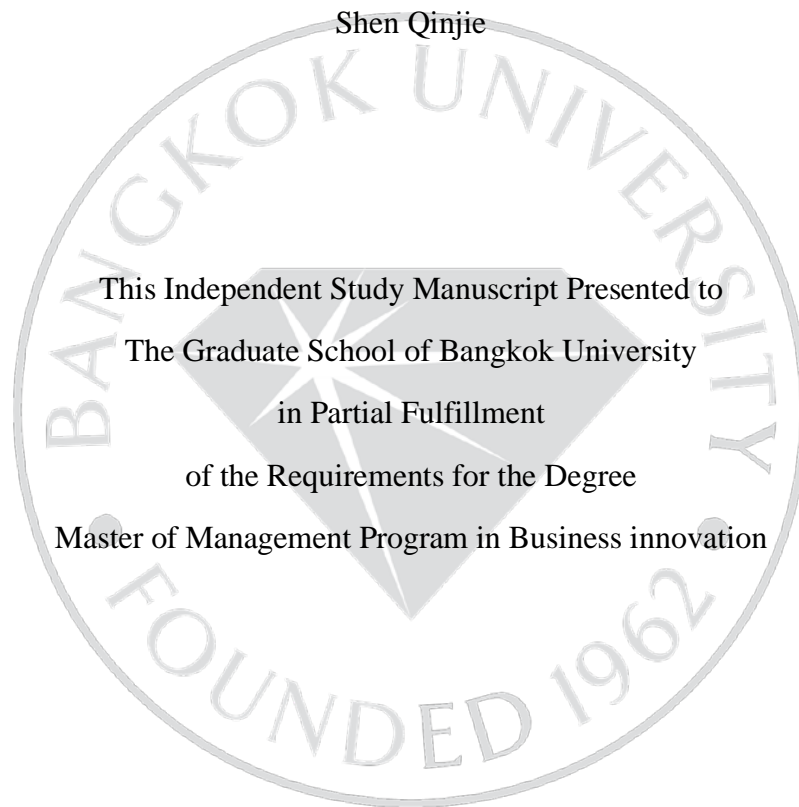


**EXPLORING INTRAPRENEURSHIP AMONG EMPLOYEES:
A CASE STUDY OF ALIBABA'S VMATE PROJECT**



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A CASE STUDY OF ALIBABA'S VMATE PROJECT

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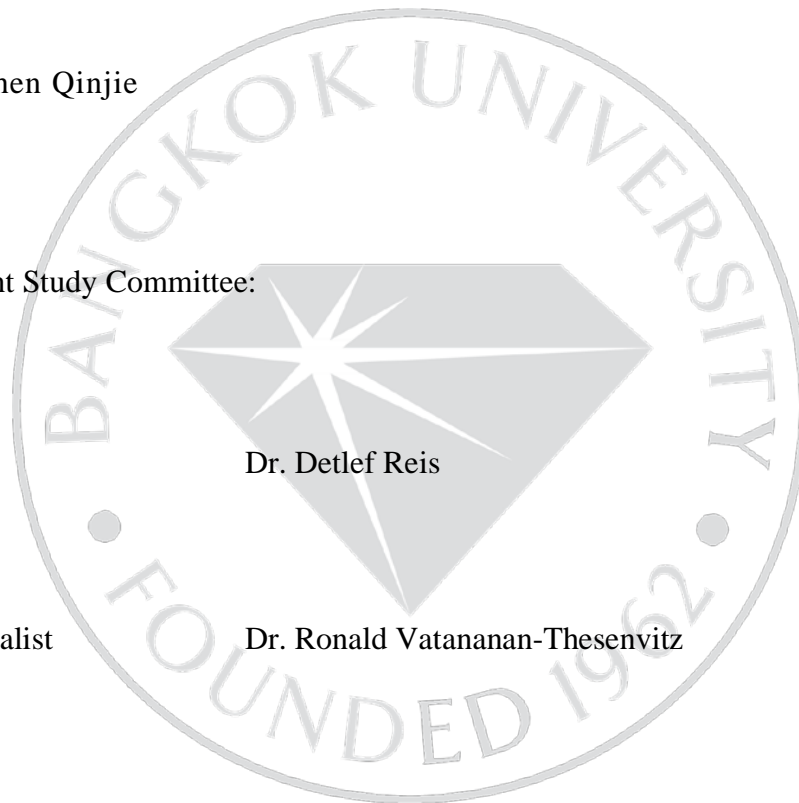
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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, 21st century, business innovation is the direction for each company which needs to stay focused on and in recent years intrapreneurship has been a major factor for many medium to large companies to survive and win in today's highly competitive market. The purpose of this independent study is to analyze the factors affecting intrapreneurship at Alibaba through the Vmate project by in-depth interviews. Most of the employees in Alibaba understand the basic concept of intrapreneurship and basic characteristics of intrapreneurship. Somehow, they still need to comprehend the difference between intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship. The traits of insider-outsider, implicitness, inspiration, commitment, creativity, knowledge, risk tolerance capability, sense of responsibility, proactiveness were found among Alibaba employees to develop the intrapreneurship inside the company.

Keywords: Intrapreneurship, Alibaba, Vmate, traits of insider-outsider, inspiration

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Shen Qinjie

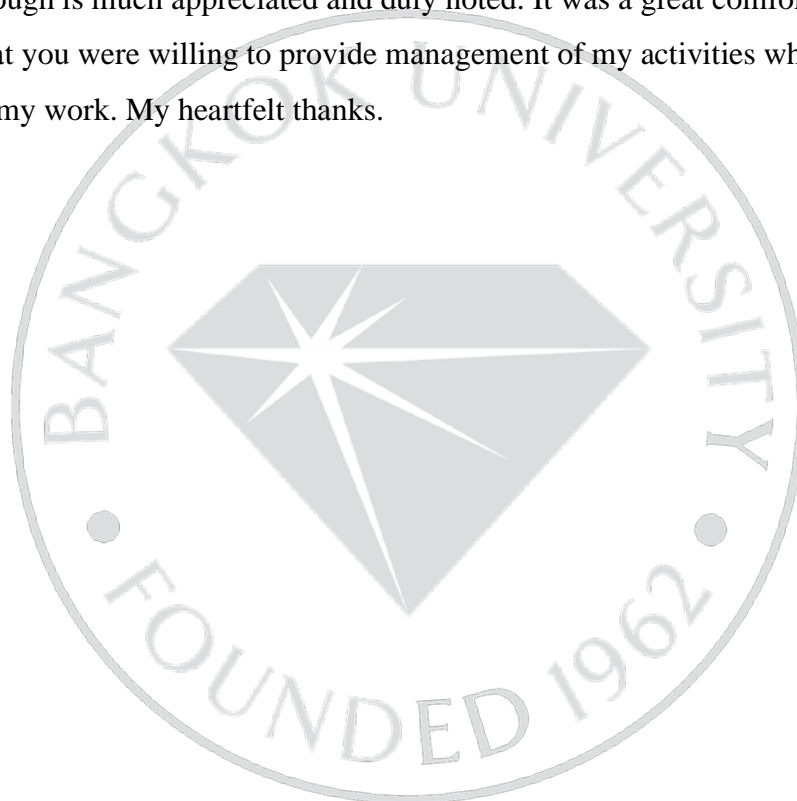
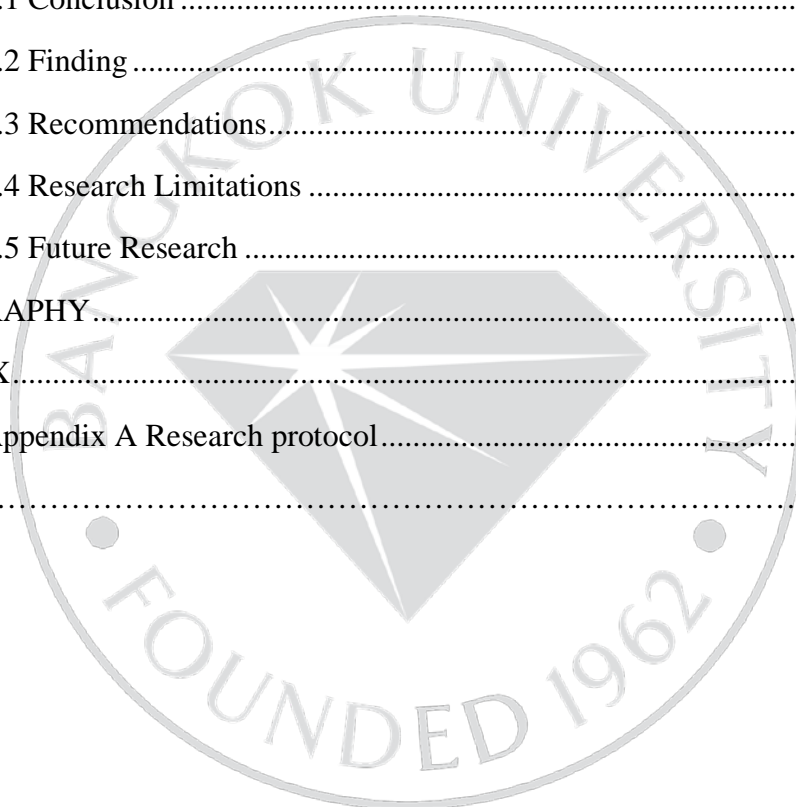


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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation of the Study

Throughout the first ten years of the 21st century, China's double-digit growth was driven by a high return rate from productivity gains and factor inputs. However, China's reformers realized that China's growth strategy now requires adjustments (Kroeber, 2020). The Chinese government needs to transition from manufacturing to more technology-based industries. Nowadays, more and more technology companies focus on indigenous innovation and technology as a means of economic growth. This is a comparatively new phenomenon in the modern scientific growth of China. Now, the government and tech companies believe that technological advancement will play a pivotal role in the development (Alexander & Yusuf, 2020), and innovation from low to top management are required. Some Chinese technology companies are frontrunners in mobile devices, wind turbines, quantum computing, and commercial drone' segments. In addition, some Chinese social media companies such as Tencent Alibaba are no less innovative than corporate innovation leaders from the West, such as Google and Tesla, among others. However, despite these technological advances, efforts of China to catch up to the production methods deployed by the most technologically advanced nation worldwide remain incomplete. As of now, the European Union, the United States, South Korea, and Japan are still running ahead of China in many fields (Alexander & Yusuf, 2020). For example, despite enjoying a home advantage on the world's biggest automobile market, Chinese auto companies could not take the lead in embedded technologies, production efficiency, product quality compared to Western competitors such as G.M. and Volkswagen.

In the same way, software and production technologies are lagging in China. All these examples indicate that China has potential and technology, but there

is a need for taking risky and innovative decisions that can enable the Chinese firms to lead the way like other sectors (Alexander & Yusuf, 2020). Hence, Intrapreneurship might play a significant role here to alleviate these shortcomings.

Intrapreneurs are the organizations' entrepreneurs. Some intrapreneurs are members of Research and Development teams that continuously work to improve the products and services of companies; others are creative marketing persons involved in developing new ways to satisfy their present customers and intensify the customer base. In any case, they constitute a group of company-internal people who can create, identify, and exploit new opportunities that generate new value for firms (Ma et al., 2016). Worldwide, creative teams of established companies are finding new businesses opportunities, and visionary leaders are helping transform their firms and entail recent trends via internal corporate venturing practices. For example, Andrew Grove helped bring transition in Intel by shifting its business from DRM to CPU.

Similarly, Louis V. from IBM and Toto's technicians revolutionized companies and their respective industry (Ma et al., 2016). Leaders and technicians' elites have the inspiration to innovate in giant companies by enabling entrepreneurial expeditions from within; this is no small feat compared to the magnificent achievements of standalone star entrepreneurs (Ma et al., 2016). Hence, it can be assumed that Intrapreneurship can create wonder in the Chinese technology sector. Intrapreneurship can help companies to flourish; this argument is made in many studies which proved that Intrapreneurship is correlated positively with the growth of a company (e.g., Antoncic, 2007; Aguilar et al., 2019). In addition, further studies such as Antoncic (2011) and Kearney et al. (2013) proved the positive impact of entrepreneurship on revenues and growth, while Zahra (2015) studied it on knowledge creation and also concluded positive effects. Wang et al. (2015) found positive influence on innovation, while Urban & Wood (2015) related it with opportunity. Chen et al. (2014) associated Intrapreneurship with new product development. Overall, it suggests that companies can grow significantly if employees perform as

intrapreneurs. Still, it becomes intriguing to identify what kind of Intrapreneurial spirits are presently among employees in the technology sector in China. In addition, what sort of factors motivate their intrapreneurial drives and what limits them.

China Statistical Authority reported that the direct value-added of software, I.T. services, and information transfer accounts for only 3.7% percent of the GDP of China in 2020 (Tianlei & Nicholas, 2021). In contrast, the U.S. Economic Contribution of the Consumer Technology industry report asserts that the consumer technology industry indirectly and directly contributes 12% of US GDP (Flores, 2019). Despite massive R&D efforts and investments, Chinese technology companies still lag behind U.S. tech companies. This factum can be observed from a human perspective and a human capital angle. There might be a lack of intrapreneurial motivation or spirit among employees in Chinese tech companies, which limits the employees from taking any great initiative and making innovative, potentially risky decisions.

Against this background, this study will explore the intrapreneurship behavior of employees in Alibaba. Headquartered in Hangzhou, China, Alibaba is a multinational company operating worldwide with 20 thousand of employees. A safer option in the capital winter may be to stay inside large companies for entrepreneurs. Compared with the cold external capital market and the declining enthusiasm of large companies for external investment, most companies are strengthening the incubation of internal projects. This trend shows especially in the entertainment and content track. For example, the successful case of ByteDance incubating TikTok inspires Alibaba and its intrapreneurs.

As the Internet enters the second half and the life cycle of mature products reaches a turning point, Alibaba needs innovative products to break the deadlock. They need to achieve a clear direction, a clear goal, a broad enough room for development, and, most importantly, new products that might support the company's future growth curve.

It is not better to invest money in external companies than to invest in oneself internally. The establishment of the Innovation Business Group in Alibaba is more related to this phenomenon. Instead of letting these young people start their own ventures and seek investments for these, Alibaba convinces them that it is better for them to stay in the company as an Intrapreneur. Alibaba's in-house investors have found that due diligence for internal investments as Intrapreneurship is much easier compared to external investments. In terms of post-investment management, Alibaba can also provide more resources, which are precisely the elements that improve the success rate of investments. This is the reason that Alibaba has had several successful intrapreneurial projects. Alipay, Ding Talk, Vmate, and the latest data from Vmate, founded four years ago and has nearly 100 million monthly active users.

Still, the intrapreneurship capabilities and spirits of the employees in this organization have yet to be investigated. This study will focus on employees from this organization which will aid to fill up the gap in past studies on how employees in Alibaba do innovation and what capabilities they have to improve the innovation and performance of Alibaba.

1.2 Research Question

Main Question:

How has Alibaba's Intrapreneurship pushed forward the Vmate project over time?

Learn what kind of innovative impact Alibaba's Intrapreneurship has brought to Vmate. What role does it play in facing market decisions and product development.

S.Q.1: What factors affect the progress of intrapreneurship projects in Alibaba?

In the new business level study, intrapreneurial activities are essentially the incubation and growth of intrapreneurs, involving a series of evolutionary processes.

Despite the natural advantages of using parent resources for business incubation, the process of Intrapreneurship within large firms is not always smooth. Because intrapreneurial projects are experiments with unknown outcomes by nature, the results are fraught with uncertainty. This raises a critical question: How do intrapreneurs successfully incubate and grow? From a process perspective, the incubation and growth of Intrapreneurship is a complex and dynamic process that involves different levels of management involvement and a management balance between old and new businesses. Based on the existing studies, Intrapreneurship usually consists of four stages: conception, incubation, growth, and integration. First, the conceptualization phase is usually the essential entrepreneurial activity needed to recognize valuable business opportunities and propose a corresponding business plan, which is then handed over to top management for evaluation or bypassed by the company. (DR Comment: Repetition of sentence fragments here, please clean up this sentence) top management for evaluation or pre-incubation of the idea bypassing existing rules (Belousova & Gailly, 2013). After identifying business concept and resource requirements, the new business enters the incubation phase, where the primary purpose is the business model validation to obtain legitimacy and resources. In this phase, the intrapreneur has to perform internal validation to obtain internal management support and gain legitimacy among the stakeholders in the new market (Souitaris et al., 2012). After the business model has been validated, intrapreneurs enter the growth phase. At this point, the intrapreneur is operating as an independent business entity in the market, and the main objective of this phase is to accelerate and scale the business to capture the emerging market share (O'Reilly & Binns, 2019). Finally, the intrapreneur is integrated with the parent company to achieve a strategic renewal of the organization as a whole (Friesl, 2019). Integration is not a necessary stage. In platform-based intrapreneurship models, intrapreneurs can also maintain a separate corporate identity as part of the organization's entrepreneurial ecosystem (Shankar & Shepherd, 2019), bringing the parent company's sustained strategic and

financial success benefits. In conclusion, it is essential to understand the growth and process of Alibaba's internal entrepreneurship and analyze the factors mentioned above.

S.Q.2: What valuable lessons or significant challenges has Alibaba learned from intrapreneurship projects that led to success?

Alibaba is not a God-like company, Alibaba also made many mistakes. For example, in 2007, Alibaba wanted to make a company called Ali Software. The dream was good: one dollar a day for world-class enterprise software. That is, let small and medium-sized enterprises pay a dollar a day, then they can use enterprise software.

At that time, Alibaba already had hundreds of thousands of paying SMEs and had an outstanding team in technology. So, expanding into an enterprise software rental business seemed like a natural fit. Yet, Alibaba's software investment of 200 million yuan still failed in the end.

So, all Alibaba people involved in the project sat down to review: why did it fail?

The inefficiency of innovation is a waste of money and the most significant waste of the company's strategic opportunities. Ali's experience is that the success rate of new business project is high when it is reduced to a startup environment. Whenever an innovative business project is approached with a "big company"-mindset (i.e., appoint a competent person, deploy a team, organize funding, and provide resources), the failure rate is very high.

Against this background, this study also wants to investigate the following two phenomena or corporate innovation:

1. Innovation is not the result of appointments

The person who went to lead to do this thing was not self-selected but appointed. For example, the boss said: "Wang, I think you are good, you go to lead an innovation project". Wang was forced by the bosses' authority to agree. He also felt inside that it was not reliable, he had no confidence, but it was not good to say these

point out loud. Others went to start a business back then, did anyone come to appoint you? No. So innovation and entrepreneurship must be self-driven, is his own belief that this thing is reliable.

2. Innovation is not smashed out with money

We review Alibaba software, all of a sudden invest two hundred million YUAN, people think it is too much money to give. With more money, people must have become more stupid. More money, you use the company's team, they will say: I am responsible for the boss. You are pursuing the return on investment, input-output ratio. This is still the premise that the company pays for this team and meets a team in charge. But without money, you don't think about the input-output ratio. You think I don't have to put in but also have an output rate. The time to start a business is when there is no money, you have to do business with an 'empty hand', and you are the smartest.

S.Q. 3: How did the project team overcome the aforementioned to challenges of project leader selection and monetary input-output ratio) and achieved the project goal?

Alibaba's intrapreneurship model has the same effect as Google's model, which has developed a "Jockey Club" system in which all employees can participate. Through the "Jockey Club" platform, employees will introduce their new innovative projects or ideas and clarify the project objectives and the qualifications of the team members to be recruited. In this way, the inter-departmental and inter-professional cooperation mechanism is well-realized, and the company also very much encourages the joint development and mutual collaboration project development mode.

And, within Alibaba, intrapreneurship projects are not all generated from new ideas, but also through the failure of the project to learn from experience, failure to learn, the failure of previous projects to summarize the reasons for reflection, to obtain new entrepreneurial opportunities. For example, through intrapreneurial activities and successful Vmate software, Ali's prototype of this software from the

previous failure of some software. The startup team had previously been engaged in the development and application of the software. It was affected by the market erosion of the external TikTok and the internal product positioning, which eventually declared a failure. However, the group's goal of developing instant messaging remained unchanged. With this goal in mind, Alibaba temporarily separated its team from the company, choosing a new office location and using independent human and material resources, free from corporate interference and influence. At the same time, the product positioning used a differentiation strategy, mainly to distinguish Vmate from the competitor WeChat and optimize the product positioning. Then, Vmate was successfully launched and recognized by the market.

The reasons for studying these Research Questions are:

1. Analysis of the development environment of the industry in which Alibaba is located: macro-external environment, competitive environment of the industry.
2. Strategic behavior: the interaction model between the company's environment and innovative business strategies.
3. Management drive and constraint: the relationship between top management's perception and the freedom of grassroots implementers.
4. Study of the intrapreneurship challenges and opportunities facing Alibaba.

1.3 Scope of the Study

An in-depth analysis of Alibaba's company journey through Intrapreneurship to promote the birth of an innovative business, solve the crisis, and usher its development is an excellent example of innovation in studying innovation management in the Hi-tech industry in China. In recent years, more traditional industries have been under substantial impact from the rapid development of the Internet industry. So, this case study is of great relevance for a wider group of

companies also in more traditional industries to find out what are opportunities (and challenges) for Intrapreneurship within large companies and how to develop Intrapreneurship to build and maintain long-term competitive advantages.

1.4 Definition of Terms

Since the 1980s, Intrapreneurship has been studied and practiced both at home and abroad, but there are many ways to describe the concept in the industry. Through literature review, the concept of Intrapreneurship can be interpreted from different perspectives, such as narrow, broad, and entrepreneurial.

Firstly, the meaning of Intrapreneurship is understood in a narrow sense, mainly from the company's perspective, using human and material resources within the existing organization for new business creation activities (Burgelman, 1983; Pinchot, 1985; Carrier, 1994)

Vesper (1989) points out that the core idea of Intrapreneurship is for a company to break away from the norm and try to do new projects with its resources. The core point of all these intrapreneurial initiatives is the internal generation of new business and profitable growth.

Secondly, a broader understanding of Intrapreneurship is that the core extends outward from the company to generate new business. Stevenson & Jarillo (1990) suggest that Intrapreneurship is a process in which the firm's resources are reorganized to bring about organizational innovation. Burgelman (1984) and Zahra & Covin (1995) endorse this concept and state that on the one hand, Intrapreneurship can create new business and thus increase the profitability of the company; on the other hand, with intrapreneurial activities, the organization generates new strategies, which provide a new opportunity for the company.

Antoncic & Hisrich (2004) state that Intrapreneurship, understood in a broad sense, should refer to entrepreneurial activities of unlimited size and form within the company. It cannot be judged only by whether a new business or

department is created, but Intrapreneurship stimulates the development of organizational structure, corporate climate, and other synergies. As such, the company's Intrapreneurship can stimulate synergistic development of the organizational structure and the corporate culture.

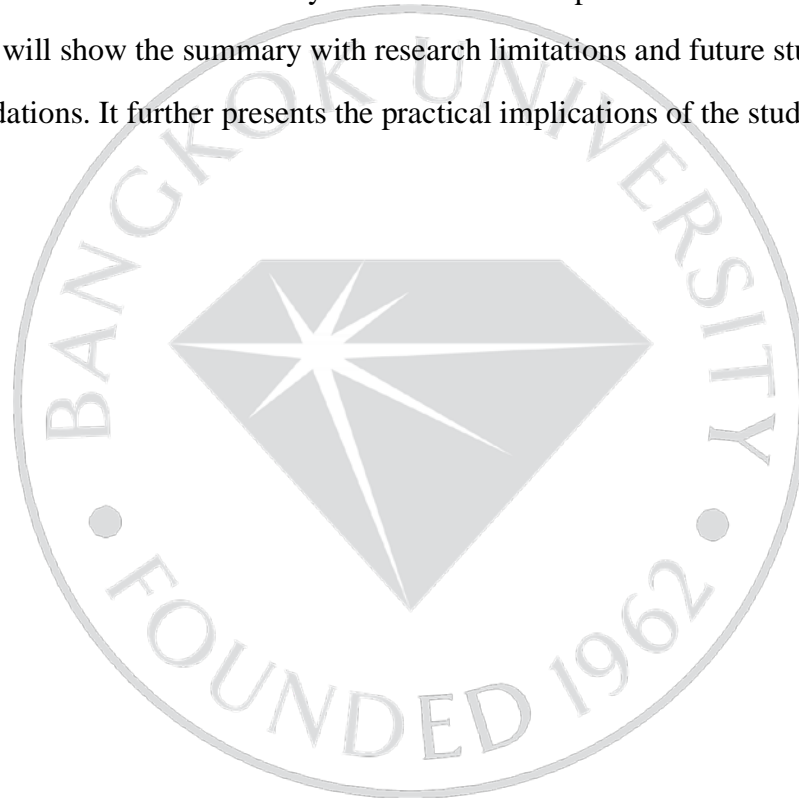
Finally, the core focus of understanding the meaning of Intrapreneurship from the perspective of entrepreneurship is the initial stage of the concept of Intrapreneurship. In the initial stages of the concept development, Peters (1984) and Pincho (1985) both define Intrapreneurship as intra-firm entrepreneurship. Antoncic (2007) suggests that the innovative activities encouraged within the firm in terms of sustainable corporate development are designed to maintain the firm's ability to profitably and continuously innovate.

Through the continuously evolving body of research on Intrapreneurship, combined with the continuous practice and experimentation of the concept by different companies around the world, it is found that the meaning of Intrapreneurship is limited only in terms of new business generation and entrepreneurship but also includes innovative activities such as inter-company collaboration, M&A, subcontracting, and synergy (Antoncic, 2011).

The concept of Intrapreneurship should also be included. Thus, the essence of Intrapreneurship is the entrepreneurial spirit that is permanently integrated into the company's activities and drives organizational innovation and strategy. The spirit of Intrapreneurship is permanently embedded in the company's activities, driving organizational innovation and strategic change, and encouraging decision-makers and employees to break out of their comfort zones and experiment with innovation and entrepreneurship within the company. This encourages decision-makers and employees to break out of their comfort zones and experiment with innovation and entrepreneurship, enabling the company to maintain a long-term competitive advantage in the industry.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This study report consists of five chapters: introduction, literature review, research methodology, findings, and conclusion. The introduction chapter sets the background, identifies problems, defines the aim and objectives of the research. The literature review develops the conceptual framework by explaining concepts and theories related to Intrapreneurship. The research methodology chapter discusses the research methods and tools to meet the aims. The results and discussion chapter presents the data collected and analyses the results with previous studies. The conclusion will show the summary with research limitations and future study recommendations. It further presents the practical implications of the study.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the concepts of intrapreneurship, traits of Intrapreneurship, and previous studies related to findings on motivations inhibiting Intrapreneurship and factors limiting them.

2.1 Concept of Intrapreneurship

Intrapreneurship is referred to as corporate entrepreneurship (Burgers and Covin, 2016; Dess et al., 2003) and is known as the entrepreneurship performed inside present firms (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004; Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013). It comprises venturing, innovation, strategic renewal activities towards growth and revival in mature firms (Ling et al., 2008; Sinha & Srivastava, 2015). An organization's entrepreneurial activities are derived from the employees' behavior, who can be explained as intrapreneurs. Kuratko & Antoncic (2011) classified five dimensions of Intrapreneurship: new business venturing, innovativeness, risk-taking, strategic renewal, and proactiveness. So each of these dimensions has a common factor that intrapreneurial behavior spurs growth and innovation in firms by exploring, recognizing, and exploiting new knowledge (Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013; Zahra, 2015).

2.2 Personality Traits of Intrapreneurship

In general, most venture creators have certain common traits that are also often found in intrapreneurs (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004). Typical characteristics are an inspiration, commitment, insider-outsider, initiative, indirectness, implicitness, and incrementalism. Though there are many more, these traits will be explored in this research and introduced in the following.

2.2.1 Inspiration

Intrapreneur's strong thrust is reflected in three facets: proper motivation, keen sense, and afflatus for venture creation (Carrier, C, 1996). It is believed that intrapreneurs are highly inspired. However, they challenge themselves from time to time. They are motivated to create ventures which could emerge from a strong drive for self-realization and desire for fame and fortune. It can also come out of a steep sense of identity, sincere wish to have a better future, loyalty for their firm. This driving stimulus motivates people to shoulder the accountabilities which come with excising their creative endeavors. The effectiveness of Intrapreneurship can be seen from the Chinese context only. In the last 30 years, very few intrapreneurs emerged within State-owned sectors of China like Liu Chuanzhi from Lenovo, Wu Renbao from Huaxi Village, Yang Rong from Brilliance Auto, Zhao Xinxian from 999 Pharma. However, some failed and some succeeded. But they have one thing in common: the inspiration to set off suppression of old state-owned firms to generate new opportunities. Some who failed, sailed again on their intrapreneurial expeditions, might be 2nd or 3rd time.

In the same way, Steve Jobs was a tireless innovator who had a vision. Despite being dismissed by the board of directors of the company; he had the inspiration to develop the "Next" generation of computers. Upon his dramatic return to Apple in 1997, he made great strides in flourishing Apple to lead the tech sector worldwide (Ma et al., 2016)

First, the meaning of Intrapreneurship is understood in a narrow sense, mainly from the company's perspective, using human and material resources within the existing organization for new business creation activities (Burgelman, 1983; Pinchot, 1985; Carrier, 1994)

Vesper (1989) points out that the core idea of Intrapreneurship is for a company to break away from the norm and try to do new projects with its resources. The core point of all these is that the company The core point of all these is that new

business should be generated internally.

Secondly, a broader understanding of Intrapreneurship is that the core extends outward from the company to generate new business. Stevenson & Jarillo (1990) defined Intrapreneurship as a process in which the firm's resources are reorganized to bring about organizational innovation (Burgelman, 1984). Zahra & Covin (1995) endorse this concept and state that Intrapreneurship can create new business and thus increase the company's profitability. On the other hand, with intrapreneurial activities, the organization generates new strategies, which provide a new opportunity for the company.

Antoncic & Hisrich (2004) state that Intrapreneurship, understood in a broad sense, should refer to entrepreneurial activities of unlimited size and form within the company. It cannot be judged only by whether a new business or department is created, but Intrapreneurship stimulates the development of organizational structure, corporate climate, and other synergies. The company's Intrapreneurship will stimulate synergistic development of the organizational structure, corporate atmosphere, etc.

2.2.2 Commitment

Ma, Liu & Karri (2016) assert that to perform Intrapreneurship, there is a need for unswerving commitment. Intrapreneurs should have resilience and perseverance like entrepreneurs. They also pose intrapreneurial reasons with consistency. In an established organization, conservative forces and organizational inertia may create barriers to new initiatives that challenge the firm's status quo. Intrapreneurs need to acknowledge that their ambitions can be abandoned, diverted, or canceled. Hence, they should have a persistent, proactive, and stubborn nature in their insistence on pursuing their vision and skill. At the same time, intrapreneurs must be patient when witnessing setbacks for the next. It can be understood that it is the hard-driving and continuous approach of engineers of Washlet at Toto who consistently researched and experimented even without complete support from the corporate

management. It enabled them to improve the product reliability and performance, and subsequently, it facilitated revolutionary invention to life.

Inside-Outsider - Intrapreneurs have the expertise to handle external and internal challenges. They have a broad vision, monitor varied aspects of the environment, follow trends, and maintain the right direction for corporate management. They also expertly understand the organizational routines and skillfully navigate their journey in their firms. They keep balancing a focus on endeavoring to change or optimize internal practices or daily routines of an organization and on exploration of opportunities in the external environment.

Initiatives - Intrapreneurial initiatives approach results from the interaction of ability and expertise of intrapreneurs and the institutional context under which they work. The actual process and practical features of intrapreneurial initiatives significantly decide the success of such initiatives. There are three generic ways to implement the initiatives by intrapreneurs. The first is indirectness, which means initiatives based on indirectness are featured by efforts to avoid direct conflict with the firm's core business. Secondly, implicitness does not give any threat to ingrained practices which are rigid and effort to amend the inertia in the organization. Thirdly, incrementalism emphasizes winning the tolerance and understanding from varied parties within the firm, executive intrapreneurial initiatives in an incremental manner at the right time (Ma et al., 2016)

Indirectness - As per Ma, Liu, and Karri (2016), indirectness refers to that intrapreneurial activities should be non-confrontational and non-threatening to the present business field. Any intrapreneurial initiative that tries to replace and leave the present key business directly will invite opposition from conferred interest and suffer sound reactions by the firm's inertia. It appears to be a normal organizational phenomenon. The mobile phone business of Apple is another instance of indirectness of Intrapreneurship. The launch of the iPhone did not affect the main computer business of Apple. Its operating system and overall design were made based on the

present product series and the original software platform. Conversely, the invention of digital imaging technology threatened cash cow business conventional film, and its reluctance to incorporate the promise of its intrapreneurial activities caused downsizing and bankruptcy.

Implicitness - Firms' formal system mostly tries to maintain the continuity and stability of routine operations, which might not necessarily support or encourage innovation. For avoiding threat and confrontation of a firm's modus operandi, intrapreneurial initiatives should be tacit, low-key, and sometimes secretive if required. Due to being low-key, such activities could avoid unessential curiosity and attention from inside the organization and from business rivals. In a few cases, intrapreneurial initiatives required to take covert and overt dual-track methods. Keeping tacit and low key, it is essential to make in mind some people at some level of higherups the presence of intrapreneurial initiatives and update with the achievements and progress. Also, sustaining support and essential resources aids in consolidating the legitimacy of initiatives. For example, Toshiba's top management took many decisions to give up computer and laptop projects. The company's development team kept covertly continuing the project, and through continuous design improvement, the company attained great success. Finally, the company introduced the laptop in 1986 and became a trendsetter in the sector (Ma et al., 2016)

Incrementalism - An implicit and indirect way to intrapreneurial initiatives is to generate new growth areas or create innovations inherently impeding the status quo. Hence, incrementally taking small steps is more suitable for gaining acceptance of their initiatives than replacing and marginalizing the present norms. So incremental ways to novel initiatives would aid to attain acceptance and encouragement from upper management. For example, a change in the core business of Intel from DRAM to CPU was not attained at one time. While it came into final shape long before the transition started. Groups of critical personal and technological advancements began beforehand. Hence, such transition was more spontaneous and natural despite internal

struggles. So, the change in IBM's positioning from P.C. producer to system integration provider was not accomplished quickly. Gerstner could not get personal support for this change with his charisma. It needed all efforts from power contest between old and new people, incremental advances, persuasion to post hoc confirmation (Ma et al., 2016)

Finally, the core focus of understanding the meaning of Intrapreneurship from the perspective of entrepreneurship is the initial stage of the concept of Intrapreneurship. In the initial stages of the concept development, Peters (1984) and Pinchot (1985) advocate the definition of Intrapreneurship as intra-firm entrepreneurship. Christensen (2005) suggests that the innovative activities encouraged within the firm in terms of sustainable corporate development are designed to maintain the firm's ability to profitably and continuously innovate.

Through the continuous research on Intrapreneurship, combined with the continuous practice and experimentation of the concept by different companies around the world, it is found that the meaning of Intrapreneurship is limited only in terms of new business generation and entrepreneurship but also includes innovative activities such as inter-company collaboration, M&A, subcontracting, and synergy.

The concept of Intrapreneurship should also be included. Thus, the essence of Intrapreneurship is the entrepreneurial spirit that is permanently integrated into the company's activities and drives organizational innovation and strategy. The spirit of Intrapreneurship is permanently embedded in the company's activities, driving organizational innovation and strategic change, and encouraging decision-makers and employees to break out of their comfort zones and experiment with innovation and entrepreneurship within the company. This encourages decision-makers and employees to break out of their comfort zones and experiment with innovation and entrepreneurship, enabling the company to maintain a long-term competitive advantage in the industry.

2.3 Theoretical Underpinnings

Social cognitive theory and Utility Maximization theory are related to entrepreneurship/intrapreneurship behavior. According to Papadakis et al. (1998), social cognitive theory narrows down the intrapreneurial activities affecting factors, search and classify them into employee trait factors, environmental and organizational factors. Another side, utility maximization theory is employed to narrow down the factors which influence related entrepreneurial decisions. Though there are many differences in utility models of decision-making, the key idea is that people who are provided many choices would choose one that potentially promises maximum utility and utmost satisfaction. People choose their activities based on the expected gain from specific with a specific period. Douglas & Shepherd (2000) argue that people anticipate gaining utility from utility and income "work effort, risk-bearing, independence and other working conditions." Income from intrapreneurs is in the form of profit sharing and company ownership. Mosen et al. (2010) further applied this theory and concluded that financial reward is the key to influencing intrapreneurship decisions (Martiarena, 2013)

In addition, Hornsby et al. (2002) introduced some models indicating the factors inhibiting and limiting Intrapreneurship in a different context. This study also highlighted how the firm's internal environment affects the initiatives to perform Intrapreneurship among middle managers. It was identified that management support, organizational structure, availability of resources, risk-taking, and reward affect the ability to perform entrepreneurship. However, Kuratko and colleagues (1990) found empirical support for only three factors: reward, risk-taking, and availability of resources. Christensen (2005) researched Hornsby and Kuratko's Danish engineering firm model. It was investigated that communication, culture, and process influence intrapreneurship in complex and knowledge-intensive firms. However, the specific context of this study limits the generalization of its findings and results.

Zahra (1991) conducted research showing that comprehensive corporate

strategies had a significant impact on Intrapreneurship. Results reveal that an organization's external environment like hostility and dynamism influences Intrapreneurship. The same outcomes come out with Antoncic et al (1991) research. It was further added that product demand and industry life cycle also affect Intrapreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004; Covin & Slevin, 1991). Christensen (2005) consists of four factors: formal structures, informal structures, strategic focus, and intrapreneurship program and process. The formal structure includes organizational structure, reward, process. While informal structure comprises communicational, culture, and all informal elements. Strategic focus is made on resource availability and management support. In addition, industry competition, organizational type, and life cycle also determine the Intrapreneurship's affect intrapreneurship.

Figure 2.1: Christensen (2005)

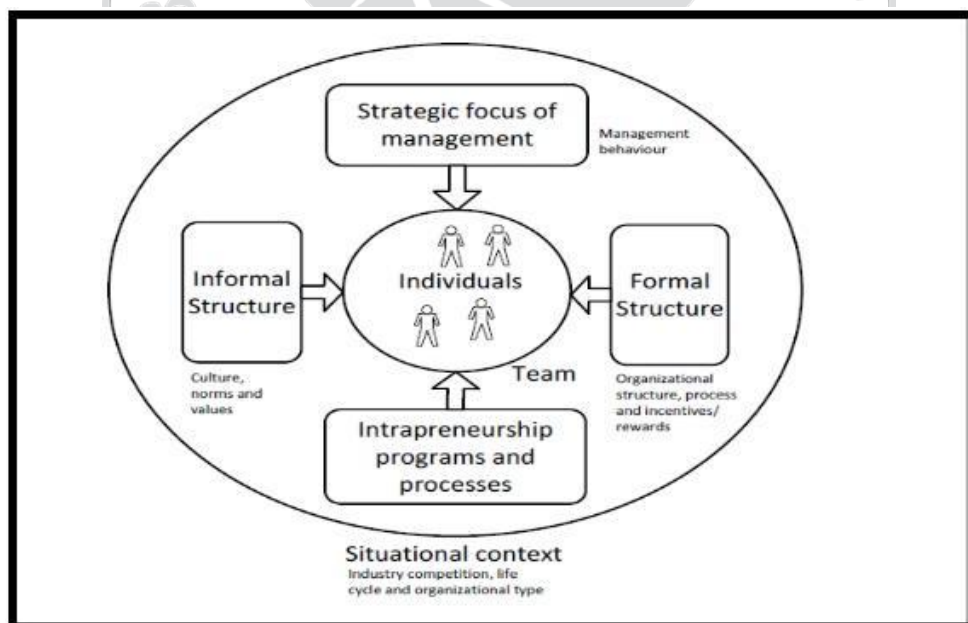
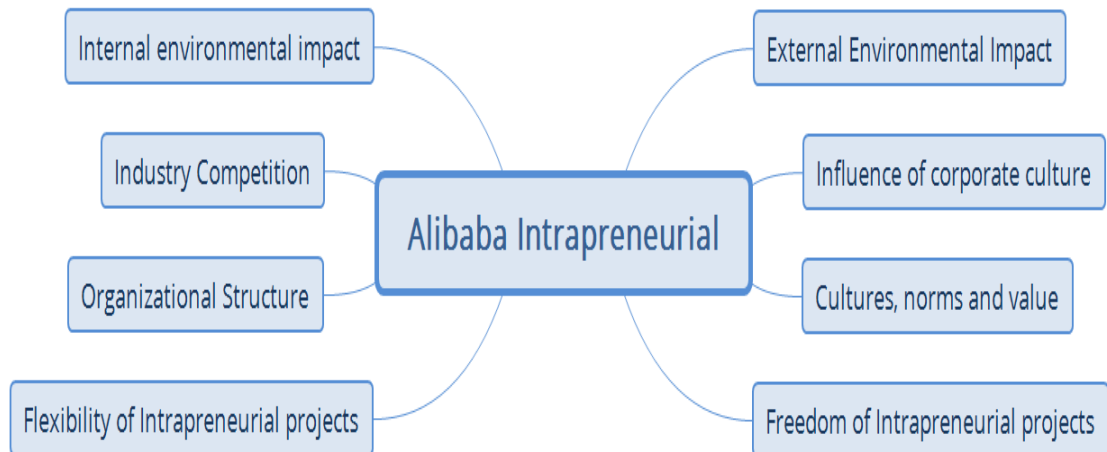


Figure 2.2: Adding Section



Strategic Focus

Zahara (1991) advocates those wide-ranging corporate strategies inhibit Intrapreneurship. It reflects that some kinds of corporate strategies are favorable to Intrapreneurship. However, the organization's strategic focus comprises corporate strategies and official strategies and management's strategic focus on all levels. Management strategic focus is related to management behavior and cognition with Intrapreneurship. Some studies have shown that management influences the performance of organizations (Castanias & Helfat, 2001; Holcomb et al., 2009; Lucas & Goh, 2009) comprising the capability to fuel Intrapreneurship (Christensen, 2005; Hornsby et al., 2002; Kuratko et al., 1990). The reason is that management controls the resource allocation and availability that intrapreneurs may depend on to succeed. It indicates that preserving the status quo would be a crucial element of strategic focus. It has been evidenced that clashes between middle management and top management cause significant issues in organizations and influence employees' work behavior. For example, Lucas and Goh (2009) proclaimed that in Kodak, top management could not overcome the resistance of mid-level management to begin

digital photo technique. Hence, it negatively affected Intrapreneurship. It was assumed that when any innovation in the company faces so much trouble, the purpose of Intrapreneurship will fail. Hence, this research will find what important role the company's strategic focus may play in Intrapreneurship among employees working in hi-tech companies of China.

Situational Context

Organizational situational context comprises all external environmental factors. Some studies (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004; Covin & Slevin, 1991; Zahra, 1991) studied the positive impact of external factors like technological opportunities, dynamism, the demand of products, industry life cycle, and hostility on Intrapreneurship as inhibitors.

Formal Structures

Some formal structures like processes, structure and particular incentives greatly influence the behavior of employees. Over time, formal artifacts affect cognition, communication, and assumption. Benner and Tushman (2002) claimed that procedures, processes, and standard-oriented firms could not convert explorative innovations that result in weak long-run performance. Leonard-Barton (1992) discovered that core rigidities are core capabilities that can drive innovation. Such ambidextrous organizations are considered very fruitful to foster Intrapreneurship.

Informal Structures

Informal structures like culture, values, and norms also influence the employee's behavior and ability to Intrapreneurship. Baer and Frese (2003) demarcated that atmosphere of psychological safety, and personal initiatives are linked with higher learning and more excellent performance, and better application of employees' creativity. But colleagues might assume personal initiative as threatening and harmful because it disturbs the status quo like daily works. It is further added that organizational culture can drive innovation, hence influencing the chance of success of intrapreneurs. Lucas & Goh (2009) highlighted that if security is more given

importance over risk-taking in organizations and the status quo is more emphasized over change, the company would generate less innovation. It was argued that the organizational culture of Kodak was blamed. Hence, employees could not implement innovative ideas in the company because hierarchal structure and culture evaded the employees to respond to digital photography disruption.

2.4 Factors Motivating or Limiting Intrapreneurial Activities / Behaviors

Eesley & Longenecker (2006) studied this topic in-depth and concluded some obstacles limiting Intrapreneurship. These are punishment for risk-taking behavior, new ideas; ideas having no follow-ups: failure in the promotion and no encouragement for Intrapreneurship; poor communication between customers and employees; unclear objectives, mission, priorities, absence of management support; no reward for risk-taking decision and progress, limitation of resources and time.

However, Bhardwaj, e.al. (2004) pointed out that attractive reward policies encourage intrapreneurship behavior. At the same time, Kuratko et al. (2005) found a positive association of firms' internal factors inhibiting employment policies, reward, management, time availability, reinforcement, and organizational boundaries with Intrapreneurship. Jasna and Antoncic (2011) researched to examine the factors influencing Intrapreneurship, and it was investigated that benefits, remuneration, organizational culture, and employee loyalty affect the Intrapreneurship of employees. Some other authors (Pinchot, 1985; Wong, 2005; Lesjak & Vehovar, 2005) found that information flow in the organization is crucial to innovate and hence for Intrapreneurship. Communication disclosure (quality and quantity of communication) is equally significant in fuelling Intrapreneurship. Tabassi and Baker (2009) found in the context of the construction sector that the working environment can affect the innovation behavior of employees.

2.5 Research Gaps

The literature found that research on Intrapreneurship has been conducted on U.S. companies, such as Apple and Intel, while there is a gap in the hi-tech industry. Moreover, there is a gap in studies in the Chinese context that explore employees' intrapreneurship abilities and what limits and inhibits Intrapreneurship among them. Thus, this study will fill the gap.



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the scientific methods and approaches chosen to carry out the research. In addition, it discusses the methods employed for data collection and analysis. Alternative approaches have been examined, and disadvantages and advantages have been assessed.

3.1 Research Design

The method chosen for this study is single case research method. The single case study aims to explain and critique the causes of the problem and adopt effective strategies to solve it. The object of the study is a problem that is more prominent than its counterpart, and the object of the study has a specific scope and a unique situation. (Yin, 2009)

Although the objects of case studies are individual, they are not isolated, so the study of these individual objects must reflect, to some extent, specific characteristics and laws of other individuals and the whole. The purpose of single case study is to understand and grasp the specific situation of an individual, but also to reveal the generality of the problem through a case study. (Yin, 2009)

The single case study is a rich and highly detailed description of the research subject. Case studies can examine both the present and the past of a case and track the future development of a case. Because case studies are focused, they have more time to analyze and study as many variables and their interactions over a more extended period as possible, so they are often tracking in nature. (Bennett, 2004)

Case studies can be conducted regardless of time and place; the case study can be conducted at any time, i.e., the subject can be studied in depth. Case studies are generally conducted in a natural context, without changing external factors, with the researcher watching or participating in the process, without adding any external

influence, with little control over the subject, and in a natural state. (Bennett, 2004)

The researcher participates in the case, observing the subject from their position, exploring their perceptual processes of the event, and interacting with them using their language and concepts.

The target for this study is:

1. Firstly, through in-depth interviews, we can understand the general situation of innovation carried out by Alibaba, their investment in innovation, internal and external drivers and innovation performance, etc.;

2. Secondly, through in-depth interviews, we can unveil the influence of different innovation strategy orientations of Alibaba on their internal knowledge acquisition, storage, transfer and sharing activities and the influence of different internal knowledge preferences on innovation performance, etc.;

3. Thirdly, on this basis, we can understand on them quickly, in the concrete innovation practice of enterprises, what kind of knowledge and culture should be equipped with the innovation strategy to ensure the practical realization of innovation performance, i.e., to understand the role of internal knowledge in mediating the bridge between the innovation strategy mode orientation and innovation performance through interviews, in order to verify the practical applicability of the theoretical model of this study.

4. Fourthly, through all interviews to find out what internal Intrapreneurship brings to the company, what factors drive projects and how these influencing employees. Learn what factors limit the intrapreneurial drive of the company's employees, and how the company adapts and keeps them motivated in the face of challenges.

On the other side, descriptive research focuses on detailing and describing the specific topic in detail while the experimental design is used for scientific research. Hence, the experimental design helped the researcher discover the facts associated with the innovation capabilities and traits of the employees in Alibaba, and

the factors encouraging innovation and intrapreneurship spirits of the employees in the company, among others. It assisted research in this project to discover the previously unknown facts. The research comprehended the topic in detail and adapted the research questions quickly in this study to find more from the respondents which could not be possible through the descriptive and experimental design. Hence, this design assisted the researcher to elicit accurate and relevant information from the respondents.

3.2 Case Description

The organization selected for this study is Alibaba, a high tech multinational Chinese organization specialized in retailing, e-commerce and technology (Alibaba, 2022). This organization was founded in 1999 and since its establishment, Alibaba has been growing in the global market because of the innovation and creativity in products and services (Alibaba, 2017). It offers business-to-consumer business-to-business (B2B), and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) services through its web portals. The product portfolio of Alibaba includes cloud computing, artificial intelligence, mobile commerce, mobile media, film, TV shows, entertainment, and others (Alibaba, 2022). It also offers innovative services to consumers and other businesses such as AliGenie, Taobao, Tmall, Lazada, Daraz, and others.

The strategic focus of Alibaba has been on growth through innovation and creativity. In 22 years, Alibaba has expanded to most countries in the world and is the 21st most prominent company globally (Alibaba, 2022). It became the second-largest company in Asia in 2018 by breaking the valuation mark of \$500 billion. According to the annual report 2021 of Alibaba, the number of employees was 258,578 in September 2021 compared to 251,462 in March 2021. The company had only 50,092 employees in March 2017 (Alibaba, 2017). It means it grew too much within the last 4 years. It expanded the number of employees in the organization because the employee's performance improved its market coverage and operation. Alibaba has

been ranked as the most innovative organization in China and one of the most innovative companies globally (Claudia, 2019). Alibaba has achieved a net income of USD 50,508 Million in 2021, down from USD 76,360 M in 2020 due to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its business (Alibaba, 2022). The net income of the company was USD 9,852 M in March 2017 and it was 5,314 in March 2016 (Alibaba, 2017) It means Alibaba has shown the growth to a great extent which has encouraged the researcher to explore the intrapreneurship capabilities in Alibaba.

As such, Alibaba has been involved in intrapreneurial projects that demonstrate the capabilities and skills of the employees of the company (Alibaba, 2022). The researcher selected Alibaba because of its strong intrapreneurial innovation and creativity capability. The researcher has presented the entrepreneurial projects of the company such as new products, services, processes and areas.

Alibaba has reportedly invested \$100Mn in a short-video sharing app Vmate to increase its foothold in the Indian market. Vmate was launched in India in 2016 by Alibaba subsidiary U.C. Web.

Developed at the end of 2017, Vmate now has global monthly active users of 50 million and has been downloaded over 100 million times on Google Play. It taps into the Indian young people's interest in sharing their life and interacting with friends online.

For those 50 million global users and will use the funding to scale its business in India. Launched as a video streaming and short-video-sharing app, Vmate now has video downloads, and 3D face emojis.

Alibaba is trying to grab a share in the social video apps market, which it couldn't do in China and Vmate could be its way to fill the gap in India. Most of the features that ByteDance's TikTok offers can also be found in Vmate. ByteDance is valued at about \$75 billion and has more than 120 million users in the country. As one of the most prominent global investors in e-commerce and food-tech markets, Alibaba has made several significant investments in BigBasket, Paytm, Snapdeal and Zomato.

There were even rumors about the company saying that it had plans to start its video streaming service last year after acquiring a majority stake in Chennai-based TicketNew.

The investment by Alibaba Group shows that social video apps are finding much popularity in India. There was a time when the internet consumers in India were very cautious in using their data, but now that has changed as mobile data has become significantly cheaper. Thus, video apps are increasingly receiving massive downloads on Google Play Store.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Three sources of data collection in this study are interviews, observation, and archives (both from online and offline). This study conducted interviews for collecting the data from 10 employees of Alibaba. The interviewees' distribution is as follows; I interviewed ten people from two different departments: Innovation department and Marketing department. Also, because this study focuses on Intrapreneurship of Alibaba company, the central part is from the Innovation department.

Table 3.1: Structure of Interviewees

Department	Manager	Employees	Research and Planning	Project design and promote	Customer Service	Audit Program
Innovation department	1	7	2	3	2	1
Marketing department	1	1	2	Assist the research and planning team with market research		

Department	Manager	Employees	Worked or interned in the innovation department of another company before joining Alibaba			
Innovation department	1	7		4		
Marketing department	1	1		0		

Department	Managers	Employees	Working experience		
			1-5 years	5-10 years	More than 10 years
Innovation department	1	7	4	3	1
Marketing department	1	1	1	0	1

Interviews:

For the interviews, the researcher used an open-ended question framework to gather employees' views (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It helped collect the qualitative data from the respondents that aided in getting a good insight into the topic. Furthermore, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews in this project because they provide flexibility while conducting the interviews, and this helps the researcher in examining deeply the viewpoints of the interviewees, which is not possible in structured interviews as they always pursue strictly the same method (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Flinders (1997) criticized that due to the limitations, interviews are generally overestimated in their expressiveness. As a research method, the interview's sample size is generally small, and respondents may not have all the information that the researcher is seeking. In addition, respondents may take the interview lightly, which may be problematic for the interviewer. This problem is pervasive in qualitative research, particularly in interviews (Edson, 2016). But since the researcher has taken very in-depth views and created questions based on literature, this problem has been solved (Bryman, 2016). All the interview questions have been created by considering the research questions and objectives that improved the alignment between the purpose of the study and interview responses (Bell et al., 2018).

Furthermore, each interview with the employees was sustained for 20 to 30 minutes. The two kinds of informants that the researcher in this study has approached are managers and employees (Bell et al., 2018). They are good informants in this study as the employees work in a team with the company's managers to bring creative offers and products of the company to the market. Employees were chosen from the innovation department, operational department and other departments of Alibaba to improve the effectiveness of the study and measure the environment in different departments.

The interview transcription was created by writing the script of the

interview with each participant in the interview (Sutton, 2015). The next stage is the coding where each theme is coded by highlighting the exciting and vital data. Each code is transformed into themes. In this study, research has named each of them as the intrapreneurial traits, motivational factors, and restrictive factors in intrapreneurship projects of Alibaba. Each theme is reviewed effectively and the data is collated into each theme to systematically improve the comprehension of data (Williams & Moser, 2019). Therefore, the thematic analysis helped to analyze the data effectively.

After completing the interviews, the researcher organized all the feedback into three main categories: 1. factors influencing intrapreneurship 2. employees' assessment of the intrapreneurial environment 3. solutions to the challenges of Intrapreneurship.

Direct Observation:

Second, for the direct observation, because the author of this study has the experience of interning in the marketing department of Alibaba for three months. Hence, the researcher has many experiences interacting with the innovation department. The marketing department conducts market research whenever they develop a new service or product. It evaluates the challenges, dangers, and advantages of such service or product in entering the future market. From the day-to-day of my work, the researcher could observe the level of project freedom the department has and the strategic adjustments they need to make in the face of competitors. Since the author was an intern, the researcher sometimes also had the opportunity to guest-visit the H.R. department to help them record interviews with candidates and learn more about their basic requirements for selecting employees for the innovation department. Therefore, it is possible to correlate different intrapreneurship projects more in-depth.

Archives:

Third, for archives, the author of this study searched for more information online about Alibaba's innovation and Intrapreneurship. Also, during the interviews, the researcher asked if there is any internal information that can be made available to

him as references. Together, these information gave the author of this study a precise picture of the internal decision-making steps when faced with a series of intrapreneurship challenges and even allowed him to analyze over time how the adjustments that Alibaba made in their Intrapreneurship practices developed and differed.

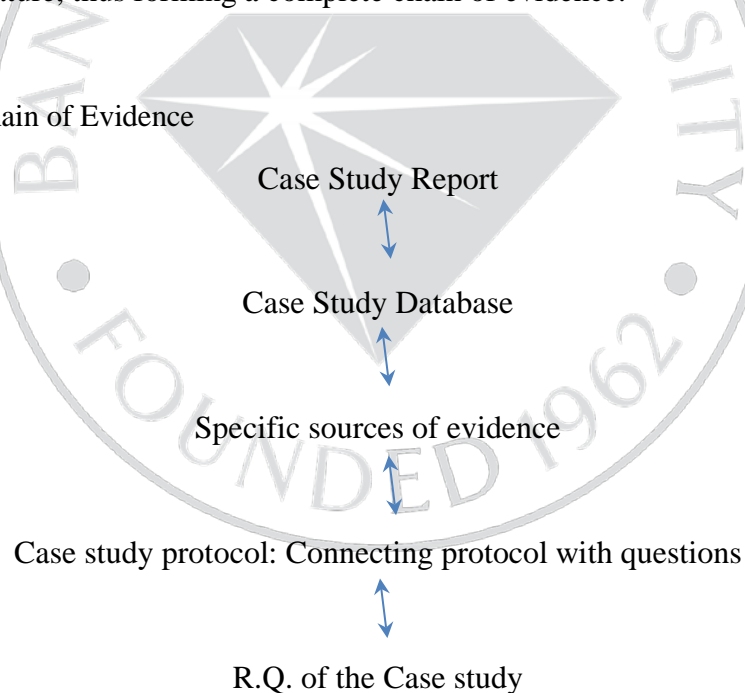
3.4 Validity and Reliability

First of all, a literature survey had to be done first, through many documents on Chinese websites and by asking Alibaba to get some publicly available documents as information. Second, interview Alibaba's internal employees, divided into different departments, innovation, and marketing. I interviewed ten employees, both managers, and general staff, and eight will be from the innovation department. This paper will also divide the interviewees into those with one to five years of work experience and more than ten years of work experience. To corroborate each other, in-depth interviews will be conducted to understand the importance of Intrapreneurship to them and the various factors that influence intrapreneurship projects. The protocol and the interview plan will be adjusted according to the interviewee in time. The questions will be tailored to each position and department.

Yin (2018) suggests researcher should ask good questions and explain the answers. The researcher has to be a good listener who is not bound by my way of thinking or preconceptions. The researcher should also be flexible and scalable to turn problems into opportunities and challenges into motivation when he encounters new problems. Whether conducting theoretical research or countermeasure research, the researcher should always grasp the essence of the research problem. Only by grasping the essence of the problem can the researcher eliminate irrelevant information, narrow the scope of the research, and keep the whole research within a manageable range. The researcher should not be biased about the problem to be studied and exclude all preconceptions or established opinions, even those with some theoretical basis.

Correspondingly, the author of this study used the information he obtained as a resource for his database, online news, information, and public information within the company. If there is some essential graphical information, it will be one of the most critical data and will be organized and analyzed. Likewise, the questions and answers to the interviews with different people in the draft have also been a part of the database. Asking open-ended questions to establish links in the documentation helped to increase reliability. Finally, a series of evidence chains were formed. First, total citations have been made to the relevant parts of the database, including literature, interviews, and already own observations in the work. Second, the events, places, and ways of data collection are clarified. This is followed by a detailed elaboration of the data obtained from the interviews and the close connection between the data obtained from the literature, thus forming a complete chain of evidence.

Figure 3.1: Chain of Evidence



Construct validity: developing a set of correct, operational measures of the concept under study.

Intrinsic validity: used only in descriptive or causal case studies, not in descriptive or exploratory case studies): the identification of causal links from various

confusing artifacts, i.e., the demonstration that a particular condition causes another particular outcome.

Extrinsic validity: The creation of a category under which the findings are grouped.

Reliability: Demonstrating that each step of the case study - such as the data collection process - is reproducible and that the same results can be obtained if the study is repeated.

Table 3.2: Case Study Strategy

Inspection	Case Study Strategy	Stages used by the strategy
Construct validity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use multiple sources of evidence 2. Form a chain of evidence 3. Require key providers of evidence to check and verify draft case studies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Collection 2. Data Collection 3. Report Writing
Internal validity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform pattern matching 2. Attempt some kind of explanation 3. Analyze the competing opposites 4. Explain the logic model used 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence Analysis 2. Evidence Analysis 3. Evidence Analysis 4. Evidence Analysis
External validity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single-case study guided by theory 2. Multi-case study by repetition and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study Design 2. Study Design
Reliability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt the draft case study 2. Establish case study database 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Collection 2. Data Collection

The following table shows six approaches to data collection and analyzes their advantages and disadvantages.

Table 3.3: Pro and Con between Different Evidence Methods

Evidence	Advantage	Disadvantage
Literature	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stable: can be read repeatedly. Natural and real: not built as a result of a case study. 2. Precise: contains the exact names, references and details that appear in the event. 3. Wide coverage: long time span, covering multiple events, multiple scenario 	<p>Searchability: Low</p> <p>If the collection of document is incomplete, the error of information will be higher.</p> <p>Reporting error: Reflects author bias (unknown)</p> <p>Access: Some human factors can affect the access to document information</p>
Archive records	As above (same document) precise and quantitative	As above (same as the document). Archival privacy and confidentiality affect access to certain information
Interview	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted: directly addresses the case study topic 2. Insightful: presenting the cause-and-effect inference process in the observation 	<p>Improperly designed questions can cause error response errors. Improper recording affects accuracy.</p> <p>Respondents consciously answer as intended by the person who released them</p>
Direct observation	<p>Reality: covers what happened in real life</p> <p>Relevance: covers the context in which the event occurred</p>	Time-consuming and labor-intensive. The selection is prone to bias unless it covers a wide range. The observer will adjust and hide his behavior.

(Continued)

Table 3.3 (Continued): Pro and Con between Different Evidence Methods

Evidence	Advantage	Disadvantage
Participatory observation	As above (same as direct observation) Ability to understand personal behavior and motivation in depth.	As above (same as direct observation) Errors due to investigator control
Physical evidence	Witness to cultural identity Witness to technical operation.	Selection error... Difficulties in obtaining.

In this study, the author of this study has investigated the internal and external factors influencing Alibaba's Intrapreneurship and the various factors that need to be adjusted in the face of competitors' challenges, in a single category. The author also has ensured the validity and reliability of the data by carefully following up each step of the study in as much detail as possible by maintaining the correlation between the interview, observation, and archives methods:

1. In the interviews, since different positions and departments have different understandings of Intrapreneurship, different questions were asked depending on the department and the position, and questions related to internal innovation were asked laterally when facing a department that is not an innovation department.

2. In the observation method, the researcher recorded the details of the projects he has been involved in and summarized the steps, progress, and even defects of the internal innovation.

3. The archives method searched online for information related to Intrapreneurship as much as possible and obtained publicly available internal innovation materials from the interviewees within Alibaba. This was done to reduce errors and improve the validity and reliability of the data.

The selected method and approach affect the data and results' reliability and

transferability in any research. In the view of the Web Center for Social Research (2006) Methods "reliability relates to consistency and repeatability of research results which cannot be measured but only estimated". Transferability indicates whether the attained outcomes could also be attained by another research conducted by diverse researchers at a diverse time. Like reliability, the transferability of outcomes is also not sure or proven in every research. The outcomes attained by the research requirements are to be guaranteed by future research and perhaps even quantitative research designs. But this study does not have the purpose of developing generalizable outcomes. Instead, the purpose of this study is to establish an excellent comprehension and provide novel valuable perceptions regarding Intrapreneurship. Thus, the research design and the research approach can be said appropriate if one considers the limitations and scope when assessing the outcomes.

For example, from interviews, intrapreneurial projects often require close collaboration with the marketing department in the innovation department. The marketing department can market research and position the product or service more accurately and quickly. The innovation department has three main job functions: research and planning, project design and promotion, and customer service. The project is finally reviewed and audited by the manager then presented to the CEO.

It was interesting to learn in the conducted interviews that half of the interviewees in the innovation department had worked in the innovation department of other companies. There are many reasons why they jumped to Alibaba. However, the main reason is that traditional Chinese companies and some large corporations have a very conservative approach and mindset when it comes to innovation projects and Intrapreneurship. The pressure exerted by their leaders is simply this: only success is allowed, not failure. This leads to rigid management models, inefficient output of new projects, and a severe disincentive for employees to work. But in Alibaba, the innovation department is a department that allows people to make mistakes more often and fail faster, thus the faster they learn knowledge and experience. They are not

looking for speed, not quantity, but only quality. These conditions give the employees enough enthusiasm and motivation to face their work, and they are not stingy to share their experience, although the work is hectic, but the employees are always full of energy.

Two managers that the researcher interviewed were senior people with over a decade of experience at Alibaba. They have also experienced many failed projects, most notably the two years between 2007 and 2009 when Alibaba invested 200 million RMB to enter the software market, which failed due to a lack of innovation experience. After a lengthy discussion, they finally kept the innovation department and gave more freedom to the project after that. Every project's failure somehow means they are one step closer to success. The subsequent projects like DING TALK and Vmate succeeded because of it.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

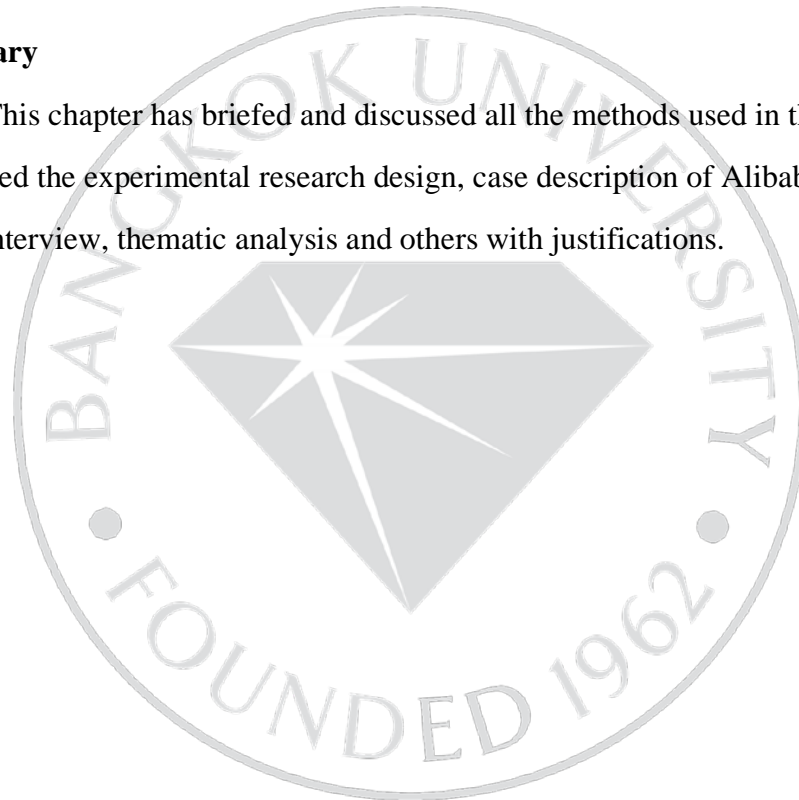
Executing research with ethical and societal consideration is considered the compulsory basis for every study. In this research, the term ethical consideration begins with the guarantee of respecting everyone's rights involved in the research and ensuring impartiality, righteousness, and truth. Moreover, Ritchie and Lewis (2013) advocated that the confidentiality and secrecy of the respondents have to be assured and nobody would experience any kind of harm or loss by their elective participation. Ritchie and Lewis (2013) further stated that it is the researcher's duty that he/she should inform the respondents regarding the research purpose, how he/she would use the interview, and who the other related parties are. The respondents' protection is considered the last factor that comes under the ethical issues within a research work. Ritchie and Lewis (2013) described this factor as the case where the data is sensitive and respondents could experience unfavorable effects from their involvement or have shared personal information. In this research, the interview was a little sensitive because respondents were part of Hi-tech organizations. Hence, the researcher decided

to hide his/her actual identity so the respondents could share their information freely.

Moreover, this research provided sufficient time to the interviewees to think about the question and answer adequately. They were not forced to answer every question or complete the interview which means they could quit anytime. In addition, the researcher sent the interview transcription to each respondent and asked for permission to use the data. None of the respondents wanted to quit the interview or had any objection to using the data.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has briefed and discussed all the methods used in this study. It has described the experimental research design, case description of Alibaba, primary methods, interview, thematic analysis and others with justifications.



CHAPTER 4

DATA FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is to present the responses of the interview participants in this study and discuss the findings extracted from the responses. In this chapter, the researcher has created themes and analyzed the data in each theme to interpret the responses and provide the crux of the study. For the Vmate project, it has developed three important themes based on the objectives of the study such as entrepreneurial traits, factors motivating intrapreneurship activity and factors restricting intrapreneurship among employees.

4.2 Themes

Theme 1: Intrapreneurial Traits and Abilities

From the results, it is found that most Chinese employees of Alibaba relate intrapreneurship with entrepreneurship. They know about entrepreneurship and all of them said that intrapreneurship is doing something new and taking risks in creating something unique. However, most of them did not use the term that these activities should be in a firm as an employee. As per interview, the intrapreneurial mindset traits of insider-outsider, implicitness, inspiration, commitment, creativity, knowledge, risk tolerance capability, sense of responsibility, and proactiveness were found in the interviewed employees of Alibaba.

Table 4.1: Participants

Participant No.	Level	Department	Years working for Ali
1	Employee	Innovation	4 years
3	Employee	Innovation	4 years
5	Employee	Innovation	8 years

In the context of entrepreneurship, participant 1 who has been working in the innovation department for 4 years stated that, “Since it is related to entrepreneurship, I believe it means creating new business, taking risks, etcetera.” This statement suggests that for him, intrapreneurship is like entrepreneurship that may need employees to think creatively for creating new business taking a considerable risk in the way of innovation

The response of participant 1 who has been working in the company for 4 years was supported by participant 3 who also worked in the innovation department for around 4 years, who commented:

“Entrepreneurship in corporations. I read some articles regarding it. Our company previously asked employees in the innovation department to read books that they recommended reading so that we could gain enough knowledge and confidence....At that time, TikTok was popular all over the world, and our company didn't want to miss this opportunity, so we were thinking of making a mobile app with a similar model to TikTok, But the company didn't want to invest money directly and needed a lot of careful planning, and we then developed an initial marketing strategy and worked with multiple departments. The company finally dispensed with the cumbersome process and invested directly in our department, and we had absolute freedom, and the company took risks, but gave us enough trust”.

From the answers, it is found that some participants believe that intrapreneurship is entrepreneurship in the organization for creating a new project and new ventures that may require the skills of risk tolerance, knowledge, passion, creativity, problem-solving etc. Some respondents strongly believe and asserted that entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship are the same. But at the same time, it also shows that a truly successful company will not be afraid of failure, but will also give enough trust to employees, the company and employees are mutual achievements.

In this way, participant 5 who worked 8 years believed in his views about intrapreneurship and expressed, “Doing something new and ability to face failures”. It

means intrapreneurship is to create something new and to do innovation with good courage and to have the ability to face failure in an endeavor to innovate. Similarly, participant 3 mentioned that, “I believe in taking a risk, doing some innovation and acting proactively for any work”. These participant answers reveal that employees in Alibaba are quite entrepreneurial and understand what is needed for innovation and showing creativity in the organization.

As such, it appears that the interviewed Alibaba staffs are aware of the concept of intrapreneurship and its related qualities. but still mix up intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship. Because only two who are managers used the term that it should happen in firms. Moreover, there are different traits of intrapreneurship such as innovation, sense of responsibility, risk-taking ability, creativity, proactiveness, and others. However, no employees and respondents were fully confident and knowledgeable about the difference between intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship. All the employees did not mention and uttered traits of the intrapreneurship but they just answered what they knew about.

Table 4.2: Respondents Who are Aware of Factors

Factor	# of respondents aware of factor	# of respondents partially aware of factor	# of respondents unaware of factor
Qualities of intrapreneurship	8	1	1
Difference between entre- and intrapreneurship	0	2	8

Theme 2: Factors Driving Intrapreneurship Behavior among Employees

From the responses, it is found that many factors may drive staff motivation in the organization to show their creative skills and abilities. The support of the

management, rewards and recognition, freedom of the work, incentives, competitive environment in the workplace and others play a vital role in influencing the intrapreneurship behavior of the employees in the organization.

Table 4.3: Participants

Participant No.	Level	Department	Years working for Ali
1	Employee	Innovation	4 years
2	Manager	Innovation	10 years
3	Employee	Innovation	4 years
4	Employee	Innovation	5 years
5	Employee	Innovation	8 years
6	Employee	Innovation	6 years
7	Employee	Marketing	3 years
8	Manager	Marketing	11 years
9	Employee	Innovation	3 years
10	Employee	Innovation	6 years

In the context of the motivational factors, participant 1 said that, “It occurs suddenly, I believe. Or if my colleagues do something creative, it creates an urge for me to work creatively.” It means internal competition is one of the most important factors that drive the positive feeling and courage among the employees to endeavor to create something new to gain success. The competition between the employees may be a positive force to encourage innovation.

In contrast, participant 2 who has been working in the company for 10 years argued:

“I am inspired when I see someone gain popularity after doing something innovative. I also want to gain fame in this sector, So I moved from the marketing department to the innovation department, and although it was hard at first, I was indeed tempted by the generous rewards, and when our VMate project became

operational, the company bought us a house locally.”

In the context, participant 8 who is the leader of the marketing department mentioned that, “Commitment for company, knowledge about the external environment such as market and customer needs, internal environment such as company resources. Because if the company will not provide us with those resources, we will not be able to do something new”.

These findings suggest that some employees are motivated by the desire for fame and recognition based on innovation and uniqueness of the idea and achievement of the employees in Alibaba. However, other employees believe that knowledge of the external and internal business environment may determine the employee's behavior and their ability for innovation. According to the response, lack of resources, lack of knowledge, and lack of awareness of market trends limits employees' motivation to create new things and products or services.

Furthermore, participant 4 who has been working in the company for 5 years argued:

“When someone gives me the liberty to do what I want then I believe I can create something new. Else other views and opinions deviate me. I would like to do it my way and in a secret manner. At that time I was in charge of the technology and programming, and the company gave us a lot of freedom to play in many functionalities, as long as the general framework met the requirements, the remaining details could be completely according to our department's ideas, which gave us more motivation and inspired me a lot of interesting ideas, which played a big role in promoting the Vmate project in the international market.”

These comments suggest that autonomy and implicitness (work freedom) may be the most effective factors for some employees to get motivated in the workplace and show creativity in their jobs. Some respondents say that promotion at the workplace and support to the employees may be great factors for encouraging innovation in their work and improving creativity in the organization.

Responding to questions related to important factors encouraging intrapreneurship behavior, respondents said that management support is very important to motivate and encourage more innovation and intrapreneurial behavior in the workplace. In this context, respondent 1 noted, *“I believe company’s management should encourage us as Google does by giving some time to its employees.”*

In contrast, participant 10 mentioned that *“It should start from an educational level that employees should not only work for the company but for themselves too to meet their own goal, We also hope that the company can arrange to provide us with a way to upgrade our education at the right time, or just to upgrade our knowledge and skills training, so that we can learn more about business innovation, similar to your major, in the current increasingly competitive business environment we really need some group building activities to break through the bottleneck of our innovative ideas.”*

These comments indicate that the education and knowledge of the employees that clearly shows that some people believe that people's educational level can encourage and preclude employees from showing their capability of doing something new and unique.

Furthermore, participant 6 who has been working in the company for 6 years mentioned that *“I believe, it firstly starts with the inner side then the company’s vision and simple and supportive hierarchy.”* According to this statement, company’s culture and structure play a significant role in motivating employees for engagement and creativity in the workplace. Suppose the organization has a supportive and less long hierarchy. In that case, it may have a positive implication on the employee's attitude, which may cause their high engagement in showing intrapreneurship behavior. Another respondent in this study argued that transparency in management may motivate employees to work hard to show intrapreneurship behavior. In this context, participant 4 stated that, *“Ofc, the company should set a formal structure that how employees should work and they will get rewards. It will give transparency and*

may encourage intrapreneurship behavior of employees.”. This comment is a novel finding that has not been found in the previous studies included in the literature. It means the organizational hierarchy, transparency, management support, company policies, promotion, educational level and other factors may be important factors for influencing intrapreneurship behavior of the employees.

In Alibaba, employees are urged to work on innovative projects, and they are motivated by the management to take up the projects and show their skills. Employees can be motivated by the rewards, personal communication with the employees, supportive leadership, culture` of the company, promotion, recognition, demand, competition, market situation, and others may influence the degree of motivation of the employees to work hard and show entrepreneurship behavior.

In this context, participant 3 advocated that “Some companies set the organizational process in such a way, that employees automatically work creatively such as they set rewards, or promotions or recognition.” It means the recognition, rewards and promotion can be an important factor to motivate employees to work upon the innovative projects of the company. Participant 1 and participant 2 gave supporting statements that promotion and rewards are most important that drive them to work upon the innovative projects of the companies. However, few respondents stated that competition in the market influences them to work on innovative tasks. Participant 5 reasoned that "Sometimes market situations require us to do something new when if rival companies launch a new product or new technology." The comment suggests the competition in the market may require the creation of new products and processes to gain a competitive edge. Participant 6 also argued in favor of the competition that can force innovation and creativity. Participant 4 said:

“If I feel that this new product is demanded in the market and it will be useful for consumers, I may work on that innovation. For example, I feel that Facebook was so popular because it meets the need of having a social circle and connectedness. I can find something more innovative which will be demanded by

Chinese consumers. Or I can also say competition can drive innovation in me.”

This comment infers that the utility of a product to the consumer may decline over time, and this may require the organization to focus on creating a new product or service to improve the satisfaction of consumers again.

So, Participant 4 mentioned that *"When my colleague or similar designer does something and gets appreciation, then I feel the motivation to do innovatively"*. It means the risk-taking ability of the employee and appreciation of the colleagues for the innovation give intrinsic motivation to employees to work hard in the organization. It may motivate them to work innovatively and improve creativity in their jobs. Moreover, participant 3 argued that *"I have the high commitment from which I start the work. Since I work for Alibaba I try all possible ways to do something additional for you. In fact, it is beneficial for me as well"*. It means the commitment level of the employees plays a very important role in growing the courage of employees and giving intrinsic motivation for the jobs.

In the context of the manager's role in promoting innovation, the leadership may be compelling and supportive which can determine the behavior of the employees in the workplace. Some of the employees have stated that the management in Alibaba is quite supportive and employees are not compelled to accept the innovative projects. In contrast, some employees argued that managers in Alibaba sometimes compel employees to work but not always. In this context, participant 1 mentioned that *"Not really, they never compelled me at least"*. In contrast, Participant 3 said that *"Not for innovation, but when we are given targets then managers do this sometimes"*. Furthermore, participant 9 who are working in company for 3 years advocated the views of participant 3 by saying that *"Yes, they set a target"*. These findings suggest that the management of Alibaba is not autocratic, but that a situational leadership is practiced in the organization, allowing the leaders or managers to change the leadership style according to the requirements of the situation at hand. Managers become sometimes autocratic and compelling while sometimes

becoming supportive.

In the context of motivational force for engaging staff in innovation and creativity, participant 9 stated that “*Company vision, smooth communication, supportive management, availability of facilities helps me*”. It means the vision of the company, communication system in the company, and management style in the company plays a vital role in motivating an employee to be more engaged in creativity and innovation. Participant 7 who are working in company for 3 years argued, “*Promotion, money, educational diplomas at company cost* “. Furthermore, participant 3 uttered that “*Money, organizational policies and culture motivate employees, I believe* “. Other participants said different factors for getting motivated in the workplace such as goals, commitment, strategic focus and others. It means most of the employees in Alibaba get motivated by the monetary rewards, recognition, promotion and self-commitment to work hard for creativity and innovation.

Table 4.4: Factors are Driving Intrapreneurship

Factor	
Rewards and recognition	Rewards provide them fully energy to work on projects
Desire for fame and recognition	Satisfy the vanity in the company
Freedom of the work	Company gives freedom to let them work projects by their own, won't interfere much
Education level	Reading more related books of intra and want to have chance to study business innovation
Leadership	Managers become sometimes autocratic and compelling while sometimes becoming supportive.

(Continued)

Table 4.4 (Continued): Factors are Driving Intrapreneurship

Factor	
Competitive environment (Internal)	The internal competition made them have good efforts
Competitive environment (External)	When a competitor innovates a new product or application, the company will launch a similar product or application and make functional innovations

Theme 3: Factors Restricting Intrapreneurship Behavior Among Employees

From the findings, it is found that employees can be restricted for the innovation. Employees may resist accepting change in the organization. The leadership and management in the organization plays an important role in motivating and restricting employees to show creativity and innovation in the workplace both.

Table 4.5: Participants

3	Employee	Innovation	4 years
4	Employee	Innovation	5 years
5	Employee	Innovation	8 years
7	Employee	Marketing	3 years
8	Manager	Marketing	11 years
10	Employee	Innovation	6 years

Job insecurity is one of the factors that restrict employees for involving intrapreneurship. Participant 5 said that “I believe that I can face failure and take risks, and I don’t have fear of being fired, so I will make something new one day”.

Lack of resources is another reason that limits the intrapreneurship of employees in Alibaba. In this way, participant 10 explained that “*My tension sometimes and when my senior does not provide me with resources which I want such*”

as time, tools, or access to any facility of the company". It means stress may affect the employee's intellectual skills, which in turn reflect on their task and performance in the organization. High stress in the workplace may restrict employees from working for innovation because lack of resources can cause stress to an employee on how to get things managed with fewer resources. Participant 3 argued that *"When my request does not reach to management when I insist on anything, then I feel like giving up the project. Therefore, communication must be there between us and management"*. It has been supported by participant 4 who said that *"When my manager does not listen to me, it demotivates me"*. In contrast, participant 5 responded that *"When I do not have a friendly atmosphere, I will feel suffocated"*. It means employees give importance to friendly importance while some give more importance to management.

Furthermore, respondent 6 stated that *"Job insecurity, if I fail to do anything again and again then I fear to do something innovative"*. Fear of failure is the most important factor in the employees' work-life because failure to do something new and loss of job due to failure may restrict employees in a usual way instead of motivation for innovation and creativity. In a similar context, participant 9 said that *"My fear of people will call me a loser if I am not able to complete successfully"*. In contrast, Participant 7 mentioned that *"Lack of resources such as no technology in my company which I want to use for new projects"*. Overall, this theme has presented that lack of resources, fear of job security, psychological challenge (fear of being called loser), lack of communication, stress in the workplace, and some other factors may restrict Alibaba employees to work on innovative tasks and projects.

Table 4.6: Factors are Limiting Intrapreneurship

Factor	
Job insecurity	When employees are at risk of failure is not to worry about being fired

(Continued)

Table 4.6 (Continued): Factors are Limiting Intrapreneurship

Factor	
Lack of resources	The lack of resources can put pressure on employees, high pressure can limit the incentive to innovate
Leadership	Related to the willingness of managers to provide a friendly work environment
Communication	Lack of communication leads to project failure

4.3 Discussion

This part of the research report discusses the results and findings of how this study has answered the research question. It assesses the alignment of the results of this study with previous research papers summarized in the literature whether it is providing different outcomes or is in line with the previous study.

In the context of the first objective, Intrapreneurial Traits and Abilities, most of the employees in Alibaba know of innovation and creativity and comprehend the intrapreneurship traits and characteristics. However, they comprehend that intrapreneurship is doing something new and creating new ventures or businesses. It means knowledge of intrapreneurship is not complete and they mix it with entrepreneurship. This research study has found that employees in Alibaba mentioned commitment, risk-taking, innovation, initiative, proactivity, creativity and others are the characteristics of the intrapreneurship in the organization. It means this study has explored the definition of intrapreneurship, that it is the entrepreneurial activity in the corporate and taking risks in establishing new ideas in the organization. This study has found the results in line with previous research by Antoncic (2011) focused on four important dimensions of intrapreneurship: proactiveness, innovativeness, new business venturing, and risk-taking. The current study has supported the previous research papers that entrepreneurial behavior of the employees in the workplace can influence the entrepreneurial activity, performance and creativity of the organizations (Ling et al., 2008; Sinha and Srivastava, 2015). Additionally, Huang et al. (2021)

stated that intrapreneurship focuses on entrepreneurship in the corporation.

Intrapreneurship is the business approach used to achieve the sustainability of the business. It means the finding of the current study match with previous studies somewhat but lack of the knowledge of the employees about the difference between intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship may cause the gap between current and previous studies.

However, the current study is a qualitative study and explored whether employees were aware with the term of Intrapreneurship. In addition, whether they have traits of intrapreneurship. Although not all intrapreneurial traits were found in this research, factors that employees affirmed were being innovative, determined, dedicated, knowledge-seeking, self-motivated, and competitive.

Even though this study can be useful for comprehending the traits of the intrapreneurship, but there is a limitation. This study could not find which characteristic and trait is most effective for intrapreneurial behavior. This can have an implication on the usage of the study in the organization and on the usage by the employees to improve their skills and traits to be more innovative and creative. This can provide general comprehension of the required skills and traits to be innovative to grow the organization. In addition, such skills and traits can be developed with training as well.

In the context of the second objective, Factors Driving Intrapreneurship Behavior among Employees, it is found that liberty in the workplace, transparency, implicitness, competition in the market, educational diplomas in company cost, promotion, rewards, recognition, monetary incentives and other factors may motivate employees in the workplace of Alibaba. All these factors have had positive effects on the motivation of the employees in Alibaba to improve their engagement in innovation and show creativity in their work to improve efficiency and ensure unique products to the consumers. The factors from inside of the employee and from the outside of the employees play a very important role in motivating the employees.

The findings of this study are in line with previous studies explained that monetary incentives, rewards, promotion, organizational structure and policies, product demand, market situation, communication between employee and management, friendly environment in the workplace, management support in the workplace improve the courage of the works to take the risk and to adopt the changes in the workplace (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004; Covin & Slevin, 1991; Christensen, 2005; Hornsby et al., 2002; Kuratko et al., 1990). The reflection of utility theory was also visible as one of the participants stated that if they feel that a product is demanded in the market and it will be useful for consumers, then they may work on that innovation. Overall, this finding suggests that these motivational factors can be used to drive intrapreneurship in Alibaba and other firms.

Even most of the findings of the current study are in line with previous research studies, this study has unveiled new motivational factors that drive intrapreneurial behavior, such as transparency, competition with colleagues, creative activities of the colleagues in the workplace, and educational diplomas at the company cost that can work as motivating factors to improve engagement of the employees in creativity and innovation.

In the context of the third objective, Factors Restricting Intrapreneurship Behavior Among Employees, it is found that various factors and challenges inhibit the intrapreneurship behavior of the employees in the workplace. Lack of resources, autocratic managerial style, lack of communication, psychological challenges (being called loser and failure), personal stress and tension of the employees, poor communication between employee and managers, ineffective working conditions and environment in the workplace and other factors may affect the tendency of the employees towards the innovation. Employees can be reluctant to work on an innovative project if they are not satisfied with the management and organizational policies. Most of the employees are happy in Alibaba and they contribute to improving the company's creativity. However, the organization is facing challenges in

motivating employees. Some factors lead to adverse implications on the employee's motivation in the workplace such as poor communication, insufficient resources, lack of coordination, work stress and others. As Kabir et al. (2017) claimed that lack of the education to people may limit the ability of employees to be intrapreneurs and entrepreneur. But this study has not found this. It may be the reason that Alibaba is one of the giant corporations in China which requires highly efficient and educated employees and uses rigorous recruitment and selection method and hence this was not the problem. From the interviews, it was found that social norms were not the reason that can limit intrapreneurship in Alibaba. Therefore, this research is not in line with Kabir et al. (2017). This research also contrasts with the results of Drost (2010) that self-efficacy limits the intrapreneurship. But this study shows consistency with some studies (Rojuaniah et al., 2016; Belousova & Gailly, 2009; Aparicio, 2017) that access to resources, may affect the motivation of the employees and people adversely. This research also confirms that lack of freedom and fearful environment prevent the intrapreneurship behavior (Rojuaniah et al., 2016) as well as the importance of time commitment for creativity (Amabile et al., 2002).

To sum up, this chapter has generated and discussed the research findings critically. It has been found that rewards, promotion, recognition, creativity by colleagues, competition, demand for products, transparency, liberty, resources availability, strategic focus, communication and other factors may be determinants to the intrapreneurship behavior of the employees where more or less of the intensity of the factors may affect the behavior of employees in the organization. This research contributed some novel insights on intrapreneurial in Alibaba Company. Naturally, some gaps have been left unclosed and can be bridged in future studies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The main aim of this study has been to explore the inspiration of intrapreneurial behavior among employees working in Chinese hi-tech companies. To achieve this research objective, the study focused on Alibaba, one of the most growing companies in China and the world. This research is based on a single case study approach. The researcher preferred the qualitative research method and interpretivism philosophy in conjunction with the inductive approach to explore the factors that motivate and restrict employees to work in innovative projects in the organization.

From the results and discussion in this study, it can be concluded that most of the employees in Alibaba understand the basic concept of intrapreneurship and basic characteristics of intrapreneurship. However, they still need to comprehend the difference between intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship. The traits of insider-outsider, implicitness, inspiration, commitment, creativity, knowledge, risk tolerance capability, sense of responsibility, proactiveness were found among employees. They should be made aware of the difference between the two by providing good education to employees in the workplace and improving their skills toward incrementalism in the organization.

Another finding of this study is that employees in the workplace can be motivated through recognition for achievement, rewards, monetary incentives, support of the management, supportive hierarchy of the company, good work climate, transparency in the operation, liberty, market demand, education of employees, among a few other factors mentioned. This study has explored some novel factors such as transparency, creativity by the colleagues in the workplace, and education diploma at company cost may be good motivating factors to improve employees' engagement in

innovative projects.

Furthermore, it is found that employees can feel demotivated if they are not valued in the workplace and managers do not listen to the employees. This may cause stress in the workplace and discord between the employee and management, affecting the relationship between them. Job security is also an important factor that may affect the intention and engagement of the employee because the feeling of insecurity due to failure on innovation projects may affect the behavior of an employee to avoid such tasks and jobs.

5.2 Finding

This study provides some novel insights into intrapreneurial motivational factors, and future studies can further validate these factors in a new context, country, sector or company. Alibaba provides good transparency in the operation and improves good communication systems in the workplace to encourage a good relationship between and improve coordination between all the employees. It improves the effective engagement of employees by motivating each one.

It can be said that education and training of the employees in the organization and competitive working environment in the workplace increase the employees' engagement in innovative projects, as identified in the current study. Along with other studies, this research may be useful to the organization to comprehend the factors influencing the motivation of the employees. This may improve the reliability of the results because of the conformance of the factors identified with previous studies, but an exploration of some novel factors in the current study might be more useful. However, the research on the qualitative aspects only and focus only on one case study may not be significant to claim that identified factors in this study can work in every organization to motivate employees to work on creative and innovative projects.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, there are some suggestions for Alibaba and other organizations to motivate employees to embark on innovative projects.

Organizations should provide training to employees to improve their skills and capabilities. The training may aid employees to improve their strengths and lessen the weakness that can aid their work on innovative projects with confidence. It can better work to improve the chance of the employee's success and remove the feeling of job insecurity which is the most important reason restricting employees to get on innovative tasks.

Including Alibaba, there should be proper availability of resources in the organizations which may encourage the employee to use the resource for innovation in the workplace. Lack of resources can preclude employees to get on new tasks and producing new products or services, but the availability of sufficient resources may be useful to engage employees in new creative projects. It is not necessary that being giant organizations, all employees get adequate resources. Hence, it should be ensured by management that employees should be given all required resource to innovate in company.

They should be ensured that their failure will not lead any kind of job insecurity. In addition, they should be motivated to innovate and make them learn that innovation comes from failure. Hence, being failed is not the bad thing.

The leadership in the organization should be inclusive to grow the innovation in the company. Inclusive leadership may ensure the participation of the employees in the process of creating new ideas and innovative solutions to the challenges being faced by organizations. This may improve the performance of enterprise by incrementalism innovation.

5.4 Research Limitations

This research has been carried out to explore the factors that motivate and restrict employees to show intrapreneurship behaviour, but it carries some limitations that may influence the usage of the results. This research has been conducted using qualitative methods that may provide general and detailed information without any statistical evidence of which factor influences motivation of the employees.

Furthermore, qualitative research that included only 10 employees from the single case may limit the use of results because it cannot prove and claim on the identified factors can be the same in all organizations. The fear of the confidentiality and risk of leak of personal information could have affected the mindset of the respondents in this study to provide true information. The results of the study cannot be generalised as it was done in one company and country.

5.5 Future Research

For future research, it can be recommended that other researchers may use the quantitative method and survey questionnaire to conduct a study on the same topic and research areas to determine which factors most influence the motivation of the employees to show intrapreneurship. A survey questionnaire can be useful for collecting quantitative data and using statistical methods for assessing the data. This will aid to prove previous theories about motivating factors and the entrepreneurship behaviour of employees. Furthermore, the researcher can consider more organizations in the study instead of a single case to improve the reliability of results and usefulness. In addition, future studies can be done in other nations and sectors as well.

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Appendix A

Research protocol

INTERVIEW

Innovation department: 2 managers: LI XU(李旭), ZHANG PENG (张朋) 6 employees: SHEN JIAQING(沈佳晴) WANG LU(王璐) CAI RUI (蔡瑞) ZHOU YIZHONG(周以重) FANG TAO(方涛)

Marketing DEPARTMENT: One manager: CHEN QING YING(陈清颖), 1 employee: SHI YIJIE(石郁结)

1. Intrapreneurial activities exist within the company and could you provide some examples?
2. Innovation department has a high degree of freedom and flexibility or not and if yes, could you talk about What are the ways to ensure the freedom and flexibility of employees working in the company? Or in what ways will employees ensure that their innovative thinking is put into practice in Intrapreneurial projects?
3. What do you think is Alibaba's concept of innovation and How has Alibaba's concept of innovation changed in the last few years?
4. What roles of these concepts of innovation that you mentioned for Intrapreneurial and Why?
5. What bottlenecks have stalled the company's internal innovation program? Was it a factor inside the company or a challenge from an external competitor?
6. What kind of adjustments have brought Alibaba to a stronger vitality in innovation and Intrapreneurial?
7. Everyone is special, especially in the innovation sector. Can you talk about how each person's different internal concept of Intrapreneurial has helped the project? For example, several different roles are needed in each team to ensure that

the overall project schedule is maximized in terms of efficiency

8. Will Intrapreneurial projects be terminated early after a certain distance from the target? If yes, what kind of standards to measure that target, could you provide a real case? If not, the company will continue to see how the project goes on?

*

9. What role do managers play in the innovation department? Like what does a manager in the innovation department need to do to help the team move forward and assess whether the project is off track?

10. What do you think is the biggest achievement of your team in the Intrapreneurial project? What kind of products and services, for example. Can you briefly describe the story of the team behind this product or service?

Observation: According to their own experience in the company's projects and understanding of the detailed records.

Archives: Search Google and Baidu engines for information about Alibaba's innovation, intrapreneurship profiles. And get more public insider information from interviewers

BIODATA

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Work Experience

Internship at Alibaba from 2020/6-
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