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Intrapreneurship Skills in Workplace and Innovative Behaviour among iGen Graduates: A Proposed Conceptual Framework

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Abstract
Purpose: This study aims to propose a conceptual framework for intrapreneurship skills and innovative acts among iGen graduates.
Design/methodology/approach: This study adapts the knowledge-attitude-behavior (KAB) theory to examine the relationship between intrapreneurship skills, attitude, and innovative behaviour since the theory provides a systematic approach to integrating knowledge and behaviour. A set of literature was explored and examined to propose the conceptual framework.
Findings: A conceptual framework was proposed for the study of intrapreneurship skills and innovative acts among iGen graduates.
Research limitations/implications: This paper is a review paper from other journals, and the data is yet to be collected.
Practical implications: The study can be used as a guideline for a company to identify potential talent for their organizations. Besides, policymakers or educational institutions could benefit from this study by creating and developing more talented workers in the future.
Originality/value: This study focuses on the intrapreneurship skills among iGen graduates and how their innovation behaviour will be affected in their daily work.

Keywords: Intrapreneurship, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Human Resource Management

Introduction

In the fast-paced and ever-evolving landscape of the contemporary workplace, the emergence of the iGeneration (iGen), born between 1995 and 2012, has ushered in a new era of talent and potential. This generation, marked by their digital nativity, diverse perspectives, and unique upbringing, has begun to make its mark on the workforce, challenging conventional notions of work, creativity, and innovation. Harnessing the untapped innovative potential of iGen graduates is increasingly becoming a focal point for organizations aiming to remain competitive in an era of rapid change and disruption. At the intersection of this generational

shift and the pursuit of innovation lies the concept of intrapreneurship – a term coined to describe the entrepreneurial spirit and behaviours exhibited within organizational settings. Intrapreneurship skills encompass a range of attributes, such as creativity, risk-taking, and problem-solving, all of which are essential for driving innovation within organizations (Bosma et al., 2019; Rauch & Hatak, 2016). The iGen cohort, often characterized by their affinity for technology, adaptability, and collaborative tendencies, presents a unique opportunity to explore the relationship between intrapreneurship skills and innovative acts within the workplace.

There have been increasing trends in scientific research on entrepreneurship (Figure 1). However, there is a lack of studies that focus on intrapreneurship skills among workers in the workplace (Figure 2), especially among iGen graduates. Intrapreneurship is the entrepreneurial behaviour of employees within an organization. This research endeavours to delve into this intriguing intersection by proposing a conceptual framework that aims to elucidate how intrapreneurship skills at the individual level affect the innovative behaviour of iGen graduates in their professional environments. Through an exploration of the multifaceted dimensions of intrapreneurship and the distinct characteristics of the iGen cohort, this framework seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the factors that drive innovation within this generation and how organizations can effectively leverage these skills.

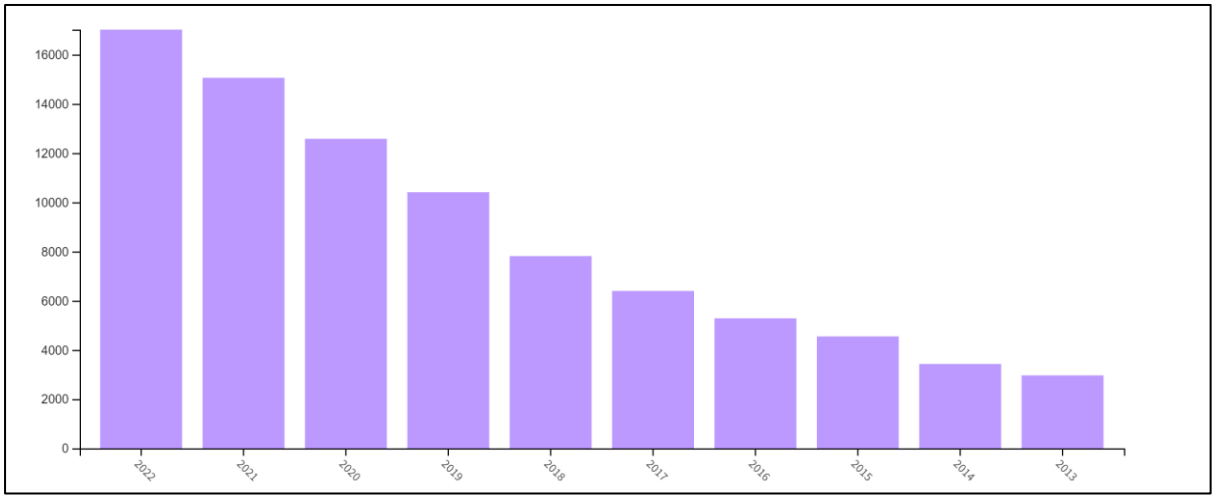

Figure 1: Number of entrepreneurship journal article publication in Web of Science from 2013 to 2022
(Source: WoS database extract)

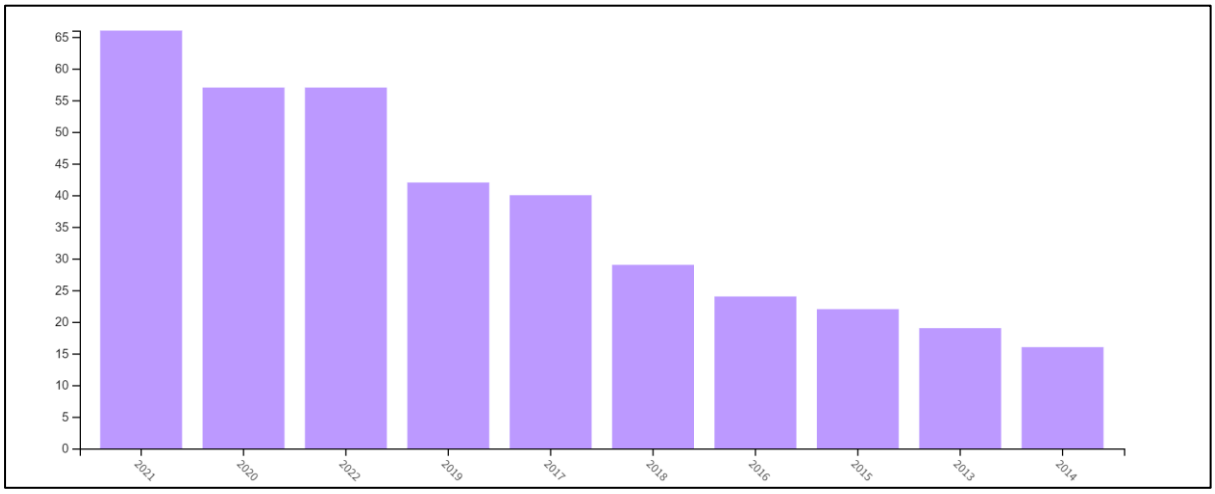

Figure 2: Number of intrapreneurship journal article publication in Web of Science from 2013 to 2022
(Source: WoS database extract)

Next, we will investigate the components of this proposed study to shed light on the intricate relationship between intrapreneurship skills and innovative acts among iGen graduates, ultimately contributing to the broader discourse on organizational innovation and generational dynamics in the workplace.

Literature Review

Intrapreneurship Skills

Intrapreneurship, a concept rooted in entrepreneurial behaviour exhibited within organizational settings, has gained prominence as a critical driver of innovation (Bosma et al., 2019; Rauch & Hatak, 2016). Researchers have emphasized the importance of intrapreneurial skills in fostering a culture of innovation, including creativity, proactiveness, risk-taking, and problem-solving. Intrapreneurship can be divided into individuals (Gawke et al., 2019) and collective (Chakrabarty, 2020). Individual intrapreneurship can be defined as the entrepreneurial actions and behaviours of specific employees within an organization. On the other hand, collective intrapreneurship is the establishment of an intrapreneurial culture and environment within the entire organization. This study focuses on the individual level of intrapreneurship skills in organizations that could lead to innovative behaviour. Gawke et al. (2019) discuss the creation and verification of a tool called the Employee Intrapreneurship Scale (EIS). The scale is designed to assess and quantify intrapreneurship, or entrepreneurial behaviour within an organization, at the individual level. This study will adapt the scale to measure the intrapreneurship skills among iGen graduates in the workplace.

Innovative Behaviour and iGeneration

Innovative behaviour refers to the actions and activities of employees that contribute to the generation, development, and implementation of new ideas, products, processes, or solutions that lead to improvements, competitiveness, and growth within the organization. It involves individuals or teams taking proactive steps to identify opportunities for innovation, experimenting with novel approaches, and pushing the boundaries of established practices (Scott & Bruce, 1994). In today's fast-paced digital landscape, organizations face fierce competition. Innovative behaviour allows organizations to stay ahead of the competition by constantly evolving their products, services, and processes to meet changing customer needs and market dynamics. It can lead to the development of unique offerings that set them apart.

On the other hand, the iGen cohort, also known as Generation Z, is distinguished by its upbringing in a digital world characterized by constant connectivity, technological fluency, and a globalized perspective (Twenge, 2017; Elam, 2016). These characteristics have significant implications for how iGen individuals approach work and innovation. Their digital nativity, adaptability, and preference for collaboration are seen as assets in navigating the complexities of the modern workplace. It empowers organizations to harness the opportunities presented by technology, meet customer expectations, and drive sustainable growth and success. This study proposes to examine how intrapreneurship skills affect innovative behaviour among iGen graduates. Skills or knowledge was found by previous literature to have a relationship with attitude and behaviour.

Attitude

Attitude refers to an individual overall evaluation, feelings, or beliefs about a particular object, person, situation, concept or behaviour. Attitudes encompass cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. The cognitive component involves an individual's beliefs, thoughts, and knowledge about the object of their attitude. Besides, affective components refer to the emotional aspect of attitude, including feelings, likes, dislikes, and emotions associated with the object. Other than that, the behavioural component represents an individual's intentions or actions related to the object of their attitude. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), attitudes can be formed through various processes, including direct experience, socialization, exposure to persuasive communication, and cognitive processes like reasoning and judgment. Attitude can also predict behaviour. However, the relationship between attitudes and behaviour is complex. While attitudes can predict behaviour, they do not always do so. Factors like social norms, situational constraints, and the strength of the attitude can influence this relationship (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes can change over time due to various factors, such as persuasive communication, social influence, and cognitive dissonance (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Hovland et al., 1953). In terms of measurement, Greenward et al. (1998) said that attitudes can be measured using various techniques, such as self-report scales (e.g., Likert scales), implicit measures (e.g., Implicit Association Test), and physiological measures (e.g., facial expressions and neural responses). This study will examine the attitude of iGen graduates in the workplace. Attitudes in the workplace can refer to an individual's general disposition or emotional response towards innovation, risk-taking, and change. Understanding these attitudes is crucial as they can significantly impact an organization's ability to foster innovation and adapt to evolving challenges. According to Damanpour (1991), Positive attitudes toward innovative behaviour are characterized by a willingness to embrace change, generate creative ideas, and support efforts to introduce new processes, products, or services. Various factors can influence employees' attitudes toward innovation. Providing training and development opportunities to employees can enhance their knowledge and skills related to innovation, which can, in turn, influence their attitudes toward it (Ven den Bossche et al., 2009). Understanding and cultivating positive attitudes toward innovation can help organizations thrive in today's rapidly changing business landscape.

Knowledge-Attitude-Behaviour (KAB) Theory

This paper adapts the Knowledge-Attitude-Behaviour (KAB) theory by Schrader and Lawless (2004). They found that there is a relationship between knowledge, attitude and behaviour. The KAB model is a psychological framework that seeks to understand and explain how information and awareness change an individual's attitudes and, ultimately, behaviours. In this model, Knowledge (K) represents individuals' information and facts about a particular topic or issue. It can be acquired through education, personal experience, media exposure, or other

sources. Besides, knowledge is considered the foundational element in this model. People need to be aware of and understand the relevant information before they can form attitudes or engage in behaviours related to that information. Then, Attitude (A) refers to an individual's evaluation or emotional response to a specific topic or issue based on their knowledge and personal beliefs. Attitudes can be positive, negative, or neutral and play a crucial role in shaping behaviour. In this model, someone with a positive attitude is likelier to perform behaviour related to the attitude. Other than that, Behavior (B) in this model represents individuals' actions or choices regarding a particular issue or topic.

The KAB model suggests a sequential relationship between these three components. Knowledge leads to the formation of attitudes, which, in turn, influence behaviour. However, this relationship is not always linear, and various factors can intervene at each stage. Attitudes often influence behaviour but do not always directly translate into action. Other factors, such as external constraints or social norms, can also impact behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In this study, we aim to examine the intrapreneurship skills among iGen graduates and how they led to innovative behaviour among them. Besides, this study will examine the mediation effect of attitude towards the relationship between intrapreneurship skills and innovative behaviour. Hence, this study adapts the research process of knowledge, attitude and behaviour by Schrader and Lawless (2004) to this study. The KAB model is a useful framework for understanding how information and awareness can drive changes in attitudes and behaviours. This theory provides systematic guidelines for examining the relationship between intrapreneurship skills and innovative behaviour among iGen graduates.

Proposition

Based on the previous discussion, the following propositions are put forth:

Proposition 1: Intrapreneurship skills will positively affect innovative behaviour among iGen graduates.
Proposition 2: Attitude of iGen graduates will positively affect innovative behaviour among iGen graduates.
Proposition 3: The relationship between intrapreneurship skills and innovative behaviour will be mediated by attitude.

Conceptual Framework

In sum, the literature highlights the growing significance of intrapreneurship skills in driving workplace innovation and the unique attributes of the iGen cohort that can potentially amplify their intrapreneurial contributions. Building upon this foundation, our proposed conceptual framework aims to bridge this gap in knowledge, providing a structured approach to exploring how intrapreneurship skills among iGen graduates influence innovative acts in contemporary workplaces (Bosma et al., 2019; Rauch & Hatak, 2016; Twenge, 2017; Elam, 2016; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Ng et al., 2019). Based on the conceptual framework developed, the intrapreneurship skills are expected to affect the attitude and then the innovative behaviour among iGen graduates in the workplace.

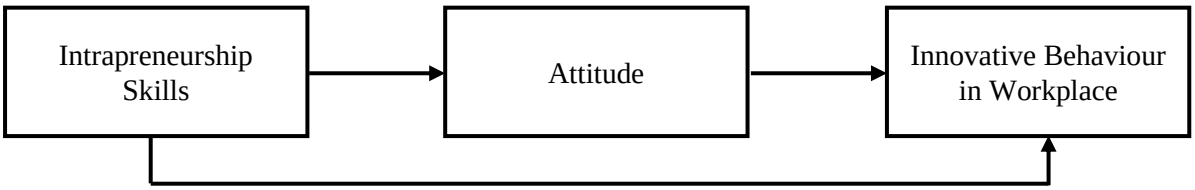

Figure 3: Conceptual Framework

Conclusion

The study is expected to benefit organizations, policymakers and educational institutions for leveraging intrapreneurship skills to promote innovative behaviour among iGen graduates in the workplace. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how intrapreneurship skills influence innovative behaviour among iGen graduates, contributing valuable insights to the body of knowledge, especially on intrapreneurship and workplace innovation.

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