

Why Should I Become an Intrapreneur? Introducing the Concept of Intrapreneurial Outcome Expectations

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Abstract

This study increases the understanding of students' beliefs concerning intrapreneurial behaviour and its consequences. Based on previous studies of intrapreneurship and entrepreneurial outcome expectations and qualitative data collected from university students, we aimed to conceptualise students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations and expose the possible differences between entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial outcome expectations related to entrepreneurship education. The qualitative research material comprised 74 learning diaries of students participating in bachelor-level intrapreneurship courses. The qualitative research material was analysed according to a qualitative content analysis. Intrapreneurial outcome expectations respond to the question, 'If I engage in intrapreneurship, what will happen?' The findings revealed that students perceived positive and negative consequences of intrapreneurial outcome expectations at three levels: individual, organisational, and societal. The findings also revealed differences between intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial outcome expectations regarding the level at which the students handled the content. The study highlights the importance of levels of outcome expectations other than the individual level, which dominates general and entrepreneurship outcome expectations research. It demonstrates that intrapreneurial outcome expectations should be considered different from entrepreneurial outcome expectations and understood not only from the individual

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level, as the consequences of intrapreneurial behaviour influence people, organisations, and beyond.

Keywords

intrapreneurial outcome expectations, intrapreneurship, entrepreneurship education

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education scholars have argued that there are two main approaches to entrepreneurship education: a narrow view, which focuses on the education of students to become and succeed as business owners (i.e. entrepreneurs) and a broader view, which focuses on educating entrepreneurial individuals who can utilise their skills and competencies more generally in working life (see [Gibb, 2002](#); [Jones & English, 2004](#); [Liguori et al., 2019](#)). The impacts and outcomes of entrepreneurship education have been studied from various angles ([Nabi et al., 2017](#); [Pittaway & Cope, 2007](#)), but scholars and practitioners still struggle to understand what motivates our students towards entrepreneurial behaviour ([Alam et al., 2020](#)). This is concerning, as scholars have witnessed a weak connection between achieved learning outcomes and their transfer into behaviour and working life ([Harima et al., 2021](#); [Lüthje & Franke, 2003](#); [Sieger et al., 2018](#); [van Wetten et al., 2020](#)). In this study, we focus on the intrapreneurial approach to entrepreneurship education. We examine what students aim to achieve by attaining intrapreneurial behaviour. To do this, we introduce the concept of intrapreneurial outcome expectations.

Scholars have recently begun to study entrepreneurial outcome expectations as an exploratory force in why individuals engage in entrepreneurship. In the literature, outcome expectations are defined as the expected results of one's decision to engage in entrepreneurship. In other words, entrepreneurial outcome expectations answer the question, 'If I engage in entrepreneurship, what will happen?' ([Camelo-Ordaz et al., 2020](#); [Liguori et al., 2020](#)). Entrepreneurial outcome expectations entail beliefs about the consequent benefits and costs of performing a certain entrepreneurial behaviour ([Dehghanpour Farashah, 2015](#)) and are thus considered critical determinants of entrepreneurial career goals or career intentions ([Liguori et al., 2020](#)). Currently, entrepreneurial outcome expectations research has focused on business formation or starting a business perspective ([Celuch et al., 2017](#); [Santos & Liguori, 2019a](#); [Townsend et al., 2010](#)).

However, the literature does not address another important approach to entrepreneurship education: intrapreneurship. Intrapreneurs operate in a different context than entrepreneurs; thus, scholars have argued that entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship offer distinctly different benefits and costs for individuals ([Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013](#)). Our study broadens the view of the goals and intentions related to

entrepreneurship education by introducing the concept of intrapreneurial outcome expectations and answering the question, 'If I engage in intrapreneurship, what will happen?' Santos and Liguori (2019b) emphasised the need for educators to ensure that educational programmes manage entrepreneurial outcome expectations. Given that education in intrapreneurship is another main approach to entrepreneurship education, we argue that it is also important to manage intrapreneurial outcome expectations. Doing so provides us with knowledge of what motivates and demotivates our students to intrapreneurship and thus enables us to create more impactful education where learning outcomes are better transferred into behaviour and working life after graduation. The results of this study can also be utilised to increase students' motivation in entrepreneurship education programmes and courses, as well as to help educators connect intrapreneurship with working life in a meaningful way. We see intrapreneurial outcome expectations as a bridge to a better transfer of learning outcomes into behaviour.

Based on the existing understanding of intrapreneurship and entrepreneurial outcome expectations and qualitative data collected from university students participating in the course of intrapreneurship, we aim to conceptualise what students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations are and to expose the possible differences between entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial outcome expectations related to entrepreneurship education. Accordingly, the research questions are as follows: (1) What are the students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations in entrepreneurship education? (2) What are the possible differences between entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial outcome expectations related to entrepreneurship education?

This study proceeds as follows: First, outcome expectations and intrapreneurship are discussed as the theoretical framework of this study. Second, the methodology of this study is presented. Then, combining previous studies and qualitative data from students' learning reflections, we conceptualise what intrapreneurial outcome expectations are and how they differ from entrepreneurial outcome expectations. This is followed by a discussion and conclusions.

Theoretical Framework

Outcome Expectations

The concept of outcome expectations derives from Bandura's (1986) social cognitive model, in which outcome expectations are defined as an individual's subjective beliefs about the outcomes of certain intentional actions. Outcome expectations respond to the question, 'If I engage in this behaviour, what will happen?' These imagined consequences can be perceived either as positive or negative, that is, as benefits or costs of behaviour. Further, outcome expectations can be short-term or long-term, depending on when the consequences of behaviour are assumed to occur (Fasbender, 2019; Schwarzer et al., 2016).

Bandura's (1986) concept of outcome expectations has been widely applied in different fields of research (Fasbender, 2019), focusing, for example, on career development and behaviour (Lent et al., 1994), knowledge-sharing behaviour (Alshahrani & Pennington, 2020; Hsu et al., 2007), and health and well-being-related actions (Anderson et al., 2006; Schwarzer et al., 2016). Interest in understanding outcome expectations for entrepreneurship has also grown recently (Liguori et al., 2020; Camelo-Ordaz et al., 2020; Santos & Liguori, 2019; St-Jean & Labelle, 2018). In educational contexts, the concept of outcome expectations has been broadly utilised in examining, for example, students' academic motivations (Diegelman & Subich, 2001; Domene et al., 2011), goals and interests (Byars-Winston et al., 2010; Smith, 2002), and career choices (Betz & Voyten, 1997; Liguori et al., 2020). Outcome expectations affect individuals' career behaviour, career development processes, choices, and intentions as individuals learn from and are motivated—or demotivated—by expected outcomes (Lent et al., 1994).

Entrepreneurial outcome expectations represent different types of consequences of entrepreneurship. These consequences can be perceived based on the classifications made by Bandura (1986) and Lent et al. (1994). Income-related consequences, which refer to monetary gain or loss, play an important role in entrepreneurship (Celuch et al., 2017; Liguori et al., 2019). In some cases, entrepreneurship provides possibilities to make money and become rich, while in other cases, the opportunity cost of entrepreneurship is high, resulting in a loss of income when becoming an entrepreneur. In the classifications offered by Bandura (1986) and Lent et al. (1994), income-related consequences represent the physical consequences, that is, tangible outcomes, of a particular course of action. They pointed out that these physical outcome expectations can also refer to lifestyle and career progress. In entrepreneurship, this could mean that through entrepreneurship, one can afford certain kinds of lifestyles and surroundings or obtain a management position in one's organisation, achievements that would not be possible without entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is also a way of gaining social acceptance and status (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017). This can mean, for example, that entrepreneurship is a way to fit a certain group of people, such as other entrepreneurs, and gain acceptance and status as reputable members of the community. According to Bandura (1986) and Lent et al. (1994), these expectations represent social outcome expectations that capture the social responses of the behaviour. Entrepreneurship is also seen as a means of skill development, job satisfaction, and the possibility of influencing one's own working conditions (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017). Entrepreneurship can provide possibilities for individual learning and development and for working around personally meaningful and valued issues (Lackeus et al., 2016; Liñán et al., 2016). According to Bandura's (1986) and Lent et al.'s (1994) classifications, these internal outcomes represent self-satisfaction outcome expectations.

Intrapreneurship and Outcome Expectations

In this study, we follow [Antoncic and Hisrich's \(2003\)](#) definition of intrapreneurship as entrepreneurial behaviour within an existing organisation. This definition refers not only to the creation of new business ventures but also to other innovative activities and orientations, such as the development of new products, services, and practices. The definition integrates two streams of literature: entrepreneurial orientation and corporate entrepreneurship. [Antoncic and Hisrich \(2003\)](#) stated that the concept of intrapreneurship comes close to the Schumpeterian innovation concept, which is a building block of entrepreneurship. Overall, the behaviour of an individual is relatively similar in entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship, but the context is different. Thus, entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship are posited as distinct from each other ([Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013](#)). The importance of entrepreneurial individuals within different types of organisations has been acknowledged ([Kuratko & Morris, 2018](#); [Kuratko et al., 2014](#); [Nabi et al., 2017](#)), as intrapreneurs can act entrepreneurially, for example, questioning existing corporate tides, developing new practices, and creating new innovations ([Corbett, 2018](#)). Intrapreneurial individuals are characterised as being creative, self-motivated, passionate, innovative, and enthusiastic about creating something new and generating change in existing organisations ([de Jong et al., 2015](#); [Pandey et al., 2020](#)). For example, [Hayton and Kelley \(2006\)](#) identified four different individual roles through which intrapreneurship is manifested in organisations: (1) innovating, (2) brokering, (3) idea championing, and 4) sponsoring. Innovators possess opportunity recognition and creative insight, which are crucial for entrepreneurial behaviour. Brokers access new information and knowledge and transfer this knowledge to other workers. Ideal champions take leadership and inspire others, whereas sponsors provide legitimacy for actions and ensure that the needed resources are available.

Based on the literature concerning intrapreneurship, we argue that the consequences of intrapreneurial behaviour can be perceived at the individual, organisational, and societal levels. At the individual level, intrapreneurial behaviour can be perceived as a competitive advantage when valued by an employer and thus can help individuals find jobs and progress their careers more easily ([Pandey et al., 2020](#); [Rivera, 2017](#)). As intrapreneurial behaviour provides a way to complete a task that an individual considers meaningful, it is also related to individuals' work satisfaction, life satisfaction, well-being ([Ahmed et al., 2013](#); [Di Fabio et al., 2017](#)), and motivation to develop one's expertise and skills ([Chan et al., 2017](#)). At an organisational level, intrapreneurial behaviour can lead to revitalisations and betters and thus can have positive consequences for organisations ([Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003](#); [Zahra, 2015](#)). These revitalisations and betters caused by intrapreneurial behaviour can lead to societal-level advantages ([Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001](#)). Similar to entrepreneurship, intrapreneurial behaviour can, for example, create innovations and technological changes that can be of larger benefit, open up new markets, and create new jobs (see [Audretsch, 2007](#); [Carree et al., 2002](#); [Reynolds, 1994](#); [Sternberg & Wennekers, 2005](#)).

Previous studies have already addressed outcome expectations concerning the narrow view of entrepreneurship education—that is, becoming an entrepreneur—but the outcome expectations related to the broader approach to entrepreneurship education have not yet been discussed, that is, intrapreneurship. As intrapreneurs operate in a different context than entrepreneurs, it is expected that outcome expectations also differ in intrapreneurship. [Alam et al. \(2020\)](#) pointed out that in intrapreneurship, organisations usually take the risk resulting from an employee’s innovative behaviour, while in entrepreneurship, the entrepreneur bears the risk. The same applies to gains in intrapreneurial behaviour. In intrapreneurship, the organisation owns the idea and intellectual property rights, while in entrepreneurship, the entrepreneur owns the idea. Thus, intrapreneurs are not as vulnerable to outside influences as entrepreneurs, as the organisation protects them. This also means limited flexibility and possible long approval processes within the organisation. However, the rapid expansion of an innovative idea at an increasingly faster pace is possible in intrapreneurship due to organisational resources. Overall, intrapreneurship provides a less risky way to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour; however, possible gains are not as notable. For instance, the role of monetary gains, which are usually prioritised in venture creation ([Celuch et al., 2017](#); [Liguouri et al., 2019](#)), plays a more modest role in intrapreneurship, although intrapreneurship can provide profits or bonuses for the intrapreneur ([Monsen et al., 2010](#)). However, the role of personal development is usually more emphasised in intrapreneurship than in entrepreneurship ([Chan et al., 2017](#)).

In this study, we introduce the concept of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. We use the concept of intrapreneurial outcome expectations to refer to individuals’ expectations of the results of their own intrapreneurial behaviour—that is, their imagined beliefs on the question, ‘If I engage in intrapreneurial behaviour, what will happen?’ The intrapreneurial outcome expectations are discussed at three levels—individual, organisational, and societal—as we argue, based on the literature, that intrapreneurial behaviour can have consequences at all of these levels.

Methods

Our findings regarding intrapreneurial outcome expectations are built on the outcome expectations’ literature, intrapreneurship literature, and qualitative research material from a bachelor-level intrapreneurship course. We had 74 students who participated in the course where they learned what intrapreneurship means, its importance, and how it can be enhanced in organisations and among individuals. The course consisted of four four-hour interactive sessions. Learning in the classroom followed flipped classroom principles ([Bergmann & Sams, 2014](#)). Before the sessions, the students were asked to read scientific articles and prepare a reaction paper on their learning, drawing on the previous session and articles. Different pedagogical methods, such as teamwork, joint discussions and various types of exercises, including role play, were utilised in the course. The students were mainly business students majoring in different subjects.

A small number were engineering students minoring in entrepreneurship. Some of these 74 students were exchange students with multicultural backgrounds.

The students wrote personal learning diaries throughout the course and submitted the learning diaries for evaluation after the course. In these learning diaries, they discussed and shared their key learnings from the course. The students were asked to focus especially on reaching the learning goals set for the course, but they were not guided by specific sets of questions to be discussed in the learning diaries. Overall, the diaries were free forms that allowed the students to ponder issues that they found interesting and relevant. These learning diaries are utilised as our qualitative research material, as they provide a unique possibility to zoom in to intrapreneurial outcome expectations of the future workforce. Each learning diary was 10–15 pages long and personal in nature.

We analysed the qualitative research material according to qualitative content analysis, drawing on the steps of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analytical process is presented in Appendix Table A1. First, we familiarised ourselves with the data by carefully reading all 74 learning diaries. Second, the learning diaries were examined from the perspective of the students' reflections on intrapreneurship. We independently classified the diaries into two groups: (1) students who reflected intrapreneurship as their own internal behaviour and its possible consequences, that is, their outcome expectations ($n = 21$), and (2) students who reflected intrapreneurship at a general level ($n = 53$). We then agreed on the groups per learning diary jointly. Third, an inter-rater reliability analysis using Kappa statistics was performed to determine the consistency among raters regarding the classification. The agreement between the raters was substantial ($\kappa = .727$; agreement percentage = 87%). As we were interested in zooming into intrapreneurial outcome expectations of the future workforce, we focused on 21 learning diaries that demonstrated intrapreneurship as students' own behaviour and focused on the consequences of intrapreneurship. Fourth, we classified the data formed by 21 learning diaries deductively to individual, organisational, and society levels to understand whether this literature-driven categorisation is applicable, and if so, to identify the key themes within each level. Selected quotations from the research material are included to demonstrate students' reflections on and interpretations of their learning and aim to give the reader the opportunity to assess the plausibility of the interpretations: '(P[number])' denotes the student who is quoted.

Building the Conceptualisation of Intrapreneurial Outcome Expectations

In what follows, we present our findings. The conceptualisation of intrapreneurial outcome expectations is built in a dialogue with the analysis and the literature. Analysis of the research material revealed that students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations occurred at three levels that were identified from the literature: individual, organisational, and societal levels.

Individual-Level Intrapreneurial Outcome Expectations

Our qualitative data analysis revealed that most students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations were related to themselves—that is, to their personal consequences. In total, 18 of the 21 students who reflected on their own engagement in intrapreneurial behaviour pondered the consequences of their intrapreneurial behaviour regarding themselves. Therefore, we call them individual-level outcome expectations. Based on qualitative research material, individual-level outcome expectations comprised two sub-categories: *career perspectives* and *learning and professional development*.

Career perspectives. In the literature, intrapreneurship has been described as an employee's personal asset in working life (Rivera, 2017). Previous studies have emphasised that intrapreneurial behaviour can positively affect an individual's career progress, as intrapreneurial individuals are highly desirable to employers (Pandey et al., 2020). It is argued that they possess 'a new version of the lifetime employment guarantee' because they play key roles in knowing their market and creating new customer value (Rivera, 2017). Our analysis revealed that 15 students' reflections concerned how their own intrapreneurial behaviours and competencies, or the lack of these behaviours and competencies, might affect their future careers and what kinds of professional possibilities they might or might not open up. The analysis revealed that engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour enabled different kinds of career possibilities. Mainly, students discussed the possibilities of becoming intrapreneurial employees in an existing organisation and the consequences it may have: "*Personally I would very much like to work in a company in which I get rewarded by trying to proactively solve company problems and making the extra effort to think outside the box*" (P13), or showing off their capacity as a newcomer, bringing value to the company, "*As I see myself as motivated worker who has the passion of a newcomer, I would have liked to be engaged to innovative processes more besides my daily work*" (P17).

Becoming a manager in the future career was also emphasised: "*I feel that I would be a good manager, preferably an intrapreneurial manager*" (P1). This is in congruence with the literature arguing that intrapreneurship is a necessity for employees who wish to become leaders in the modern economy, as they must develop the capability to exploit opportunities and turn those opportunities into growth venues for their organisations (Rivera, 2017). Similar to entrepreneurial outcome expectations, intrapreneurship is perceived as a means of status and social acceptance. However, the difference is that status and social acceptance gained through intrapreneurship are manifested only within an organisation in which one works (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017).

In the research material, intrapreneurship was also perceived as engaging in meaningful work and having an innovator role without the risks of being an entrepreneur: "*By suggesting bold new ideas in my workplace I can make sure that I will enjoy my own work as much as possible, but will be still having kind of a safety net of my employer compared to starting my own company*" (P13). According to the

literature, intrapreneurship provides individuals with the possibility to express entrepreneurial behaviour without high personal financial risk and insecurity (Alam et al., 2020; Nicolaidis & Kosta, 2011). Following this, our analysis revealed that applying intrapreneurial behaviour was seen to provide possibilities for innovative and experimental ways of performing without necessarily being exposed to the personal risks of entrepreneurship: *“I do not consider myself to be a big risk taker. Intrapreneurship doesn't come with the risk of personal losses like entrepreneurship, making it easier to try out new ideas and ways of doing things”* (P16). This is different from entrepreneurial outcome expectations, where possible financial rewards for self-employment come with financial insecurity (Celuch et al., 2017; Liquouri et al., 2019).

Notably, some students also saw the possibility of *“stretching this way of thinking on intrapreneurship”* (P13) and to become an entrepreneur in the future, although they had not recognised entrepreneurship as a possible career choice earlier: *“I've always thought that I'm not going to start my own business, and that I'm more likely to become corporate worker in some ones service. Now I think that starting an own business wouldn't be such a bad idea”* (P9). This perspective has not been raised in the intrapreneurship literature.

Further, previous studies have demonstrated that intrapreneurial behaviour is related to employees' work satisfaction, life satisfaction, and well-being because intrapreneurship allows individuals to direct their energy to something that is particularly meaningful for them (Ahmed et al., 2013; Di Fabio et al., 2017). Intrapreneurship is a way for individuals to demonstrate and work to promote their values, such as safety and work–life balance (Courpasson et al., 2016). This also came up in our qualitative research material, as some students perceived intrapreneurial behaviour as an enabler for more efficient working and releasing time for doing something personally more valuable and meaningful: *“If I perform better I will have more time to do something else”* (P3). This is relatively similar to entrepreneurial outcome expectations, where one positive consequence is the possibility of influencing one's own working conditions (Caines et al., 2019). Although most of the students demonstrated positive outcome expectations towards career as an intrapreneurial employee, a few students also expressed negative outcome expectations: *“I would be extremely happy to work in a company where corporate entrepreneurship is supported, but I don't think I would enjoy the possible pressure that would come with it”* (P18). This parallels the research of Gawke et al. (2018), which pointed out that intrapreneurship can have a detrimental relationship with employees' well-being and job performance: it can lead to exhaustion, which in turn can cause impaired in-role performance and increased work avoidance.

Learning and professional development. Studies have demonstrated that intrapreneurial behaviour is related to employees' motivations to develop their expertise (Chan et al., 2017). Our analysis revealed that four students discussed how engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour can have consequences for their learning processes and possibilities for professional learning. Engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour was seen to promote professional learning, to help to see and make good use of different kinds of learning

opportunities, and to promote applying skills and competencies in various ways in different situations. For example, P9 said, “*I learned to think out of the box myself and after this I can use my studies in my future jobs and in everyday life*” (P9). According to P7, intrapreneurial behaviour helped her to “*realise her weaknesses and to transform them as her strengths*” (P7). This “learning and professional development” category represents what Bandura (1986) and Lent et al. (1994) called self-satisfaction outcome expectations and is also prevailing in entrepreneurial outcome expectations (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017).

Overall, we found that most students’ intrapreneurial outcome expectations are personally related in terms of the kinds of consequences they might encounter by engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour. It should be noted that the intrapreneurship literature has increasingly focused on describing how individual consequences benefit organisations, but their relevance to individuals themselves has remained under-emphasised (Blanka, 2019; Gawke et al., 2017). Our data demonstrated that physical consequences/tangible outcomes, such as rewards or bonuses (Bandura, 1986; Monsen et al., 2010), were not raised by the students at all. Instead, such financial securities were reflected as one of the consequences of intrapreneurship compared to the risks of entrepreneurship. Overall, we propose that individual-level outcome expectations describe how individuals’ intrapreneurial behaviour might affect their career perspectives as well as their learning and professional development.

Organisational-Level Intrapreneurial Outcome Expectations

Intrapreneurship and its consequences have most often been examined from the perspective of organisations and their demands. Intrapreneurial skills and behaviours are seen as prerequisites for innovative and learning organisations. At the organisational level, intrapreneurship can be perceived as intrapreneurial employees and intrapreneurial corporate practices that support and enable employees’ intrapreneurial behaviour (Alpkan et al., 2010). Both intrapreneurial employees and corporate practices are considered important for successful company performance (Alpkan et al., 2010; Kuratko et al., 2014; Rivera, 2017). Our analysis of the data revealed that the second largest type of student’s outcome expectations was related to the organisations they work in. A total of 10 of the 21 students who reflected on their own engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour pondered its possible consequences and effects on other employees, co-workers, and companies. Therefore, we call them organisational-level outcome expectations. Organisational-level outcome expectations comprised three sub-categories: company performance, staff performance, and staff well-being.

Company performance. Studies have emphasised that intrapreneurship is fundamental for companies to nurture innovation and new venture creation (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). They have suggested that certain individual behaviours, including creativity and opportunity recognition, knowledge dissemination, ideation, and empowerment of fellow workers, are vital for organisations’ renewal and performance (Hayton & Kelley,

2006). Following this, our analysis revealed that six students' reflections concerned how their own intrapreneurial behaviour might affect an employer's or enterprise's operations, performance, and productivity. Therefore, we call this sub-category 'company performance'.

The analysis revealed that students perceived engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour as an effective way to support company performance and the "*growth of business*" (P3). According to the literature, intrapreneurs often have an innovator and facilitator role in organisations (Hayton & Kelley, 2006). This means that they are creative and recognise more opportunities than others. In our data, intrapreneurial behaviour was considered an enabler for trying "*completely different ways of [doing things]*" (P13). Intrapreneurial behaviour was emphasised to provide a possibility to participate in the development work of a company as an individual actor: "*I can very well picture myself as an intrapreneur, because it gives you the opportunity to experiment and develop the company, but securely within the support system of a large corporation*" (P16). Following the suggestion that intrapreneurial behaviour as an innovation and opportunity recognition is highly demanded, especially at the interface with customers (Hayton & Kelley, 2006), our data revealed that students reflected exactly the customer perspective when pondering the potential of their intrapreneurial behaviour. For example, "*listening to customers and modifying [the company's] actions according to customers' wishes*" (P2) was emphasised.

Staff performance. Most previous studies have focused on studying individuals' intrapreneurial behaviour from the angle of company performance (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003; Felicio et al., 2012; Zahra & Covin, 1995). However, our data revealed that, in addition to the consequences on company performance, students also reflected on the possible consequences of their intrapreneurial behaviour on other employees' and co-workers' performance. Therefore, we call this sub-category 'staff performance'. Seven students' reflections were related to this category. Engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour was seen as a tool and an enabler to "*motivate employees and co-workers to do their best*" (P6) and "*inspire them to work better*" (P13). Regarding staff performance, many students emphasised the importance of intrapreneurial behaviour, especially regarding a possible future managerial position. Intrapreneurship studies have demonstrated that supportive leaders play an important role in building a productive and innovative working environment (Baruah & Ward, 2015; Moriano et al., 2014; Park et al., 2014) and attracting potential employees to the organisation (Rudic et al., 2021). The willingness and ability to inspire and enthuse other employees are typical of intrapreneurs (Howell & Higgins, 1990).

Staff well-being. According to the literature, both leaders' and employees' intrapreneurial behaviour can help create and maintain a supportive working atmosphere, which is crucial for the well-being of employees (Gawke et al., 2018; Rivera, 2017). Our data also revealed that students believe that by acting intrapreneurially, they are able to support the "*well-being*" (P1) of employees. This is related, for example, to

“helping others to find a suitable role in a group” (P16). Creating and upholding this kind of constructive working climate through their own behaviour was perceived as especially related to a possible future managerial position.

Overall, we found that some of the student’s intrapreneurial outcome expectations are not related to themselves but to the organisations they work or will work with in the future and the possible consequences of their intrapreneurial behaviour to the organisation and to other employees. Existing studies have mainly concentrated on the effects of individual intrapreneurial behaviour on organisational performance. Our data demonstrated that the consequences to other people cannot be ignored, but they are an important part of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. We propose that organisational-level outcome expectations describe how individuals’ intrapreneurial behaviour might affect their employer’s or enterprise’s operation and productivity, staff performance, and well-being. Interestingly, these aspects are not manifested in the current entrepreneurial outcome expectations literature.

Societal-Level Outcome Expectations

According to the literature, as with entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship is also important on a larger scale (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013). Similarly, it can help to facilitate innovations, diffuse different types of technological changes, create new jobs, and gradually change society (see Audretsch, 2007; Carree et al., 2002; Sternberg & Wennekers, 2005). Our analysis revealed that four students pondered the possible outcomes of their intrapreneurial behaviour on a larger scale than on an individual or organisational level. Therefore, we call them societal-level outcome expectations. Instead of economic outcomes, which are often related to entrepreneurial outcome expectations, the students emphasised social consequences—that is, how they could make the world a better place. However, these reflections were very abstract, meaning that the students faced difficulties in concretely describing what these societal-level consequences could be. Two students perceived their own intrapreneurial behaviour as a powerful tool in making *“a change in the world”* (P5) and other matters that are personally important and valuable: *“I do like to learn new things, I do like to develop things that irritates me, I do like to make the world a better place by focusing on something that I can actually impact on”* (P4). Further, two students discussed outcomes that were related to how they, through intrapreneurship, can facilitate the common quality of life and happiness of the people around them: *“I am an entrepreneurial actor even when I give presents to my family or to my friends, and they are happy. I believe now that taking the initiative to make someone smiling is proof of entrepreneurial behaviour”* (P15).

To summarise, societal-level outcome expectations were present but on a minority in our research material. The students’ focused more on societal than economic well-being, which is more prevalent in the literature. In all, the focus was on making the

Table 1. Intrapreneurial outcome expectations.

<p>Intrapreneurship literature</p> <p>Individual consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career development possibilities: an important asset for working life (e.g.) - Wellbeing: work satisfaction, life satisfaction, exhaustion (e.g.) - Job performance /low in-role job-performance (e.g.) 	<p>Entrepreneurial Outcome expectations literature</p> <p>Individual level consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical consequences: financial rewards of self-employment and financial insecurity (Celuch et al., 2017; Liguori et al., 2019) - Social consequences: status and social acceptance (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017) - Self-satisfaction consequences: skill development, job satisfaction, possibility of influencing one's own working conditions, insecurity (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017) 	<p>Intrapreneurial Outcome expectations: students' learning diary data</p> <p>Individual level outcome expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career perspective consequences: different career possibilities, different professional positions, financial security, work satisfaction and possibility of working according to one's own values - Professional learning and development consequences: utilising learning possibilities, applying skills 	<p>Concept of Intrapreneurial Outcome expectations</p> <p>Refer to individuals' expectations of the results of their own intrapreneurial behaviour: 'If I engage in intrapreneurial behaviour, what will happen?'</p> <p>Individual-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations relate to individuals themselves regarding their career perspectives, possibilities for learning and professional development</p>
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(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

<p>Intrapreneurship literature</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial Outcome expectations literature</p>	<p>Intrapreneurial Outcome expectations: students' learning diary data</p>	<p>Concept of Intrapreneurial Outcome expectations Refer to individuals' expectations of the results of their own intrapreneurial behaviour: 'If I engage in intrapreneurial behaviour, what will happen?'</p>
<p>Organisational consequences - Performance of organisation: competitive advantage, survival, growth, new innovations (e.g. Antonich and Hisrich, 2003; Baruah & Ward, 2015; Zahra, 2015) - Performance and satisfaction of employees: innovative climate, attractiveness of workplace, wellbeing of employees (e.g. Gawke et al., 2018; Rivera, 2017)</p>	<p>Organisational level outcome expectations - Company performance consequences: nurture innovation and new venture creation, opportunity recognition participation in the development work of a company - Staff performance consequences: motivation of employees and co-workers</p>	<p>Societal level outcome expectations are related to a bigger entity than individuals themselves or organisations they work in</p>	<p>The organisational level intrapreneurial outcome expectations relate not only company performance but also the performance and wellbeing of colleagues and staff members</p>
<p>Society consequences - Facilitation of novel innovations (e.g. Audretsch, 2007; Carree et al., 2002; Sternberg & Wennekers, 2005) - Diffusion of technological changes (e.g. Reynolds, 1994) - Creation of new jobs (e.g. Reynolds, 1994)</p>	<p>Societal level intrapreneurial outcome expectations relate to making a world a better place to live rather than only to purely economic outcomes</p>		

world a better place to live. Interestingly, the types of outcome expectations are not discussed in the entrepreneurial outcome expectations literature.

A summary of the conceptualisation of intrapreneurial outcome expectations is presented in [Table 1](#). We claim that individual-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations comprise career perspective consequences and professional learning and development consequences, organisational-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations manifest company performance consequences and staff performance consequences, and societal-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations represent how intrapreneurial behaviour can contribute to the common good.

Discussion

Entrepreneurship scholars and practitioners have struggled to understand what motivates students towards entrepreneurial behaviour, as there is a weak connection between achieved learning outcomes and their transfer into behaviour and working life after graduation ([Lüthje & Franke, 2003](#); [Sieger et al., 2018](#); [van Wetten et al., 2020](#)). In this study, we provided a new perspective on the intrapreneurial approach to entrepreneurship education by introducing a new theoretical concept of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. By applying the concept of outcome expectations to intrapreneurship, we aimed to understand what is in the students' minds and the consequences of engaging in intrapreneurial behaviour and to further develop a better understanding of student motivations and demotivations towards intrapreneurship.

Our study extends the previous research that has examined students' motivations for entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial outcome expectations ([Ligouri et al., 2020](#)). Although there is a relatively well-developed research-based understanding of entrepreneurial outcome expectations—that is, the costs and benefits of engaging in entrepreneurship—we argue that intrapreneurial outcome expectations need to be examined as separate and independent phenomena because entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship occur in different contexts and, therefore, offer distinctly different benefits and costs for individuals ([Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013](#)). By relying on existing literature on intrapreneurship and entrepreneurial outcome expectations and university students' learning diary data, we aimed to conceptualise students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations in entrepreneurship education and analyse the possible differences between entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial outcome expectations related to entrepreneurship education.

We argued that intrapreneurial outcome expectations refer to individuals' expectations of the results of their own intrapreneurial behaviour, that is, their imagined beliefs on the question of 'If I engage in intrapreneurial behaviour, what will happen?' Drawing from the knowledge provided by the existing literature, we argued that the consequences of intrapreneurship occur at three levels: the individual, organisational, and societal levels. The analysis of students' learning diary data also compiled this distribution. The results of this study indicate that the individual-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations that relate to individuals themselves, and more accurately, to

their career perspectives and possibilities for learning and professional development, are the most common types of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. This does not concur with previous studies that have discussed the consequences of intrapreneurship considerably from the perspective of organisations and their performance (Alpkan et al., 2010; Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Kuratko et al., 2014; Rivera, 2017). It should also be noted that students' individual-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations concern the possible drawbacks of intrapreneurial behaviour, such as exhaustion at work (Gawke et al., 2018).

The organisational-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations, in turn, concerned company performance and the performance and well-being of colleagues and staff members. Interestingly, this social or interpersonal aspect was emphasised by the students even more than the angle of organisational performance, which has been the traditional way to study and understand individuals' intrapreneurial behaviour (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003; Felicio et al., 2012; Zahra & Covin, 1995). Finally, the results indicated that students' intrapreneurial outcome expectations also occurred at the societal level, although they were not very concrete. These societal-level outcome expectations were more related to making the world a better place to live than to purely economic outcomes. Therefore, we call them societal instead of society-level intrapreneurial outcome expectations. However, it should be noted that reflecting the consequences of their own intrapreneurial behaviour to themselves, rather than to the wider scope, might have been more natural and straightforward for the students, as many of them have not yet gained working life experience.

Regarding our second research question, the findings showed that intrapreneurial outcome expectations are distinct from entrepreneurial outcome expectations in two ways: regarding the content and the level at which they deal with it. Thus, we argue that intrapreneurial outcome expectations must be handled as an independent concept. The results indicated that while entrepreneurial outcome expectations occur mainly at the individual level, intrapreneurial outcome expectations entail strong organisational and societal aspects. Entrepreneurial outcome expectations fit Bandura's (1986) original categorisation very well. In entrepreneurship, physical consequences refer to, for example, monetary gain or loss due to entrepreneurship (Liquouri et al., 2019); social outcome expectations that capture social responses of the behaviour refer to, for instance, social acceptance gained through entrepreneurship (Celuch et al., 2017); and self-satisfaction outcome expectations refer to, for example, a possibility to further personally meaningful issues through entrepreneurship (Lackéus et al., 2016; Liñán et al., 2016).

However, our analysis showed that the original categorisation of outcome expectations (Bandura, 1986) is insufficient in the context of intrapreneurship, as it focuses particularly on individual-level consequences, although these individual-level consequences are also similarly highly important in intrapreneurship. This study also demonstrated that organisational and societal aspects must be acknowledged when studying the phenomenon of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. Organisational and societal aspects concern the expected consequences of individual behaviour to

surrounding human beings, organisations, and, even more broadly, to society. The traditional categorisation of physical, social, and self-satisfaction outcome expectations perceives outcome expectations at an individual level only and does not consider other types of consequences that were identified in this study.

Regarding the content of the outcome expectations, the findings revealed that although entrepreneurial outcome expectations emphasise the role of fame and fortune for the individual entrepreneur (Caines et al., 2019; Celuch et al., 2017; Liquouri et al., 2019), the intrapreneurship students did not emphasise the possible economic consequences of intrapreneurship at all. Instead, they emphasised different career possibilities that intrapreneurship might open up, the importance of learning, their future career progress, their well-being, and making the world a better place through intrapreneurship. Of course, it should be noted that all of these might lead to economic benefits. These findings relate to the work of Shoffner et al. (2015), who claimed that individuals have become increasingly motivated by generativity outcome expectations, which refer to the overall well-being of a community or general humanity and altruistic motivation in some other way and inventing new practices and improvements of current conditions. As such, generativity outcome expectations can be understood as consequences and impacts on other people and surrounding communities. Our finding is relevant when considering future entrepreneurship education: the role of value creation for others, meaningfulness, and values should be the centre of attention, particularly when educating future intrapreneurs (Lackéus, 2015; Lackéus et al., 2016).

To summarise, based on the findings of this study, students' answers to the questions "Why should I become an intrapreneur?" and "If I engage in intrapreneurship, what will happen?" would be "It allows me to do meaningful things that have value to myself, my employer, and people around me. However, in addition to its positive consequences, engaging in intrapreneurship may also produce negative consequences such as stress and high pressure related to work". Based on these findings, we claim that intrapreneurship research is in the right direction by examining the level of intrapreneurial individuals themselves (Reuther et al., 2018). For students, it might be difficult to perceive the importance of intrapreneurship if it is discussed from the economic perspective of organisations, as we noticed that these aspects remained distinct and remote for the students. The findings of this study show that students want to be perceived as unique individuals, and not purely as resources who must contribute to the economic success of companies.

Conclusions

The starting point for this study was a clear need for a better understanding of the underlying student motivations to engage in intrapreneurship. By enlightening this, the study investigates outcome expectation research for intrapreneurship and introduces the concept of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. The study demonstrates the existence and nature of intrapreneurial outcome expectations and highlights their differences from entrepreneurial outcome expectations. Intrapreneurial outcome expectations

should be considered different from entrepreneurial outcome expectations and understood from the individual level, as the consequences of intrapreneurial behaviour influence surrounding people, organisations, and beyond. Furthermore, the study raises the importance of further research on levels of outcome expectations other than the individual level, which dominates general outcome expectations research.

Implications for Practice

Our study has clear implications for educators and programme managers in strengthening intrapreneurship-related education. Intrapreneurial outcome expectations should be further discussed in entrepreneurship education to create awareness of the different kinds of consequences and possibilities that intrapreneurship might or might not open up in students' future careers. Money-making and economic benefits do not motivate students to intrapreneurship. To motivate students in education and to foster the transfer of learning outcomes into working life, educators need to discuss how intrapreneurship can be utilised to promote well-being, job satisfaction, and performance on a wider scale. In particular, generativity outcome expectations—that is, how intrapreneurship can enhance well-being, humanity, and altruism—should be considered when planning education and cases for students. In general, education should provide continuous opportunities for self-reflection about intrapreneurship. This would help students position themselves in working life as entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, or employees based on their preferences. Further, it is important to discuss the costs of intrapreneurship, as entrepreneurship education scholars have justifiably indicated that the negative consequences of entrepreneurship education cannot be neglected anymore (Bandera et al., 2020; Berglund et al., 2020; Shepherd, 2019).

Limitations and Future Research

We acknowledge the limitations of this study, some of which are avenues for further research. One of the limitations is related to the qualitative research material. The intrapreneurial outcome expectations discussed were observed in a relatively small group of participants; only one-third of the students reflected intrapreneurship as their own internal behaviour and its possible consequences. The students were not instructed or guided on how to report their intrapreneurial outcome expectations per se, but they were encouraged to share their learning and ponderings on the course topics. This might have led to the point where relatively few students reflected on their own intrapreneurial behaviour and its possible consequences. Further, some of the students were more willing and capable than others to share their personal ideas regarding the consequences of intrapreneurship. It would be interesting to see whether more detailed instructions would produce a more nuanced understanding of intrapreneurial outcome expectations. There is also a need for longitudinal approaches to intrapreneurial outcome expectations. Through longitudinal research, it would be possible to examine how intrapreneurial outcome expectations transfer to and develop in working life, as this remains

unknown to us, given that students have not entered working life. Further, intrapreneurial outcome expectations and their realisation could be examined among employees who have gained work experience. This study calls for examining intrapreneurial outcome expectations from multiple perspectives using multiple methodological choices.

Appendix

Table A1. Analytical process.

Step 1	Familiarisation of the research material independently by the researchers
Step 2	Classification of 74 learning diaries to two groups: (1) those who reflected intrapreneurial outcome expectations (2) those who did not. Classification conducted independently by the researchers
Step 3	Performing kappa statistics and agreeing on the final classification into two groups
Step 4	Classification of intrapreneurial outcome expectations of 21 learning diaries to individual, organisational and society levels in a dialogue <i>Individual level: Consequences of intrapreneurship to oneself personally</i> <i>Organisational level: Consequences of intrapreneurship to the organisation in which one works</i> <i>Society level: Broader consequences of intrapreneurship to society</i>
Step 5	Identification of key themes in each level in a dialogue

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