrapreneurial behaviors, HRD transforms employee potential into sustained innovation and strategic renewal. From the standpoint of HRD, each dimension of intrapreneurship represents not only a behavioral expression of employee innovation but also a distinct developmental opportunity.

### *Intrapreneurship Antecedents and Consequents*

Individual antecedents of intrapreneurship, intrapreneurship as a decision and its individual outcomes were the three main categories structured and analysed. For depth analysis, the personal antecedents were structured into four subcategories, as presented in Huang et al. (2021) review: capabilities, perceptions, personality, and self-attitudes. Then, all the variables mapped and supported by the literature were listed in a matrix format, presented in Table 5.

### *Personal Antecedents for Intrapreneurship*

**Capabilities.** Intrapreneurial capabilities comprise traits such as innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, opportunity recognition, and networking (Ámo, 2006a; Neessen et al., 2019). Personal resources including resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy are also conducive to intrapreneurial activity (Gawke et al., 2017). Specific competencies such as problem-solving, endurance, and team skills enable individuals to navigate uncertainty and drive innovation. Nasaj et al. (2022) highlight network-building ability as key to accessing resources and mediating innovation stages. The concept of Intrapreneurial Self-Capital (ISC) encapsulates multiple such resources, including creative efficacy and goal mastery (Di Fabio & Duradoni, 2019). Although age may correlate negatively with intrapreneurship, intra-organizational social capital can moderate this effect (Ben Hador & Klein, 2019).

**Perceptions.** Employees' perceptions of recognition, empowerment, and supportive communication are central to their engagement in intrapreneurship (Ámo, 2006b; Kim & Beehr, 2023; Park et al., 2014). The perceived effectiveness of high-performance work systems (HPWS) and their influence via knowledge-sharing processes shape intrapreneurial behavior (Escribá-Carda et al., 2020; Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023). Similarly, managerial openness and perceptions of organizational climate foster

**Table 5.** Intrapreneurship Antecedents and Consequents Matrix

Categories	Variables	References
Individual antecedents		
Personal antecedents		
Capabilities	Age, entrepreneurial qualities, intrapreneurial self-capital, network building ability, personal characteristics, personal intellectual capital, personal resources, skills/Habilities	Ámo (2006a, 2006b), Ben Hador and Klein (2019), Chouchane et al. (2021), Di Fabio and Duradoni (2019), Duradoni and Di Fabio (2019), Gawke et al. (2017), Nasaj et al. (2022), Neessen et al. (2019)
Perceptions	Communication symmetry, demand-ability perception - person-job fit, employee empowerment, employees' perceptions of high-performance work systems (HPWS), employees' perceptions of high-performance work systems (HPWS)/HR practices, employees' perceptions of HPWS, need-supply fit perception - person-job fit, perceived desire for innovation behavior, perceived organizational climate for innovation, perceived organizational support (POS), perceived supervisor support, perception of firm entrepreneurial orientation dimensions, perception of managerial receptiveness to innovative effort, recognition, rewards	Ámo (2006a, 2006b), Chouchane et al. (2021), Do and Luu (2020), Escribá-Carda et al. (2020), Farrukh et al. (2021), Kim and Beehr (2023), Park et al. (2014), Portalanza-Chavarría and Revuelto-Taboada (2023), Revuelto-Taboada et al. (2023)
Personality	Extraversion, intrapreneurial personality, personality traits, pro-activity, sensitivity to positive outcomes	Ámo (2006a, 2006b), Duradoni and Di Fabio (2019), Gawke et al. (2019), Mahmoud et al. (2020), Nasaj et al. (2022)
Self-attitudes	Employee behavioural factors, employee intrapreneurial intention (EI), entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), intrapreneurial intention, intrapreneurial self-efficacy (ISE), motivation, perception of own capabilities, psychological empowerment (PE), psychological safety (PS), role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE), satisfaction, tolerance for risk, work engagement	Ámo (2006b), Chouchane et al. (2021), Do and Luu (2020), Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2013), Gawke et al. (2017), Kim and Beehr (2023), Mahmoud et al. (2022a, 2022b), Neessen et al. (2019)

(continued)

**Table 5.** (continued)

Categories	Variables	References
Individual antecedents		
Social antecedents		
Relationships	Knowledge sharing, informal exchanges, intraorganizational social capital (ISC), leader-member exchange (LMX), organization-employee relationship (OER), relation to the organization, social networks	Ben Hador and Klein (2019), Escribá-Carda et al. (2020), Farrukh et al. (2021), Nasaj et al. (2022), Neessen et al. (2019), Park et al. (2014), Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)
Intrapreneurship definition		
Decision	Employee innovation behavior, employee strategic renewal behavior, employee venture behavior, employees' innovative behaviors (EIB), employees' intrapreneurial behavior (IB), employees' communicative behaviors, innovativeness, intrapreneurial behavior, networking, opportunity recognition/Exploitation, personal initiative, proactiveness, risk taking, scouting	Ámo (2010), Farrukh et al. (2021), Gawke et al. (2019), Nasaj et al. (2022), Neessen et al. (2019), Park et al. (2014), Rigtering and Weitzel (2013)
Individual outcomes		
Personal impact	Motivation, employability and career decision making self-efficacy (CDMSE), exhaustion, employee knowledge, individual performance (IP), learning cycle, new ventures/projects, personal growth, personal resources, scouting, self-realization, skills development, success, well-being, work engagement	Ámo, 2006; Di Fabio & Duradoni, 2019; Escribá-Carda et al., 2020, Farrukh et al. (2021), Gawke et al. (2017), Mahmoud et al. (2022a), Nasaj et al. (2022), Neessen et al. (2019), Park et al. (2014)

motivation and innovation (Do & Luu, 2020; Farrukh et al., 2021). Supervisor support and HRM implementation strength further modulate these dynamics (Portalanza-Chavarría & Revuelto-Taboada, 2023).

*Personality.* Traits such as proactivity, conscientiousness, and emotional stability consistently relate to intrapreneurial behavior (Ámo, 2006a; Mahmoud et al., 2020). Extraversion has an indirect effect through Intrapreneurial Self-Capital (Duradoni & Di Fabio, 2019). Nasaj et al. (2022) conceptualize the “intrapreneurial personality” as a composite of traits essential to innovation realization. Some traditionally less favourable traits (e.g., disagreeableness) may support intrapreneurial persistence in complex contexts.

*Self-Attitudes.* Intrinsic motivation, satisfaction, and self-efficacy drive individuals to initiate innovation (Ámo, 2006b; Neessen et al., 2019). Constructs like Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013), Intrapreneurial Self-Efficacy (Chouchane et al., 2021), and Role Breadth Self-Efficacy (Kim & Beehr, 2023) highlight the importance of confidence in going beyond formal roles. Perceptions of job fit - such as demand-ability and need-supply congruence - enhance the likelihood of entrepreneurial action. Risk tolerance, psychological empowerment, and safety (Mahmoud et al., 2020, 2022) are also central to whether individuals feel enabled to act. Together, these self-judgments shape employees’ intrapreneurial intentions and behavior.

### *Social Antecedents for Intrapreneurship*

*Relationships.* Workplace relationships play a foundational role in enabling intrapreneurship. Informal exchanges and trust - especially in direct managerial relationships - enhance psychological safety and openness to innovation (Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013). Trust-based organizational ties, characterized by mutual commitment and satisfaction-known as the Organization-Employee Relationship (OER) - positively influence motivation and performance (Park et al., 2014). A strong sense of belonging within the organization further supports employees’ willingness to engage in intrapreneurial efforts (Neessen et al., 2019). The facilitation of knowledge sharing, particularly when embedded within high-performance work systems (HPWS), contributes to the development of collective intelligence and supports intrapreneurial behavior (Escribá-Carda et al., 2020). Intraorganizational social capital, encompassing shared goals and reciprocity, fosters collaboration and reinforces trust as a prerequisite for innovation (Ben Hador & Klein, 2019). Leadership dynamics are equally influential: high-quality Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), marked by empowerment and respect, encourages risk-taking and proactivity beyond formal job roles (Farrukh et al., 2021). Finally, social networks - both internal and external - serve as critical platforms for knowledge exchange and resource access, underpinning the co-creation and execution of intrapreneurial initiatives (Nasaj et al., 2022).

## *Individual Outcomes of Intrapreneurship*

Intrapreneurial behavior profoundly influences individual-level outcomes, particularly in areas of motivation, performance, and well-being. [Gawke et al. \(2017\)](#) identified a “gain cycle” wherein entrepreneurial initiative (EI) enhances personal resources, which in turn stabilize work engagement over time. However, [Gawke et al. \(2018\)](#) also caution that EI can yield both positive and negative effects: while individuals with high reward sensitivity experience greater engagement and performance, those more sensitive to punishment may encounter exhaustion and reduced productivity. The development of intrapreneurial self-capital (ISC), as introduced by [Di Fabio and Duradoni \(2019\)](#), contributes to employability and career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE), fostering confidence in managing one’s professional path. Similarly, [Mahmoud et al. \(2022a\)](#) highlight the mediating roles of psychological empowerment and psychological safety in the relationship between intrapreneurship and individual performance, while [Farrukh et al. \(2021\)](#) emphasize the importance of high-quality leader-member exchanges in promoting proactive and innovative efforts. Skills development and learning are also core outcomes. [Åmo \(2006b\)](#) and [Escribá-Carda et al. \(2020\)](#) link intrapreneurship to continuous learning and problem-solving, promoting both individual growth and organizational renewal. [Åmo \(2006b\)](#) and [Neessen et al. \(2019\)](#) associate intrapreneurial activity with participation in new ventures and internal projects that facilitate innovation. Recognition of these efforts contributes to self-realization and motivation, reinforcing intrapreneurial behavior ([Di Fabio & Duradoni, 2019](#); [Neessen et al., 2019](#)). Ultimately, intrapreneurship enhances well-being, work engagement, and individual performance by fostering a sense of accomplishment and meaningful work ([Gawke et al., 2017](#)).

In synthesis, intrapreneurship is a multifaceted concept with profound implications for individual employees, our research level of analysis and focus. The “intrapreneurial decision”, the deliberated act of behaving like an in-house intrapreneur ([Pinchot, 1987](#)), emerges from a dynamic interaction of personal and relational antecedents, equipping individuals with both the competence and confidence to engage in innovation and entrepreneurial projects. As a result, intrapreneurial behavior leads to meaningful individual outcomes such as personal growth, employability, enhanced performance, and skill development, aligned with HRD purpose ([Alagaraja, 2013](#); [Hamlin & Stewart, 2011](#); [Poell, 2017](#); [Wang & Doty, 2022](#)). For a clear perception of this “individual impact”, regarding HRD, the results can be summarized into five interconnected categories, namely:

***Career Development and Employability.*** Captures how intrapreneurial activity enhances individuals’ readiness for evolving career paths. Employees report greater career decision-making self-efficacy, improved employability, and heightened motivation - all of which empower them to take ownership of their professional growth.

***Individual Performance.*** Employees direct contribution to organizational growth. Outcomes such as the participation in activity in intrapreneurial projects demonstrate the tangible value of empowering employees to innovate from within.

*Learning and Growth Opportunities.* Reflects the developmental value of intrapreneurship. Through proactive engagement, individuals gain access to learning opportunities, foster skills development, and increase their employee knowledge base. These learning-centered outcomes align directly with training and development priorities in HRD.

*Risk and Strain Outcomes.* It is important to acknowledge potential risks. For some employees, particularly in high-demand or unsupported contexts, intrapreneurial engagement may lead to exhaustion. This highlights the need for HRD systems to balance challenge with support, ensuring that innovation does not come at the cost of employee well-being.

*Well-Being.* Emphasize the emotional and psychological benefits of intrapreneurial behavior. Employees often report increased work engagement, personal resources (such as resilience and optimism), and overall well-being. These experiences are critical for sustaining performance, and retention, while creating meaningful work environments.

These results underscore the importance of understanding how intrapreneurship can be systematically integrated into HRD practices - an issue addressed in the following section.

### *Intrapreneurship Integration in HRD Practices*

To effectively integrate intrapreneurship into HRD practices, organizations must move beyond traditional training and career pathways to adopt a developmental approach that actively cultivates entrepreneurial behaviors among employees (Poell et al., 2018). By embedding the intrapreneurial skillset into the employee lifecycle, HRD practitioners can create environments that empower individuals to take initiative, recognize opportunities, and contribute to business renewal from within. Leveraging on the seven key areas of McLagan's (1989) HRD model, this integration of intrapreneurship becomes both systemic and sustainable. In detail:

Training & Development is foundational to intrapreneurship, as it equips employees with the skills and knowledge required to identify and act on innovative opportunities. Through structured training, coaching or mentoring, organizations can build "intrapreneurial self-capital," allowing individuals to navigate complex environments, engage in entrepreneurial tasks, and generate new ideas. Research confirms that targeted training enhances well-being, engagement, and innovation outcomes (Blanka, 2019; Duradoni & Di Fabio, 2019; Gawke et al., 2017).

Organization Development contributes by cultivating a participative and psychologically safe culture that encourages experimentation and initiative. By shaping a work climate supportive of symmetrical communication, trust, and innovation, HR professionals create the structural conditions necessary for intrapreneurship to thrive (Escribá-Carda et al., 2020; Kim & Beehr, 2023; Park et al., 2014). High-performance work systems (HPWS) also empower employees by decentralizing decision-making and promoting autonomy (Portalanza-Chavarría & Revuelto-Taboada, 2023).

Career Development aligns employees' personal growth goals with organizational innovation needs. By offering coaching, career counselling, and leadership

development, HR helps employees envision internal entrepreneurial paths, sustaining employability and boosting decision-making self-efficacy (Ben Hador & Klein, 2019; Di Fabio & Duradoni, 2019).

Human Resource Planning supports intrapreneurship by forecasting talent needs and ensuring that the right individuals - those with entrepreneurial orientation and initiative - are recruited and nurtured, reinforcing their intention to stay (and not to quit). This area links strategic workforce planning to the intrapreneurial mindset, especially when HR practices are designed to enhance knowledge sharing and leverage tacit knowledge (Do & Luu, 2020; Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023).

Performance Management enables innovation by recognizing and rewarding intrapreneurial efforts. When performance systems are aligned to value creativity, knowledge sharing, and opportunity creation, employees are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities within the firm (Escribá-Carda et al., 2020; Farrukh et al., 2021). Participative appraisal processes that account for proactive behaviors and innovation metrics are particularly impactful.

Organization & Job Design influences intrapreneurial behavior by determining the degree of autonomy and complexity embedded in roles. Jobs that offer enriched scopes and allow for cross-functional collaboration enable employees to engage in innovative problem-solving and venture creation (Nasaj et al., 2022). A well-designed job system enhances self-efficacy and the ability to recognize opportunities within and beyond traditional role boundaries.

Selection & Staffing ensures that the organization attracts individuals with a strong innovation profile. Selective recruitment processes that emphasize traits like resilience, proactivity, and creative self-efficacy increase the likelihood of building an intrapreneurial workforce. Additionally, HR can enhance entrepreneurial orientation by strategically placing high-potential employees in roles with growth potential (Ámo, 2006b; Chouchane et al., 2021; Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013).

This comprehensive approach connects with the vision of a “critical human development (CHD)” (Bierema, 2015, p. 119), considering the need for critical action research in HR, not seeing collaborators as mere resources who sell their time, but instead valuing the individual potential.

### *A Novel Framework for Intrapreneurship/HRD*

This novel framework positions intrapreneurship as an individual-level phenomenon that is deeply embedded in and supported by strategic HRD practices. It highlights how individual traits - such as capabilities, perceptions, personality, and self-attitudes - serve as key antecedents that drive intrapreneurial behavior. These personal resources are not static; they can be nurtured through HRD mechanisms such as training programs, coaching, performance support, and development planning. The model also integrates relational antecedents, such as organizational support, and workplace trust, which reflect the social fabric of the organization and are central to HRD efforts focused on building healthy, collaborative, and empowering work environments.

At the center of the model lies intrapreneurial behavior, the expression of individual agency through innovation, initiative, communication, and risk-taking. These behaviors not only contribute to stimulate personal growth, engagement, and learning, which are central outcomes of HRD (bottom-level, our analytical level), but also to organizational adaptability and renewal.

Importantly, the framework depicts feedback loops, showing how engaging in intrapreneurial behavior strengthens individual capabilities and confidence, reinforcing a cycle of development. Through this lens, HRD is not only a support mechanism but an active enabler of intrapreneurship, facilitating a system where individuals evolve into change agents, and their personal and professional growth directly contribute to organizational success.

Summarizing, this model offers a holistic vision for HRD professionals to design and implement practices that support and scale intrapreneurial potential across all HRD domains, as evidenced by [Figure 4](#).

### Discussion and Implications for HRD

One of the main objectives of this review was to position intrapreneurship in the HRD domain as an emergent topic. By accomplishing this purpose, this discussion provides valuable insights for the research topic, emphasizing the significant implications of the review findings for HRD, contributing to firmly reinforce HRD as a discipline in the field of research and as a practice ([Garavan, 2023](#)).

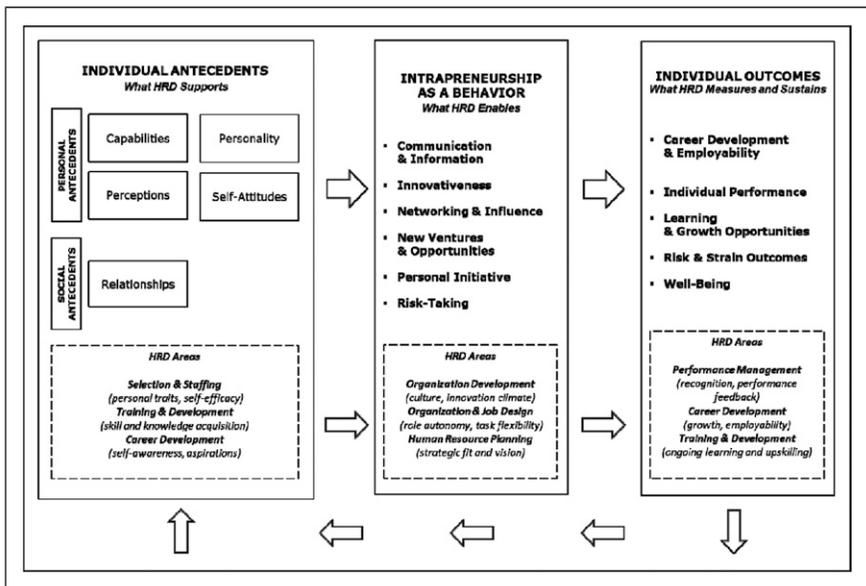


Figure 4. Novel framework for intrapreneurship/HRD

### *Theoretical Implications for HRD*

This study offers a significant theoretical advancement by reframing intrapreneurship as a developmental phenomenon (not merely a set of actions), grounded in HRD, rather than a business strategy. The proposed novel conceptual framework introduces a bottom-up perspective, positioning the individual as the central agent in the intrapreneurial process.

The novelty of this framework lies in its alignment with McLagan's (1989) seven HRD domains: Training & Development, Career Development, Organizational Development, Performance Management, Human Resource Planning, Selection & Staffing, and Organization & Job Design. Intrapreneurship is shown to be cultivated through developmental mechanisms such as structured learning opportunities, coaching, mentoring, and participative performance systems. At the behavioral level, HRD fosters the autonomy, self-efficacy, and the capacity for critical thinking and problem-solving, necessary for proactive, innovative behaviors. At the practice and process levels, HRD embeds intrapreneurial practices into daily work routines, peer collaboration, and flexible structures that promote initiative. At the system level, HRD aligns intrapreneurship with long-term strategic planning, integrating it into the full employee lifecycle from recruitment to leadership development.

Our results also extend HRD theory by clarifying intrapreneurial behavior as a voluntary, extra-role action - an expression of agentic and anticipatory effort by employees (Farrukh et al., 2021; Gawke et al., 2019). This behavior includes innovativeness, networking, strategic renewal, and venture creation, supported by developmental interventions that enhance individual confidence, decision-making capacity, and opportunity recognition. Furthermore, this review highlights an imbalance in current research, with a greater emphasis on antecedents than on individual outcomes - as visually evidenced in Table 5 - Intrapreneurship Antecedents and Consequents Matrix. Interestingly, most outcomes were positive - such as increased engagement, skills development, and well-being - yet the potential costs (e.g., exhaustion) were largely underexplored, signalling areas for future HRD research.

By designing a new integrative model, this study positions intrapreneurship within the HRD discipline as a strategic, employee-centered capability. In doing so, it lays the groundwork for continued research on how intrapreneurship can serve as a tool for personal growth, career development, talent retention, and - consequently - organizational renewal.

As Bierema (2015) emphasized, HRD is "the field best positioned to advocate for workers, organization health, and workplace justice" (p. 119). This framework supports this call by illustrating how intrapreneurship, when supported by robust and systematic HRD practices, can enhance both individual and organizational development.

### *Practical Implications for HRD*

For HRD practitioners, adopting an intrapreneurial perspective is no longer optional - it is a real need. As organizations navigate increasingly dynamic and innovation-driven contexts, HRD must evolve from a traditional support role to one that actively fosters

entrepreneurial capabilities within the workforce. Intrapreneurial HRD practices, anchored in experiential learning, developmental autonomy, and strategic thinking (Poell et al., 2018; Torraco & Lundgren, 2019), empower employees to operate beyond formal role boundaries (Farrukh et al., 2021), enhancing organizational agility and resilience.

HRD facilitates intrapreneurial behaviors by equipping employees with relevant skills, promoting entrepreneurial mindsets, and embedding innovation-oriented learning within daily work. Intrapreneurship itself can be conceptualized as a developmental learning behavior, one that involves iterative cycles of action, reflection, and adaptation (Gawke et al., 2017). HRD plays a foundational role in supporting this learning by offering formal and informal learning structures, such as coaching, job enrichment, and continuous feedback loops, that enhance individual capabilities and adaptability (Garavan, 2023; McLagan, 1989). HRD should facilitate ongoing knowledge-sharing through formal knowledge management practices, fostering a collaborative culture that enables the exchange of ideas and expertise (Ámo, 2006b; Escribá-Carda et al., 2020; Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023).

These practices have practical implications across the entire employee lifecycle. Intrapreneurial HRD initiatives can guide strategic HR practices aimed at attracting, developing, motivating retaining, and talent aligned with innovation goals (Revuelto-Taboada et al., 2023). Intrapreneurial projects foster growth in personal resources such as resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy, supporting both individual initiative and organizational renewal (Gawke et al., 2017). Activities such as venture development, opportunity recognition, and strategic renewal empower employees to take initiative and engage in innovative processes, thereby enhancing their skills and capabilities (Chouchane et al., 2021; Do & Luu, 2020).

This study contributes to practice by proposing a behavioral framework that categorizes intrapreneurship into six dimensions: communication, innovativeness, networking, opportunity seeking, personal initiative, and risk-taking. These categories offer actionable insights for HRD professionals to assess, develop, and support intrapreneurial talent. Yet, no standardized instrument for measuring intrapreneurial behavior currently exists. As such, our research might provide a basis for future scale development, aiming to support talent identification and targeted interventions in intrapreneurial domains.

HRD professionals can align learning initiatives with intrapreneurial goals by integrating creative problem-solving, risk assessment, and innovation management into development programs (Duradoni & Di Fabio, 2019; Kim & Beehr, 2023). HRD practices should also foster psychological resources by designing work environments that support autonomy, participation, and constructive failure. Leadership development becomes essential in this context: empowering supervisors to coach intrapreneurial behavior, model openness to ideas, and promote employee voice (Farrukh et al., 2021).

While the positive impacts are evident, ranging from increased motivation and performance to career development and retention, HRD must also acknowledge the potential costs of intrapreneurial work. Employees engaged in sustained innovation efforts may face burnout, role overload, or conflict with core responsibilities (Gawke et al., 2018). Therefore, HRD practices should incorporate “safeguards” for well-being and work-life balance, such as flexible role design and tailored coaching support.

In sum, HRD's role extends beyond skill development to supportive organizational culture that values employee contributions and encourages risk-taking and proactivity, both of which are essential for personal and professional growth (Farrukh et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2021; Park et al., 2014). As organizations increasingly seek internal innovation as a path to strategic renewal, HRD emerges as the function best positioned to institutionalize intrapreneurship - supporting individual growth and, consequently, organizational transformation.

## Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study employed a systematic literature review to investigate intrapreneurship at the individual level, ensuring a structured and methodologically rigorous approach to mapping the current state of knowledge. Drawing from established review protocols (Briner & Walshe, 2014; Paul et al., 2023; Rocco et al., 2022; Siddaway et al., 2019), we aimed to provide a comprehensive overview. However, the review was shaped by specific limitations, including database selection, search string scope, and a focus on articles published in English. These constraints, along with the limited inclusion of HRD - specific journals, may have excluded some relevant insights - particularly regarding emerging HRD areas such as job crafting, diversity, and inclusion. Yet, these gaps represent meaningful opportunities for future HRD scholarship to expand the field's theoretical and practical frontiers. Our results emphasize that intrapreneurship constitutes a powerful developmental process that intersects directly with the seven dimensions of HRD practice (HRD Wheel). It represents an individual capability-building mechanism with strategic implications across the employee lifecycle. From an HRD standpoint, it is crucial to understand the individual consequences of intrapreneurship. Further research should explore how engaging in intrapreneurial behavior influences personal and professional domains such as well-being, and employees' perceived sense of fulfilment or vocational calling within the organization. These dimensions are central to HRD's concern with holistic individual development.

Another important avenue for future research lies in exploring the role of intrapreneurship in influencing employee turnover intention. This links closely to HRD's strategic interest in talent development and organizational commitment. The ways in which organizational support mechanisms can facilitate intrapreneurial behavior - through leadership development, culture, structure, or reward systems - also merit further exploration. Future investigations should differentiate intrapreneurship from related constructs such as job crafting or employee voice. This would help refine theoretical boundaries and provide practical clarity for HRD practitioners designing interventions. Moreover, the voluntary nature of intrapreneurship and the interaction between personal motivation and organizational environment call for deeper inquiry into psychological empowerment and autonomy, two constructs central to HRD's practice. The contextual manifestation of intrapreneurship across different industries - such as hospitality (Do & Luu, 2020), banking (Portalanza-Chavarría & Revuelto-Taboada, 2023) - warrants attention to assess whether HRD practices should be sector-specific or universally adaptable. A largely unexplored but promising avenue

for HRD research is the role of digital tools and platforms in supporting intrapreneurial activity. As highlighted by [Huang et al. \(2021\)](#), technological innovation within organizations, particularly in SMEs, may serve as a vital enabler of intrapreneurial outcomes. Understanding how collaborative technologies or enterprise social platforms can support sustained innovation represents a key opportunity for HRD-driven digital transformation strategies.

Furthermore, while the benefits of intrapreneurship are widely recognized, this review also signals the need to examine its potential negative outcomes - such as emotional exhaustion, work avoidance, or role conflict. [Gawke et al. \(2018\)](#) highlight these as possible costs, suggesting that intrapreneurship may also carry psychological burdens. These concerns resonate with HRD's growing focus on employee well-being and psychological safety, and further investigation into these risks will be crucial to balancing innovation with sustainable workforce development.

Lastly, future studies should integrate individual, team, and organizational levels of analysis. While this review concentrated on the individual level, understanding how intrapreneurial behavior scales up through group dynamics and organizational systems will deepen the HRD field's strategic insight.

As we look ahead, the insights gained provide a robust foundation for further exploration in this field, as it has been pursued by [Shirmohammadi et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Yoon and Chae \(2022\)](#) - bringing a more innovative approach to HRD, in understanding the individual impacts of intrapreneurial activities and how organizations can best support and nurture this vital behavior.

## Conclusion

This SLR examined how intrapreneurship, at the individual level, intersects with HRD, structured around three core questions: What is the definition of intrapreneurship, at the individual level? What are its antecedents and outcomes? How can intrapreneurship be integrated into HRD practices?

Intrapreneurship was defined as an employee-initiated behavior and a compound of six dimensions. This definition is inherently developmental, aligning with HRD's focus on learning, performance, and growth. Antecedents include capabilities (e.g., resilience, creativity), personality traits (e.g., proactivity), perceptions (e.g., psychological empowerment, job fit), and workplace relationships (e.g., trust, organization/leader support). Outcomes include increased learning and knowledge, greater work engagement, motivation, personal growth, employability, and participation in entrepreneurial projects - affirming intrapreneurship as both a personal and professional development mechanism.

The integration of intrapreneurship in HRD practices covers all seven HRD dimensions of [McLagan \(1989\)](#) HRD Model: Training & Development, building intrapreneurial skills through creative, network-based, and innovation-focused training; Organization Development, fostering climates of trust, support, and innovation; Career Development, encouraging self-directed growth via entrepreneurial roles; Staffing & Selection: recruiting individuals with entrepreneurial traits and skills; Organization &

Job Design, promoting autonomy and job crafting to support innovation; HR Planning, aligning workforce development with innovation goals; and, Performance Management, recognizing and rewarding intrapreneurial efforts.

Theoretically, this study positions intrapreneurship as a developmental construct central to HRD, presenting an original conceptual model that bridges the two domains. From a practical perspective, it offers HRD professionals a structured framework to intentionally integrate intrapreneurial behavior into training, development and learning practices, while fostering innovation - reinforcing the needed strategic role of HRD in organizations.

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\*Indicates included studies in the SLR.

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- Indicates included studies in the SLR.