

Ristovska, Natasha; Blazheska, Daliborka; Gramatnikovski, Sashko

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Introducing intrapreneurship management concept in function of improving organizational performance

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INTRODUCING INTRAPRENEURSHIP MANAGEMENT CONCEPT IN FUNCTION OF IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Natasha Ristovska¹
Daliborka Blazheska
Sashko Gramatnikovski

Abstract

This paper is an action research conducted in order to prove the connection of introducing intrapreneurial management concept with the motivation and productivity of employees and thus the organization's efficiency and profitability. Each employee, as individual, possess potential degree of creativity. The intrapreneurial culture and specially designed reward systems can increase motivation, satisfaction and encourage employees to use their creativity to contribute to continuous business innovations, therefore to the overall business success.

The model of an innovative organization that introduces intrapreneurship concept is analyzed in this paper. The importance of adequate performance management system that supports intrapreneurial activities is highlighted. Thus, the influence of motivation on employees' creativity and overall innovation processes is elaborated. Finally, the need of fostering intrapreneurship is presented.

The research is supported by case study of a multinational organization in the service industry in N. Macedonia where survey was conducted among 90 employees. The results confirm that intrapreneurship concept should be implemented in service organizations in order to increase the creativity and motivation of employees to be involved in innovation processes and therefore contribute to business prosperity and improved performance.

Keywords: intrapreneurship, creativity, innovation, motivation, productivity, performance.

JEL classification: M21; M10; L26; L83

INTRODUCTION

Intrapreneurship management concept in an existing organization implies that employees have the opportunity to develop new projects important for the profitability and efficiency of the organization. The essence of this concept is to detect and encourage the creative potential of employees who will give ideas for improving

¹Natasha Ristovska, Ph.D., Associate Professor; Daliborka Blazheska, Ph.D., Full Professor; Sashko Gramatnikovski, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Tourism and Management in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia.

processes and products or services and actively participate in the implementation. Nowadays organizations face the challenge to maintain their competitive advantage in the market which is mainly based on continuous introduction of innovation in all aspects of business operations.

Intrapreneurship involves innovations and risks. Managing risk for future benefits is crucial for all modern business organizations. Intrapreneurial activity within organizations has emerged as a mechanism to generate profitable results and valuable solutions for the society (Aparicio, Turro, and Noguera 2020). The concept of intrapreneurship includes introducing an intrapreneurial culture in the organization which means fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in employees by implementing reward-based performance systems. Every employee must be encouraged and supported in his effort to develop and implement intrapreneurial project. The role of human resource management in this regard is to recruit, select talented employees and to design motivation systems for employees to be creative, to develop new ideas, to share them and to participate in the process of their implementation. Creativity includes looking beyond the framework and existing rules and norms associated with the traditional performing of tasks. Creativity is a characteristic that helps employees find new answers and solutions to old and new problems. The creativity of each individual is a function of three components: expertise, creative thinking and motivation. Expertise is everything that an individual knows and can do in the field of work that he performs and it covers the techniques and procedures related to business operations and understanding of working conditions. Creative thinking is the ability of employees to combine old ideas in a new way and reflects the flexibility and imagination of employees in problem solving. Motivation is the employee's passion and need to be creative and can be stimulated by certain rewards or other personal interests. Expertise and creative thinking enable the creativity of employees, and the motivation that employees have determines whether they will be creative workers or intrapreneurs. The ultimate goal for the organization introducing intrapreneurship concept is to manage talented employees and to increase their creativity in function of developing new ideas that will be further transformed into concrete innovations crucial for the overall business performances in the competitive business environment.

1. INTRAPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYEES' CREATIVITY

Intrapreneurship is a management concept that focuses on employees within organizations that have the attributes of entrepreneurs. Intrapreneurs give creative ideas and take the risk to implement them in order to solve certain problems within the organization. The terms “innovation”, “strategic renewal” and “out-of-the-box thinking” are applied to flag intrapreneurship as behaviour in pursuing new opportunities and competitive advantage (Blanka 2019). Intrapreneurship has a multidimensional structure and it is influenced by the important role of proactivity and innovative action, associated with the challenge to the intrapreneurs in their propensity for risk (Augusto, Rodrigues, and Caldeirinha 2012). Innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, opportunity recognition / exploitation and internal / external networking are

important behavioral dimensions of intrapreneurship (Neessen, Caniëls, Vos, and De Jong 2019).

In an effort to gain a competitive advantage by increasing their entrepreneurial activities, organizations focus on improving the creativity of their employees, not just on developing their technical competencies and skills. Nowadays, in the changing business environment, the importance of creativity in the workplace is becoming more and more prevalent. As markets become more saturated and competition intensifies, organizations need to find new or innovative approaches to business problems. They can look for this creativity in their staff or even recruit new, more talented employees. The concept of creativity can be divided into three dimensions: the individual, the product or the process.

At the core of intrapreneurship is the spread of entrepreneurial thinking among employees (Güven 2020) and developing an intrapreneurial culture. This processes take time and start with the philosophy of management and leadership style encouraging greater openness to team proposals. According to Badoiu, Segarra-Ciprés and Escrig-Tena (2020) intrapreneurial projects may arise in organizations whose top managers support corporate entrepreneurship in a non-active manner. This will enable team members to develop their creativity in the organization and give ideas for optimal solutions. Leaders are generally expected to think creatively and come up with innovative solutions to organizational problems, but if the creative abilities of the team are nurtured and properly used, a greater choice of creative ideas and solutions to organizational problems will be provided. There will be more benefits from the creativity of employees in the workplace, such as increased engagement, increased interaction, increased personal ethics, increased passion, increased motivation, improved problem-solving process, improved productivity, enhanced teamwork and cooperation.

All organizations have creative employees who just need to be encouraged. Establishing creativity as a business approach and promoting an intrapreneurial culture requires established systems that will strengthen the creative process such as incentives. Organizational culture is a strategic resource that can be used to cultivate entrepreneurial orientation (Ling, López-Fernández, Serrano-Bedia, and Kellermanns 2019). Employees at every level of the organization need to be supported as they develop ideas. Everything related from the organization's vision to human resource management, talent management, performance management and reward systems, if properly set up and coordinated, can foster creativity in the workplace. Organizations should allow employees to contribute relevant ideas, introduce changes and bring in innovative strategies to increase their growth and profit (Ekeh and Ogidi 2015).

2. BUILDING INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATION

In today's competitive environment, individuals in organizations with new knowledge and ideas are key factors for introducing innovation. Employees with specific personal creativity, skills and abilities can increase the opportunity for generating new innovative ideas that will help achieving competitive advantage.

Innovative organization operates on the principles of diversity. Diversity is a natural setting of an innovative organization. In order for management to be a driver and initiator of innovation, it must be diverse and composed of different employees by competence, work experience, age, gender, who apply different methods and styles in managing the organization. Practice shows that heterogeneous management teams are more successful than homogeneous.

The innovation management team can most effectively implement innovation in a decentralized type of organization that has a small amount of power at the top of the hierarchical pyramid. Decentralized organizations tend to erase hierarchical levels and positioned authorities where knowledge and ideas are taking precedence.

According to Park, Kim and Krishna (2014) organizations become innovative and adaptive to the organizational environment as they cultivate relationships with employees because they can motivate employees to engage in voluntary intrapreneurship and scouting in and around the organization. Only management that is constantly looking for ways to innovate can be part of an innovative organization. Talented employees and innovators are essential asset in an innovative organization. The management is the one who should create favorable conditions for developing and implementing innovations. In this regard, management creates good interpersonal relationships, eliminates conflicts or applies appropriate strategies for their resolution, establishes management for recruitment and retention of talented employees, and eliminates the rigid principles that apply in traditional organizations. Within innovative organizations, the most valuable product is the idea for new ways, methods and techniques that have a positive effect on efficiency.

Innovation is an integral part of business activities, because without new products and services or improvement of existing, the organizations will lag behind the competition. Innovation development is not a one-time event, but a systemically embedded process in modern organizations. Recent research confirms the importance of innovation, but innovation performance varies considerably between different sectors and between organizations in the same sector, suggesting that both structural and organizational factors influence the effect of innovation on performance. Innovative organizations that are able to use innovation to improve their processes or differentiate their products and services outperform their competitors, measured in terms of market share, profitability, growth or market capitalization. However, managing innovation is difficult and risky as most new technologies do not directly transform into new products and services and most new products and services do not achieve commercial successes. Furthermore, innovative work behavior plays a mediating role in the relationship between organizational climate for innovation and organizational performance (Shanker, Bhanugopan, van der Heijden, and Farrell 2017).

Innovation is closely linked to teamwork and the creative combination of different disciplines and perspectives. In order to maximize the creative potential of employees, the activity of generating ideas should be collaborative. Innovative organization is more than structure; it is an integrated set of components that work together to strengthen the environment in which innovation would develop. Finding new opportunities involves constantly analyzing the organization's external and internal capabilities, establishing appropriate communication channels, and developing methods and techniques for

identifying trends. Hence, an innovative organization should be based on new information, technologies and knowledge, with a high degree of perceptibility of market opportunities, with the capacity for rapid adaptation and the ability to successfully integrate new technologies into the existing system in a short period of time and at minimal cost. Also, corporate entrepreneurship (itraprenership) can be seen as complementary factor in enhancing the impact of technological innovation on organizational performance (Yunis, Tarhini, and Kassar 2017).

3. MOTIVATION, PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Human resource is one of the most important resources for generating new ideas, but also for implementing innovation in any modern organization. An intrapreneurial organization that develops partnerships with employees also takes into account the motivation of employees as one of the variables that affects their productivity and effectiveness, but also the overall business performance of the organization. Motivation gives courage, energy and perseverance to employees in order to follow the goals of the organization. The motivated employee takes action in order to achieve his work goals and the goals of the organization. Employees are motivated by working conditions, job security and salaries, but they also want responsibility, autonomy, challenges and opportunity to learn. Highly motivated employees are productive and vital to organizational survival. According to Fischer, Malycha, and Schafmann (2019) research there is explicitly strong and significantly positive main effect between intrinsic motivation and creative/innovative performance which implies that the higher the intrinsic motivation, the higher the creative and innovative outcome.

Intrapreneurial organizations implement human resource management style that shows confidence in their employees, gives employees space to interpret and implement organizational goals independently, provides opportunities for growth and career development, creates an organizational climate and culture that allows employees to use their creative abilities. This way of managing employees creates a committed and motivated workforce that is crucial to maximizing the organization's full potential and performance. Managers in intrapreneurial organizations need to establish employee motivation systems in order to take advantage of its benefits (Ganta 2014):

- *Employees satisfaction* – Satisfaction of employees is important for any organization, as this factor can lead to progress or regress. In the absence of incentives, employees will not be fully prepared to meet their goals. Thus, managers should apply different types of incentives, monetary and non-monetary rewards or disincentives in case of inefficient employees;
- *Employees efficiency* - The level of efficiency of the employee is not strictly related to his abilities and qualifications. To get the best results, the employee needs to have a perfect balance between ability and readiness. Such a balance can lead to increased productivity, reduced operational costs, and overall efficiency gains, and can only be achieved through motivation;
- *Ability to meet organizational goals* - Those goals are met when there is adequate resource management, cooperative work environment, all employees are goal-oriented, and there is established cooperation and coordination;

- *Team harmony* - Adequate work environment focused on cooperative relationships is very important for the success of the organization. Not only can it bring stability and profit, but employees will also adapt more easily to change;
- *Workforce stability* - Workforce stability is very important from a business point of view. The staff will remain loyal only if they have built a sense of belonging, are actively involved in decision-making and the contribution of each individual in achieving the results is appreciated. Employee skills and power can be used for organizational benefit and creating a corporate image that can further attract new competent and qualified employees.

4. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND MODELS

The main goal of performance management is to establish a high performance culture in which individuals and teams take responsibility for the continuous improvement of business processes and their own skills and contributions within the organization. A well-designed performance appraisal system has two important functions: establishing relationships between team members and their managers, and establishing an individual's relationship with the organization. By clearly presenting the role that the individual has in the sector and the organization as a whole, his engagement in achieving organizational goals increases. The relationship between employees and managers develops continuously and depends on the management style, behavior skills of managers, but also on the overall organizational culture, considering the impact of this relationship on the performance and engagement of employees.

The performance management process sets the platform for rewarding excellence by aligning the individual achievements of employees with the mission and goals of the organization and by having the employees understand the importance of certain tasks in achieving organizational results. Setting clear performance expectations, which include results, actions and behaviors, helps employees understand exactly what is expected of their jobs. Employee performance management can be considered as a proactive process that implies harmonious alignment between individual and organizational goals in order to achieve excellence in performance.

There are several principles that management should follow when evaluating performance in operations. These principles help to maximize the engagement and commitment to achieve a high level of performance: objectivity and a fair attitude towards all employees regardless of personal feelings, when assessing employees to start from the competencies they have in terms of their responsibilities, valuing individuals according to the tasks indicated in their job description, valuing employees based on their role and contribution to the overall success of the organization.

Performance measurement should be seen as a flexible process, not a "system". The use of the term "system" implies a rigid, standardized and bureaucratic approach, which is not in line with the concept of performance management as a flexible and evolutionary process in intrapreneurial organizations. Many organizations have established a specific measurement structure that is used as a basis for determining the initial cost of labor for each job. Individual-oriented rewarding of performance is

becoming more and more present in organizations. The calculation of labor costs in organizations depends on a number of interrelated elements: set tariffs for different jobs, systematization and evaluation for each job and job responsibilities, calculation of labor costs for each product or service, specific calculation of salaries for managers, other benefits for employees and managers, control systems, performance measurement and special reward systems for the top management and board members. Organizations that introduce intrapreneurship should consider a variable pay for employees' outstanding performance apart from the base pay, which is based on job description. Both types of rewarding system should be ensured for higher motivation, retention, engagement and job satisfaction (Mitushi 2014).

In today's business environment, team performance is becoming increasingly critical to organizational success. Intrapreneurial organizations face the challenge of ensuring that employees individual and team work productivity, which can be difficult if performance management is not clearly defined, so individual goals can influence team work and vice versa. Group-based rewards seem to be logical complements to performance measurements that focus on teams and the quality / quantity of work they do. Also, from a performance evaluation point of view, it may be easier and less complex for the manager to assess team performance as opposed to individual performance. The importance of reward systems based on teamwork may also depend on the specific industry in which they are applied. Sometimes, the combination of individual and group financial incentives as well as a mix of formal and informal reward schemes can significantly boost employee motivation. However, employees may have difficulty perceiving how their efforts translate into results and may become demotivated if they see that a particular team member is being rewarded and not contributing enough to the end result. The award is based on equality in the team environment and the contribution of all its individuals should be the same. Therefore, designing team-based rewards is important, but should avoid negative effects on motivation, which will ultimately lead to greater problems for the organization.

There are many variations in reward systems between organizations and between the countries in which these organizations operate. Organizations can use different types of rewards and criteria. Overall, fairness seems to be a universal aspect of a reward system quality. However, it is important to keep in mind that reward systems decisions affect organizations' competitiveness and employee satisfaction.

5. METHODOLOGY

The empirical research is based on a survey questionnaire that was answered by 90 employees in a multinational organization in the service industry in the Republic of N. Macedonia. The survey was conducted in February 2021 and the respondents answered by assessing their level of agreement to 20 statements.

The general hypothesis for the survey was that if organizations introduce intrapreneurial management concept by developing intrapreneurial culture that supports and promotes creativity and establishing talent management, adequate performance measurement and reward system in order to enhance the motivation of employees to be actively involved in innovation and intrapreneurial activities, it will improve

organizational performance through increased productivity, effectiveness and competitiveness.

6. RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis of the survey results provided confirmation of the hypothesis and variables. Relevant survey statements have been selected to be presented hereafter.

Out of 90 employees who answered the questionnaire, for the statement: *The concept of intrapreneurship (developing internal entrepreneurs) is applied in the organization*, the following results were obtained: 33 respondents answered Yes, which is 37% of the respondents; 40 respondents answered Partially, which is 44% of the respondents; and 17 respondents answered No, which is 19% of respondents (presented in Figure 1).

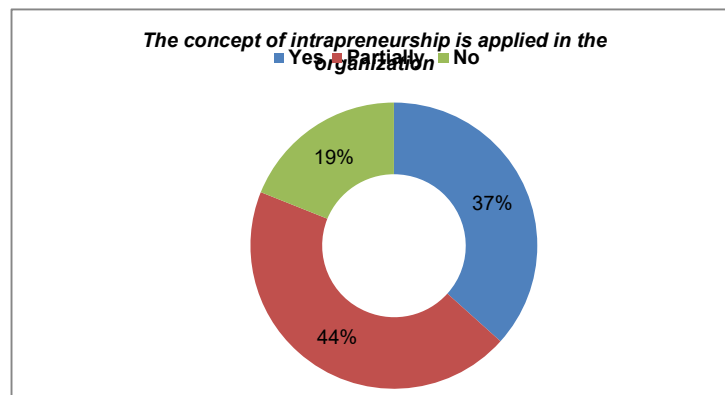


Figure 1. Intrapreneurial management concept

For the statement: *Work performance is continuously measured in the organization*, the following results were obtained: 18 respondents answered Yes, which is 20% of the respondents; 30 respondents answered Partially, which is 33% of the respondents; and 42 respondents answered No, which is 47% of respondents (presented in Figure 2).

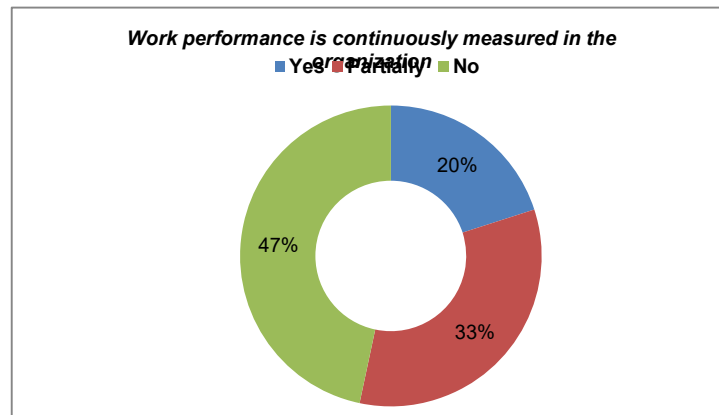


Figure 2. Performance measurement

For the statement: *Employees are motivated by the reward system to actively participate in intrapreneurial activities*, the following results were obtained: 28 respondents answered Yes, which is 31% of the respondents; 42 respondents answered Partially, which is 47% of the respondents; and 20 respondents answered No, which is 22% of respondents (presented in Figure 3).

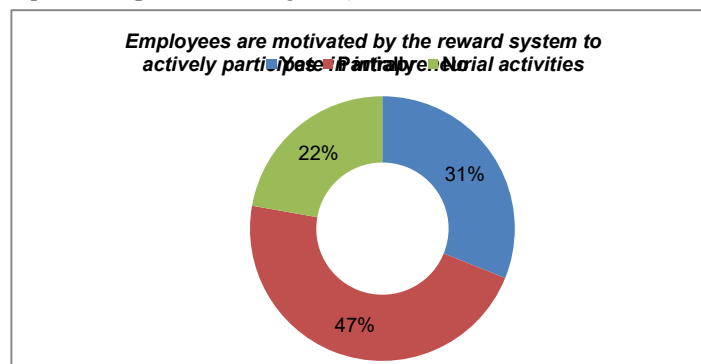


Figure 3. Motivation and reward system

For the statement: *Employees are motivated by the reward system to actively participate in intrapreneurial activities*, the following results were obtained: 29 respondents answered Yes, which is 32% of the respondents; 33 respondents answered Partially, which is 37% of the respondents; and 28 respondents answered No, which is 31% of respondents (presented in Figure 4).

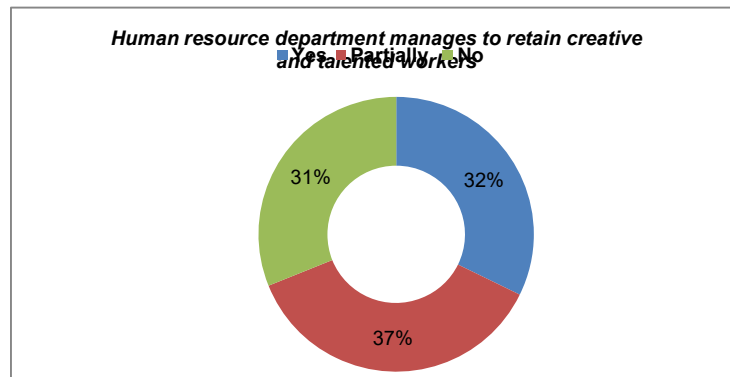


Figure 4. Talent management

For the statement: *Creativity helps employees in efficient and effective execution of tasks*, the following results were obtained: 34 respondents answered Yes, which is 38% of the respondents; 38 respondents answered Partially, which is 42% of the respondents; and 18 respondents answered No, which is 20% of respondents (presented in Figure 5).

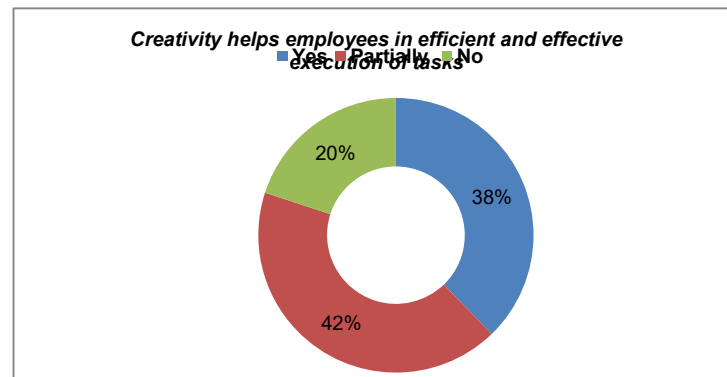


Figure 5. Creativity vs efficiency and effectiveness

For the statement: *The organization supports the creativity of employees with appropriate awards*, the following results were obtained: 40 respondents answered Yes, which is 44% of the respondents; 35 respondents answered Partially, which is 39% of the respondents; and 15 respondents answered No, which is 17% of respondents (presented in Figure 6).

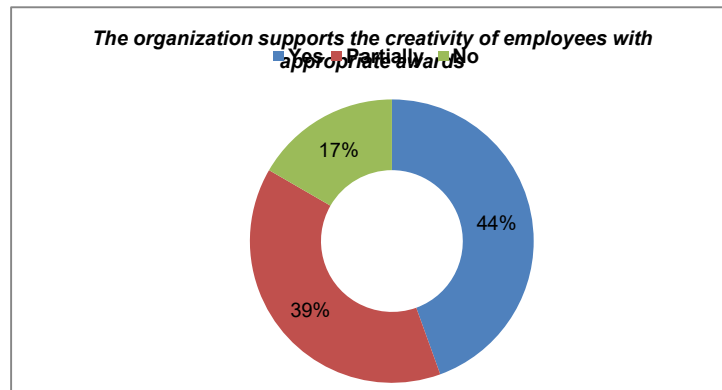


Figure 6. Rewarding creativity

For the statement: *The organization has developed intrapreneurial culture that promotes and supports flexibility, loyalty, teamwork, innovation and creativity*, the following results were obtained: 38 respondents answered Yes, which is 42% of the respondents; 40 respondents answered Partially, which is 45% of the respondents; and 12 respondents answered No, which is 13% of respondents (presented in Figure 7).

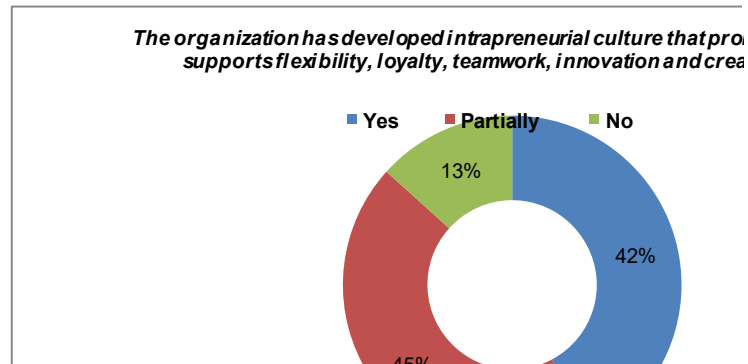


Figure 7. Intrapreneurial culture

For the statement: *Employees are actively involved in the processes of introducing innovations and changes*, the following results were obtained: 28 respondents answered Yes, which is 31% of the respondents; 41 respondents answered Partially, which is 46% of the respondents; and 21 respondents answered No, which is 23% of respondents (presented in Figure 8).

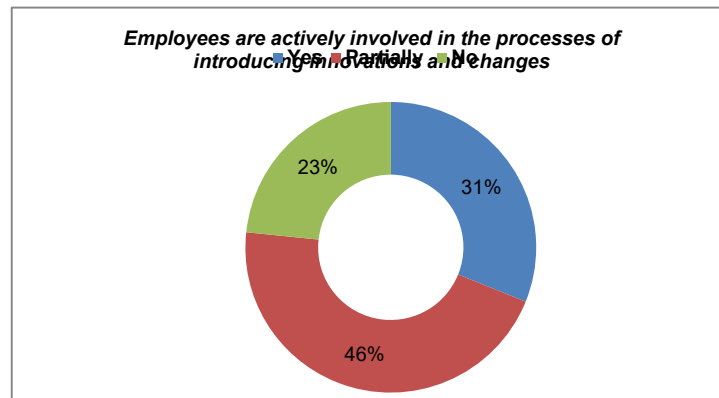


Figure 8. Employees' participation in innovation and change management processes

For the statement: *Supporting entrepreneurial thinking positively affects employee's productivity*, the following results were obtained: 32 respondents answered Yes, which is 36% of the respondents; 30 respondents answered Partially, which is 33% of the respondents; and 28 respondents answered No, which is 31% of respondents (presented in Figure 9).

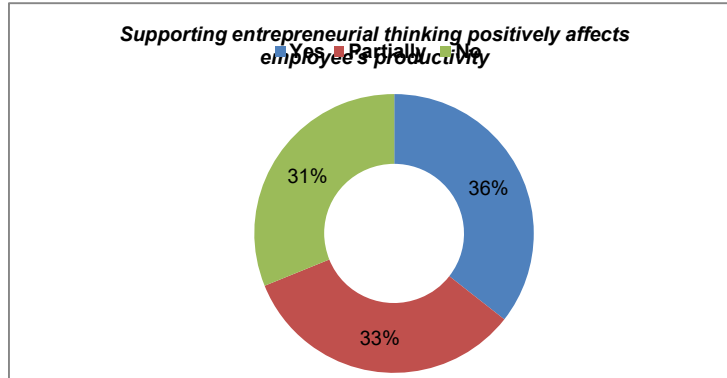


Figure 9. Entrepreneurial thinking

In this case study organization, survey results show that the intrapreneurial management concept is introduced but not fully applied in order to provide the expected results. However, the management is aware of intrapreneurial concept benefits as well as the employees responding the questionnaire. Employees' creative potential is partially used. Further upgrade of motivation and rewards system should be implemented in function of enhancing intrapreneurial capacities and innovation

activities of employees and therefore increasing productivity and improving organizational performance.

CONCLUSION

In today's rapidly changing environment, continuous improvement of effectiveness, efficiency, productivity and profitability is key to business success. Human resource management plays an important role in the process of motivating employees and improving their performance as a necessary resource for achieving organizational goals and competitiveness. By applying the concept of intrapreneurship, the management influences the continuous rejuvenation of the organization, increasing its flexibility and competitiveness on the market. Hiring and retaining talented workers and creating intrapreneurs within the organization is necessary at all stages of development of business organizations, especially when they are important for initiating and introducing changes and innovations that can set the organization apart from other rivals and in that way enabling sustainability.

Intrapreneurship is correlated with the application of innovative management whose goal is to discover, recognize and implement the best business ideas. Improving competitive advantage results from the continuous introduction of innovative products, services and processes. Innovations are closely linked to teamwork and the creative combination of different disciplines and perspectives, as well as the creation of organizational structures and processes that enable the advancement of change.

Intrapreneurship is a new concept that encompasses all employees in the process of creating innovation. In order to participate in intrapreneurial activities, employees need to be properly motivated, whether it is with material or intangible rewards. Knowing the factors that affect motivation is an important element that should be taken into account when making and implementing any decision. The impact of human resource management on performance improvement begins with motivating employees to be creative, develop new ideas and realize them. Creativity is the ability to create original, useful and applicable ideas. One of the ways to encourage employees to think creatively and engage in intrapreneurial activities is to maintain and involve employees in various trainings and encourage their development. Performance management is also a mean of improving results at every level. The main goal is to set a high-performance intrapreneurial organizational culture in which both individuals and teams take responsibility for the continuous improvement of business processes.

The impact of the system for measuring employee performance and reward system, employee training and development programs, intrapreneurial culture that supports teamwork and creativity as well as employee involvement in decision-making and change-making processes; on the motivation of employees for involvement in intrapreneurial activities has been proven also by the conducted empirical research. If organizations have a more developed system of encouraging and supporting the talented employees and the intrapreneurs, fostering entrepreneurial thinking and behavior of the employees, the more the employees will contribute to the improvement of the organizational performance.

The research shows that the intrapreneurship management concept is not much known and applied in domestic organizations in N. Macedonia and is partially introduced and developed in multinational organizations present in the country that have higher awareness and understanding of its significance if their goal is to build sustainable competitive advantage. Organizations need to follow modern management trends and practices. Therefore, this is a concept that can provide benefits for increasing the employees and consumer satisfaction from one side, and higher business performances from other side.

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