

1. Introduction and the issue at stake

This chapter provides an introduction and background for examination of the role of intrapreneurship in a global business environment. It offers an outline of the research questions, the chapter sequence and research road map of the study. According to Morris and Kuratko (2002:22), we are presently living through a global entrepreneurial revolution that will set free the power of innovation in medium to large-sized companies. Farrell (2001) sees the whole world as being in a state of change. Social actors, companies and countries with an entrepreneurial orientation could be in a position to lay the foundations for growth and wealth. Particularly in organisations that already exist, entrepreneurial activities would have to be pursued with a sense of urgency if those organisations are to survive in the global and intensively competitive business environment (Baumol 2004).

In the following discussion, it will become clear that this requires particularly proactive and reactive entrepreneurial activities and organisational adaptations in response to changed framework conditions¹. To do this, entrepreneurial opportunities must be pursued, and risks in the business world must be recognised and taken into account when taking business decisions. New market sectors and opportunities should strengthen the competitive position and financial power of established companies and lead to strategic innovation (Brandt 1986, Guth and Ginsberg 1990, Baden-Fuller and Stoppford 1994, Oden 1997). This study shows how entrepreneurial thinking and action within a business can take on a central role in securing vitality and competitiveness for a globally active company operating in an uncertain, global business environment. Thus, the following theoretical and empirical research presents a new concept on holistic intrapreneurship. This concept, defined by new theoretical building blocks for a vital entrepreneurial learning organisation, helps to understand the new big picture of an emerging new business arena and the required holistic entrepreneurial management.

¹ Heifetz et al (2009) see more and more turmoil and crises in the future that will require companies to be able to permanently adapt to changes in the market environment. As part of this, the adaptation process will be a process of preservation and reinvention. Adaptable company management must overcome acute challenges and achieve continuous adaptability. A large number of small decentralised adjustments in response to changes in the business environment would promote a division of management responsibility, the use of collective intelligence and a culture of exchange relationships. Top management have to promote a feeling of community spirit and the flow of information, in particular about the quest for innovation.

1.1 Outline of problem and terminology

Technological developments and the global networking of markets create a dynamic and complex business environment. This constantly-changing business environment offers opportunities and risks for mature enterprises². Against this background, a number of fundamental questions come into focus in the following exploration:

- Can mature enterprises³ make use of their significant advantages over new and growing companies by applying intrapreneurship⁴, even in a complex world, and thus secure their long-term viability (see chapter 3, chapter 5.3 and chapter 6)?
- What are the tasks and roles that an entrepreneurial organisation must fulfil (see chapter 4 and chapter 5.1)?
- How should an organisational system of intrapreneurship be set up so that mature enterprises can make use of market opportunities, achieve innovations and deal with threats from the business environment (see chapter 4.3 and chapter 6.4).
- What are the levers of intrapreneurship that can be identified within the system of a business (see chapter 4.3 and chapter 5.3)?
- How can the business environment be analysed systematically in order to seek out future opportunities and risks in a proactive way (see chapter 4.1 and chapter 5.2)?
- How can interaction and networking between organisations and the environment be specified and formulated (see chapter 3.3 and chapter 5.3)?
- How can an organisation learn from entrepreneurial activities in order to secure sustainable viability (see chapter 4.1.4 and chapter 6.4)?

² Schein (2003:27) distinguishes, for example, three development stages in the degree of maturity of an organisation: Start-ups, established and dinosaurs (ageing companies). This examination on the role of intrapreneurship in mature companies puts the focus on established and ageing companies.

³ Süssmuth Dyckerhoff (1995:15-22) describes attributes and problems of mature enterprises. According to Baumol (2002a) mature firms have no alternative but to be innovative because of the competitive market mechanism. As a result, innovation is the product of entrepreneurial activities.

⁴ The literature uses for entrepreneurial thinking and acting in organisations terms such as intrapreneurship, entrepreneurship within the company, corporate entrepreneurship, organisational entrepreneurship, or even corporate venturing. In this study, the term intrapreneurship is used for entrepreneurial thinking and action by and in existing organisations. This also achieves a better differentiation from the term entrepreneurship that Gartner (1989:47-68) uses to describe the creation of new organisations.

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Each business is part of a general business environment and is networked with a specific business environment (Bea and Haas 2005:89-91, Bateman and Snell 1996:56,57, Louw and Venter 2006:79,80). The general business environment can be delineated by the economic, technological, ecological, political, cultural, social and demographic framework conditions and trends that are relevant for the organisation. The specific business environment is unique for all enterprises and specifies the network in relation to the organisation's relational groups, such as customers, suppliers and competitors.

Thus, an entrepreneurial organisation focuses on specific sectors and markets for the present and the future⁵. Between this external business environment and the internal business environment, there are a variety of interactive relationships. Entrepreneurial organisations must use and formulate these exchange relationships to secure their own viability.

The general and specific business environments determine the entrepreneurial opportunities and risks and, when examining the role of intrapreneurship at the macro level, they must be a major consideration. The business environment, on the other hand, is subject to a considerable change dynamic. Significant drivers of these changes are globalisation⁶, competitive pressure and technological developments.

⁵ Brown (2007:208-214) describes a framework for the analysis of the business environment by way of three time dimensions. Horizon 1 contains trends which have an influence on existing businesses in the present. Horizon 2 considers trends that have an effect on existing business in the near future. Horizon 3 focusses on trends that can create new businesses in the future. The time dimensions have to be considered within the context of entrepreneurial information gathering from the business environment (see chapter 4.1).

⁶ Globalisation and problems of implementation as well as suggestions for the design of the globalisation process are described by, inter alia, Stiglitz (2002). For an interpretation of the term globalisation (for this study also) see Teusch (2004). According to this, fundamental characteristics of globalisation as a multidimensional process with a high self-dynamic are an increasing networking of the world and the loss of significance of limitations. Thus, the globalisation dynamic brings both winners and losers.

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The global business environment⁷ can be defined as

- (1) a networked and turbulent macro and micro environment (Ansoff 2007, Grant 2005) with
- (2) global and national economic systems (Kolde 1982, Walter 2006) with special cultural environments (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1998)⁸,
- (3) competitive forces in the relevant industries (Porter 2004a),
- (4) technology developments at all levels of the system (Narayanan 2001).

However, looking at the external business environment alone is not sufficient. In particular, present and future networks within the system of interactions between the enterprise and the business environment have to be investigated further and systematically placed within the context of conceptual approaches to intrapreneurship. The approaches until now have been mainly concerned more with aspects of intrapreneurship internal to the company (see Chapter 3.1).

However, it is precisely out of the interaction between the business environment and the enterprise that new business opportunities can be developed, relevant risks identified and entrepreneurial action justified.

⁷ In chapter 3.2 there follows a systematic description of the business environment on the basis of which a conceptual framework on the global business environment is presented in chapter 5.2. The networking between the organisation and the environment are examined in chapter 3.3 and in chapter 5.3, a qualitative systems model on aggregated levels is introduced.

⁸ Of particular significance for the concept developed here of holistic intrapreneurship are (1) the individual versus the collective, (2) short-term versus long-term and (3) the internal versus external (company) cultural orientation.

According to Block and MacMillan (1995:95)⁹, intrapreneurship¹⁰ can be defined as the use of opportunities and consideration of risks

- (1) inside the business,
- (2) from the specific business environment (micro environment),
- (3) from the general business environment (macro environment),
- (4) taking account of existing and future resources and competencies,

in a way that enables the entrepreneurial activities for innovation and adaptation necessary for viability in a mature enterprise to take place.

Approaches in scientific literature until now have focused mainly either on intrapreneurship by individuals from middle or senior management who act as champions of entrepreneurial activity (Pinchot 1988)¹¹ or on a broad-based collectivist intrapreneurship involving as many employees and managers as possible (Wunderer 2006, Kuhn 2000).

⁹ The definition proposed here illustrates an extension of the approach described there in three points: Focus also on risks – see inter alia Schwab (1976), explicit consideration of the relationship between opportunities, resources and competencies - see inter alia Andrews (1987), consideration of entrepreneurial decisions and activities in existing and new businesses – see inter alia Sanchez and Heene (2004). This also achieves a better differentiation from the term entrepreneurship. Gartner (1989:47-68) presents a comprehensive illustration of literature concerning entrepreneurship from which it emerges that the term entrepreneurship has very much been transferred to existing organisations. The author is, unlike Gartner, of the view that entrepreneurship does not end when the organisation has been spurred into life but rather can be pursued as corporate entrepreneurship during the entire life cycle of the organisation. Shane (2003) presents a further view in which the discovery of existing entrepreneurial opportunities by individual actors is the focus of the matter. These opportunities can be organised through the founding of a new company or through the issue of a licence to existing companies. The possibility of discovering opportunities by entrepreneurial actors or teams in existing organisations is not however envisaged explicitly with Shane. For this, he provides a model of an entrepreneurial process which, in the view of the author, can very much be used for the identification and (collective) pursuit of opportunities in existing companies: (1) Discovery of existing entrepreneurial opportunities, (2) Decision for the pursuit of opportunity, (3) Provision of resources necessary for implementation, (4) Realisation of the opportunity taking into account the design of strategy and the design of the organisation. For a detailed description of entrepreneurship as a process for identification and pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities taking into account the founder or the founding team, see for example Barringer and Ireland (2006). They present a comprehensive model of the entrepreneurial process – from the decision to set up to the development of the business idea, through to the founding and management of a new organisation. Kirzner (1973:75-87) gives a brief overview on the classic literature on entrepreneurship in association with the achievement and distribution of the entrepreneurial profit of an organisation. Some aspects relevant for intrapreneurship in this illustration are dealt with in the literature study in chapter 3.

¹⁰ In chapter 3.1, there is a synoptical description of the theoretical concepts of intrapreneurship and on this basis a role model for holistic intrapreneurship is developed in chapter 5.1.

¹¹ Block and MacMillan (1995) emphasise in this context the relevance of a management practice which actively promotes the implementation of individual opportunities through leadership and an entrepreneurial organisational culture.

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This study will show that there should not be an either/or situation but rather that the specific framework conditions, in particular the cultural ones, of a business, a business sector or a delimited market permit or require various recipes for success when implementing intrapreneurship. The design concept introduced here builds a theoretical framework which makes it possible, with consideration being given to a specific context, to build a model of intrapreneurship which can provide a lever to help secure long-term viability.

For implementation of intrapreneurship in a global business environment and in a variety of economic areas and countries, (inter)cultural aspects are of great significance. It is precisely because of the impact of globalisation that the mental programmes of employees and managers have to be taken into account when designing a system of intrapreneurship. The relevant cultural differences are to be found particularly in the social actors' short and long term orientation, their external or internal orientation and their individualistic or collectivistic orientation¹².

These orientations have a big influence on which intrapreneurship conception and design concept should be chosen for each situation. With this it becomes clear that the actual design of intrapreneurship concepts should be distinctly independent and that it is not possible to define an optimum premise for all situations. The framework conditions and the cultural programming that are already present in the company and the sectors the company operates in will influence the chances of success of various intrapreneurship concepts¹³.

Thus, the cultural context defines whether a more individualistic or a more collectivist path should be taken, or whether a more internal or external orientation of the social actors should be encouraged.

¹² For the role of culture for the global business see inter alia Hofstede (2006) and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998).

¹³ Schein (2003:28) also points out the relevance of the company culture. It should also be considered that an entrepreneurial culture that has led to entrepreneurial success also causes problems for employees in terms of perceiving changes in the business environment that need to be responded to. Thus, the company culture comes into focus as a parameter of design and influence.

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With the objective of exploring an integrated approach, the role model of an entrepreneurial organisation proposed here is used to introduce the microeconomic concept of the firm as a corporate actor (Homann 2005, Schnell 2005:106-109). The securing of long-term viability of a business is formulated as the fundamental objective of intrapreneurship and thus of an entrepreneurial company's management (De Geus 2002). And so, intrapreneurship in this sense means that the company system is designed such that the company as a corporate (business) actor acts entrepreneurially at the meta level (company level). Roles have to be ascertained for this corporate actor to undertake if the organisation is to achieve an entrepreneurial direction for the whole system. The necessary roles of the corporate actor at the micro level are carried out and shared by individual company managers and employees taking into consideration the specific circumstances within the business and in accordance with the relevant and specific environmental conditions.

The starting point in an intrapreneurship system is, thus, the individual company actor in the company system who, depending on the specific task they have taken on within the division of labour, understands with varying degrees of intensity the complex business environment, and who is forward-looking when taking entrepreneurial decisions. In consequence, it becomes clear that thinking in systems and system levels can assume great importance in terms of the research process¹⁴. Three levels of systems (see also Wennekers and Thurik 1999) can be defined (see table 1):

Levels of systems	Focus
Macro level:	Global economy, economic areas and national economies; division of labour within the global economic system
Meta level:	Entrepreneurial organisation as corporate actor and interaction with the business environment
Micro level:	Individual company actors and division of labour within the entrepreneurial organisation

Table 1: Business and environment: three fundamental system levels

¹⁴ Against this background, there is a description in chapter 3.1 of theoretical approaches to intrapreneurship in line with the three basic system levels with particular attention paid to the global context. Within this, it must be taken into account that individual contributions also show in details aspects from the different system levels (see McMullen and Shepherd 2006).

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According to Drucker (1985:219-221), the decisive stumbling block for entrepreneurial and innovative thinking and action in a business are the ingrained ways of doing things and not so much the size. Since valuable experience is gained with each entrepreneurial activity, these learning experiences can be used for the further entrepreneurial development of the organisation. Therefore, intrapreneurship also means that organisational learning should be firmly anchored in an intrapreneurship system.

The question is how to survive in a turbulent business environment? The dynamic development of the framework conditions increases the pressure of competition on mature companies. They have to react to permanent changes in the business environment. Technological progress and developments offer new opportunities and enable profitable innovation. From the point of view of company management, opportunities and potential to secure long-term viability must be used and risks must be absorbed as far as possible.

For this purpose, intrapreneurship can serve as a central tool. Intrapreneurship must be supported by an understanding of entrepreneurial management with a proactive, strategic direction in harmony with an entrepreneurial development of resources and competencies, an entrepreneurial company culture and an entrepreneurial design of structures and processes within the company. Therefore, the examination of a design concept for the entrepreneurial organisation with particular attention to the interaction relationships between the organisation and the external business world and the conceptual characteristics of the business environment, is an important research requirement with noteworthy practical relevance.

This is all the more so, as within management research (Hentze et al 2005) structural management research is gaining in importance. A systematic examination of intrapreneurship within the context of company strategy, company culture, company structure and company resources, with a particular focus on a dynamic and global business environment, creates a gap in research that must be filled.

1.2 Background and framework for the chapters to come

In the past, many companies had a stronger position in the market than they do now. At the beginning of the product's life cycle, products were met with high levels of demand (Kotler et al 2003:705-714) and many companies were able to successfully implement noteworthy growth strategies in supply-driven markets¹⁵. The companies got bigger and bigger and the organisations developed levels of hierarchy that responded to the interior division of labour¹⁶. After the start up phase, pioneer companies developed within the framework of the organisational life cycle via a growth and stabilisation phase into large, slender organisations (Morris and Kuratko 2002:8-14)¹⁷. Propelled by economies of scale¹⁸ the companies were able to flourish in a relatively stable environment. The progressive internal division of labour led to close-knit task orientation amongst staff and many managers. Consideration of the enterprise as a whole and particularly of the relevant markets and company environments took more and more of a back seat for many employees and managers. Entrepreneurial orientation (see Rauch et al 2009) in these organisations took a big step backwards and the organisations became less innovative, adaptable and flexible (Morris et al 2008:18,19).

In recent decades, the supply of goods and services has developed more than demand. Kotler et al (2003:47) also takes the view in this respect that most markets have today become buyers' markets. Many sectors¹⁹ find themselves in a mature state in which strategic defence of their own position has been made more difficult by high intensity of competition or by a level of demand that was already falling.

¹⁵ Sellers have a stronger market position than buyers in offer markets that are also described seller markets.

¹⁶ Division of labour in the economy has been increasingly organised via long-term employment contracts within (large) companies. For organisational forms of division of labour see inter alia Bofinger (2003:69).

¹⁷ According to Chase and Aquilano (1992:13-16), the productive system of an organisation follows a life cycle which can be extended. Within this they distinguish five stages: development of the system of all companies and product targets, product design and selection, design and localisation of production, start-up of production, production system in operation.

¹⁸ If a business increases its output volume and thereby reduce the average costs of a product unit, economists call this *economies of scale*: Companies that can achieve large production volumes gain a cost advantage, see inter alia Morgan et al (2006:316-318).

¹⁹ Johnson and Scholes (1993) distinguish four stages in the industry life cycle: embryonic stage, growth stage, mature stage, ageing stage.

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Current economic development is characterised by globalisation and is driven by technological development. Internationalisation of markets, in combination with a growing dynamic and complexity of the political, economic and social company environments, pose a special challenge for today's enterprises. They have to prove themselves in a globally competitive environment, make use of technological trends for the development of current and future business environments, and implement modern workplace technology for the optimisation of processes. Organisations with a more hierarchical structure have to adopt a more entrepreneurial perspective and move the organisation's life cycle forward through innovation, adaptations and internal flexibility (Morris and Kurratko 2002:14-17).

The permanent pressure of change on the present structures, concepts and attitudes becomes even greater as a result of smaller and quicker companies – often using technological innovation – winning market share at the cost of larger companies. The changes in the business environment require a rethink in mature organisations about management concepts and organisation structure required to secure long-term viability (Wunderer 2006:528-530).

Using the life cycle approach, four central tendencies can be deduced which justify a strengthening of the role of intrapreneurship in a global, competition-intensive business environment characterised by technological innovation: in view of ever shorter product life cycles, sectoral cycles marked by increasing global competition and product system life cycles (see Notger and Kiesel 2000) that are driven by technological developments, an increasingly entrepreneurial orientation is required if a sustained lengthening of an organisation's life cycle (see Greiner 1998) is to be attained. At the same time, a decreasing tendency towards entrepreneurship can be ascertained in the course of the organisational life cycle in businesses with a more bureaucratic structure. Viable organisations must therefore strengthen their own entrepreneurial dynamic within the organisation and use entrepreneurial activities in the areas of products, market and technology for efficiency, innovation, and adaptation to changes in the external business environment. The more dynamic and complex the external business environment is, the higher the entrepreneurial orientation in a viable organisation must be (see Morris et al 2008:74-76).

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Before starting the examination of the role of intrapreneurship within a design concept, the study should first take a look at five central findings. Globalisation, increasing pressure of competition and a dynamic development of technology are important drivers of change in the business environment in which companies seek to optimise their future in a complex world. Companies are open to their environment (see figure 1). Changes in the business environment cause changes within the organisation and in the interaction between businesses and the environment (Khandwalla 1977:223-235).

Finding 1: Today's business environment is changing rapidly. Particularly as a result of increasing global networking of markets and the continuing increase in international division of labour, there are resultant sustainable design necessities and opportunities to ensure long-term viability. Technological progress drives this development forward.

Against this background, new research questions become more important in terms of company management:

- How can globally active technology companies secure their long-term viability in a technology-driven competitive environment that is continuously changing?
- What role can entrepreneurial thinking and action inside the business play?
- How can we make the total enterprise system act entrepreneurially?

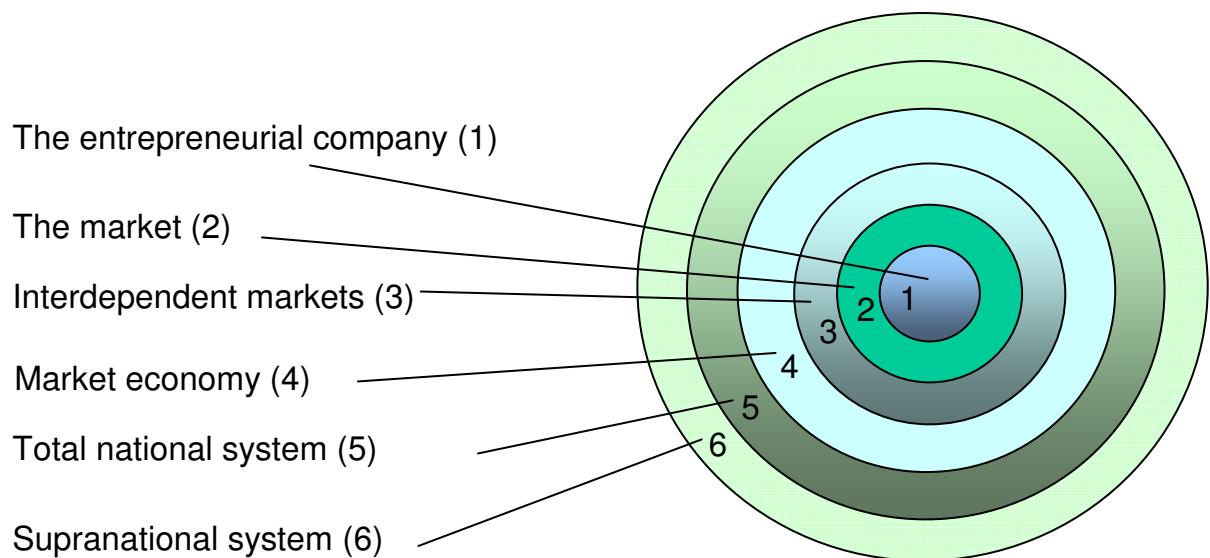


Figure 1: The company and the business environment in the total system

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In terms of a re-shaping management concepts, the change in the business environment leads to an emphasis on entrepreneurial thinking and action within the business (Hentze et al 2005:62). One of the consequences of intrapreneurship, on the other hand, is the need to take into account the short and long-term developments in the business environment when developing the company. Thus, elements such as the (worldwide) economy and long-term (global) trends determine entrepreneurial opportunities and risks.

On the one hand, the dynamic business environment requires intrapreneurship in the company and intrapreneurship, on the other hand, requires systematic consideration of the dynamic business environment in entrepreneurial decision-making. With intrapreneurship, large organisations can fight against the transaction costs of a (hierarchically organised) delicately structured division of labour²⁰, continuously increase innovativeness, improve their ability to adapt to changing conditions in the environment and therefore, secure long-term success potential.

Finding 2: Intrapreneurship can anchor the necessary dynamic entrepreneurship in mature companies, compensate for the disadvantages of large units and play a central role in the design of the company's future.

Basic premises for an active, future-orientated company structure are the perceptions of the world picture (Capra 2004), the business environment, the business institution, its internal actors and of the appropriate networks and interactions (Senge 2003:17,213-250,2006:xiii-xv)²¹. In scientific and corporate discussions, a holistic focus when dealing with the new challenges is increasingly postulated as a central requirement in this context.

Finding 3: Within the context of holistic entrepreneurial management, holistic thinking and action (Vester 2005, Ulrich and Probst 1991) by individual actors can lead to entrepreneurial success in a complex world²².

²⁰ According to Picot et al (1997:67), the costs of exchange and agreement between specialised actors can be described as the transaction costs. Williamson (1992:75-97) says organisational innovations are intended to reduce transaction costs. For him, this approach accounts for the decentralisation of operational decisions and focuses on internal efficiencies in organisational design.

²¹ Senge (2003, 2006) also particularly emphasises as well as systems thinking in this context, the big influence of mental models on the perception of the world and action in management situations.

²² With the *wheel of business evolution*, Wood (2000:91-139) presents a practice-oriented framework for the design of the complex interactions between the company and the business environment.

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With intrapreneurship, successful long-term development is supported by way of innovation (e.g. products and services, markets, technology, processes and procedures) within the framework of individualistic intrapreneurship²³ or collective entrepreneurship²⁴. This study outlines a modified conception of intrapreneurship which brings entrepreneurial action of corporate actors to the fore. This approach can be interpreted as a synthesis between individual and collective approaches and develops a role model for the entrepreneurial organisation overall.

The culture factor plays a central role in the design of an intrapreneurship system that secures the long-term viability of a business (as opposed to short-term success orientation). In a global business environment, the typical culture of the country in terms of it being a mental programme has a big influence on whether an intrapreneurship system should be set up more as an individualistic or as a collective concept. With this approach, the result, i.e. the entrepreneurial orientation of the whole organisation, is always at the forefront.

According to Hofstede (2006:501-506,512-517) the influence of national cultures on organisations is enormous, although in his research there are hardly any levers that would bring cultures internationally closer in the course of time. If his approach is to be followed, much attention must be paid to these cultural differences when exploring the role of intrapreneurship in a global world²⁵.

Finding 4: In the literature, there are various design models of intrapreneurship. On the one hand, a strong focus on an elite (individualistic) intrapreneurship is at the forefront. On the other side of the spectrum, intrapreneurship is being set up as collective intrapreneurship. The role concept of an entrepreneurial organisation developed in chapter 5.1 can be interpreted as a synthesis of both these approaches. With the design of the intrapreneurship system (individualistic vs collectivistic), cultural differences must be taken into account in the thinking and acting (mental programme). Securing long-term viability is defined as the basic direction of an entrepreneurial organisation.

²³ See Pinchot (1988), who puts the strong (individual) intrapreneur who realises profitable ideas outside of their own structure (supported by a sponsor and a team) at the forefront.

²⁴ See Kuhn (2000) who emphasises the necessity of the involvement of all employees in the new management concept of the internal entrepreneurship and requires an effective agreement between the company (offers employment security and individual incentive) and the employees (acting and thinking entrepreneurially).

²⁵ Particularly with specific company research projects - see inter alia Cooper and Schindler (1998).

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Intrapreneurship commences at the individual level. Entrepreneurial actors must understand the complexity of their particular system and fulfil their role within the framework of an entrepreneurial system containing division of labour.

By designing and implementing an intrapreneurship system, companies can achieve the efficiency, adaptability and innovation required to ensure long-term viability of the organisation in a dynamic business environment (see figure 2).

The structural company management²⁶ must achieve a supportive company system so that entrepreneurial thinking and action is attained at the level of the individual as well as at an institutional level, and so that the relevant changes in the business environment can be understood and taken into account. In developing a design concept, there must also be an examination of how the interests of the individual role players in the system of the entrepreneurial firm can be harmonised as one with the entrepreneurial interests of the business.

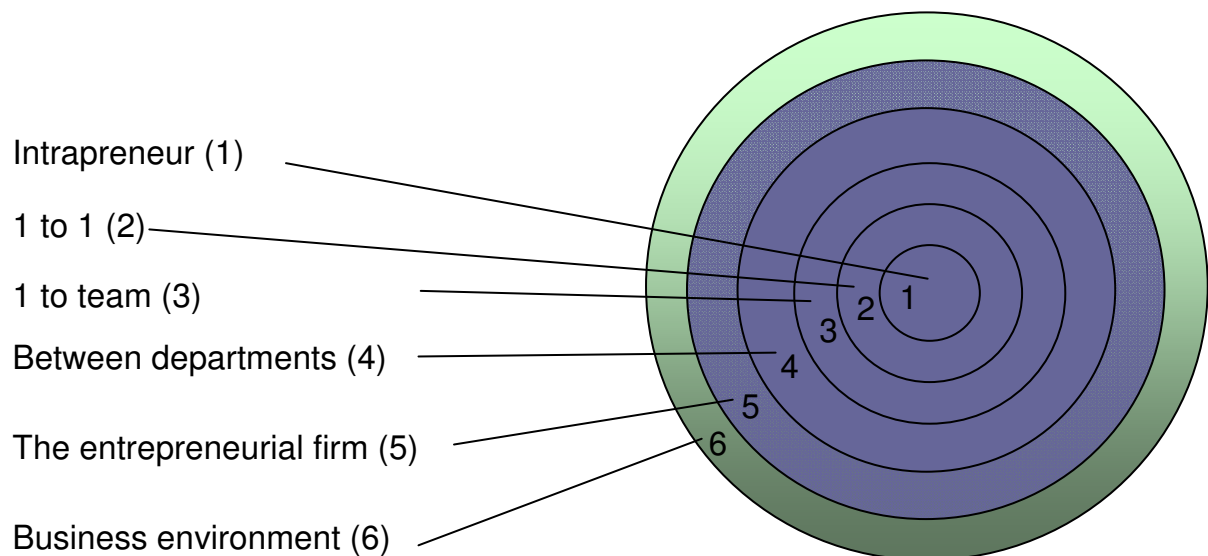


Figure 2: The individual Intrapreneur within the company system and the overall system

²⁶ Wunderer (2006:5-14) inter alia distinguishes the two central management dimensions of structural systemic and personal interactive management. The starting points for (indirect) structural management are: culture, strategy, organisation and qualitative personnel structure. This distribution defines the lever for achieving entrepreneurial action in an organisation and forms the framework for examining the internal business environment and the entrepreneurial organisation design in chapter 4.3. Personal management (direct) helps with the implementation of structural management and (alternating) fine tuning of behaviour. For Wunderer, structural management is more fitting for motivated and qualified employees. This especially appears to be the case for entrepreneurial employees and managers.

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The entrepreneurial behaviour of the organisation is therefore a central point in the examination that follows. With a holistic design of entrepreneurial tasks in structures that tend towards being decentralised and central coordination of team and group work (Wunderer 2006:508-510), the entrepreneurial challenges present in mature companies can be overcome²⁷.

Finding 5: Individual entrepreneurial actors must have the desire themselves to carry out their role (motivation), they must be able to (qualification, empowerment), and be allowed to and be supposed to (authorisation), if an entrepreneurial orientation is to be achieved.

The five central findings presented here mark a first frame of reference (Winter 2005) for examination of the role of intrapreneurship in a business environment characterised by global competition and technological dynamics.

As well as the models and concepts found in the literature on intrapreneurship, systems theories for the discussion about the interaction between the organisation and the environment, economic theory in the discussion about the entrepreneurial organisation as a corporate actor as well as models and concepts of management sciences in the discussion about frameworks for analysing the business environment all serve as a theoretical framework. This interdisciplinary approach is supplemented by the design concept developed in chapter 5 which defines an integrative frame of reference for holistic intrapreneurship.

In this way, the research presents a literature review in chapter 3 to describe the essence of the existing concepts that has been studied, to give some basic implications on the role of intrapreneurship, to explore design elements for holistic intrapreneurship via synthesis, and to identify basic entrepreneurial tasks for further analysis in chapter 4. In chapter 5 (on the basis of the theoretical analysis) and chapter 6 (on the basis of the empirical analysis) an integrated synthesis is done and a design concept of holistic intrapreneurship with theoretical constructs and framework models is developed.

²⁷ Beer (1979), inter alia, defines this kind of viable division of labour between central and decentral systems within an organisation.

1.3 Chapter sequence and research road map of the study

Against this background, chapter 2 outlines the fundamental research questions of the study and its research process, design and methodology. In order to clarify the role of intrapreneurship in a business environment characterised by technological development and global competition, chapter 3 develops three central tasks of an entrepreneurial organisation and these are based on a comprehensive study of the literature on intrapreneurship, on the business environment, as well as on the relationship between organisation and environment:

- (1) entrepreneurial collection of meaningful information,
- (2) entrepreneurial shaping of the future,
- (3) entrepreneurial design of the organisation.

Chapter 4 analyses these three central tasks of an entrepreneurial organisation. Entrepreneurial retrieval of information identifies opportunities and risks in the business environment. Entrepreneurial shaping of the future analyses potential opportunities and risks with an eye to existing and future resources and competencies and makes decisions about entrepreneurial activities. The entrepreneurial design of the organisation develops an organisation design that enables flexible adaptation to change in the business environment and adapts the organisational architecture so that entrepreneurial shaping of the future can be implemented. Thus, the central design tools for intrapreneurship are introduced by way of the entrepreneurial strategy, structure and culture in combination with the resources and competencies of the entrepreneurial organisation.

On the basis of the theoretical findings resulting from the analysis of the three entrepreneurial tasks identified, chapter 5 defines a role model for entrepreneurial organisation, develops a conceptual framework for the delineation of the business environment and proposes a qualitative system model to illustrate the interaction between the entrepreneurial organisation and the external business world. The role model specifies five roles that are realised by an entrepreneurial organisation via a division of labour.

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The knowledge manager for opportunities and risks analyses the business environment and develops a mental model of the characteristics, components and contexts of the business environment. Knowledge of potential opportunities and risks, as well as of developments and trends are used as part of the other roles. The idea finder analyses actual entrepreneurial opportunities with an eye to there being a fit with the current and future resources and competencies and identifies the entrepreneurial activities to be realised. The idea implementer (innovation manager) realises the opportunities in the start-up phase. If an established business should develop, the entrepreneurial manager manages the business through its life cycle, taking into consideration changes in the business world. The synergy manager takes care of the coordination and collaboration and also deals with a holistic orientation for the organisation in the achievement of efficiency, innovation and adaptation.

The conceptual framework for delineating the business environment focuses on the characteristics of the components of the global business environment. The desired intensity and the main design points of intrapreneurship can be deduced by reference to the characteristics. The opportunities and risks can be identified in various operational fields with reference to the components. The proposed qualitative system model relating to interaction of the organisation with the environment shows on an aggregate level the two exchange fields between the environment and the organisation that are fundamental to the viability of an organisation: by implication, established and new business represent a start to the business cycle and define the optimisation and renewal (see Rüegg-Stürm 2004) required for viability with reference to the turbulent characteristics of the business environment.

In chapter 6, the theoretical findings of the study are reflected against reality by way of an empirical study. Further, the role of intrapreneurship in a globally active technology enterprise in the dynamic Bodensee-Oberschwaben region of southern Germany is examined. Chapter 7 gives conclusions and an outlook for further research. The study is organized around the outline depicted in figure 3.

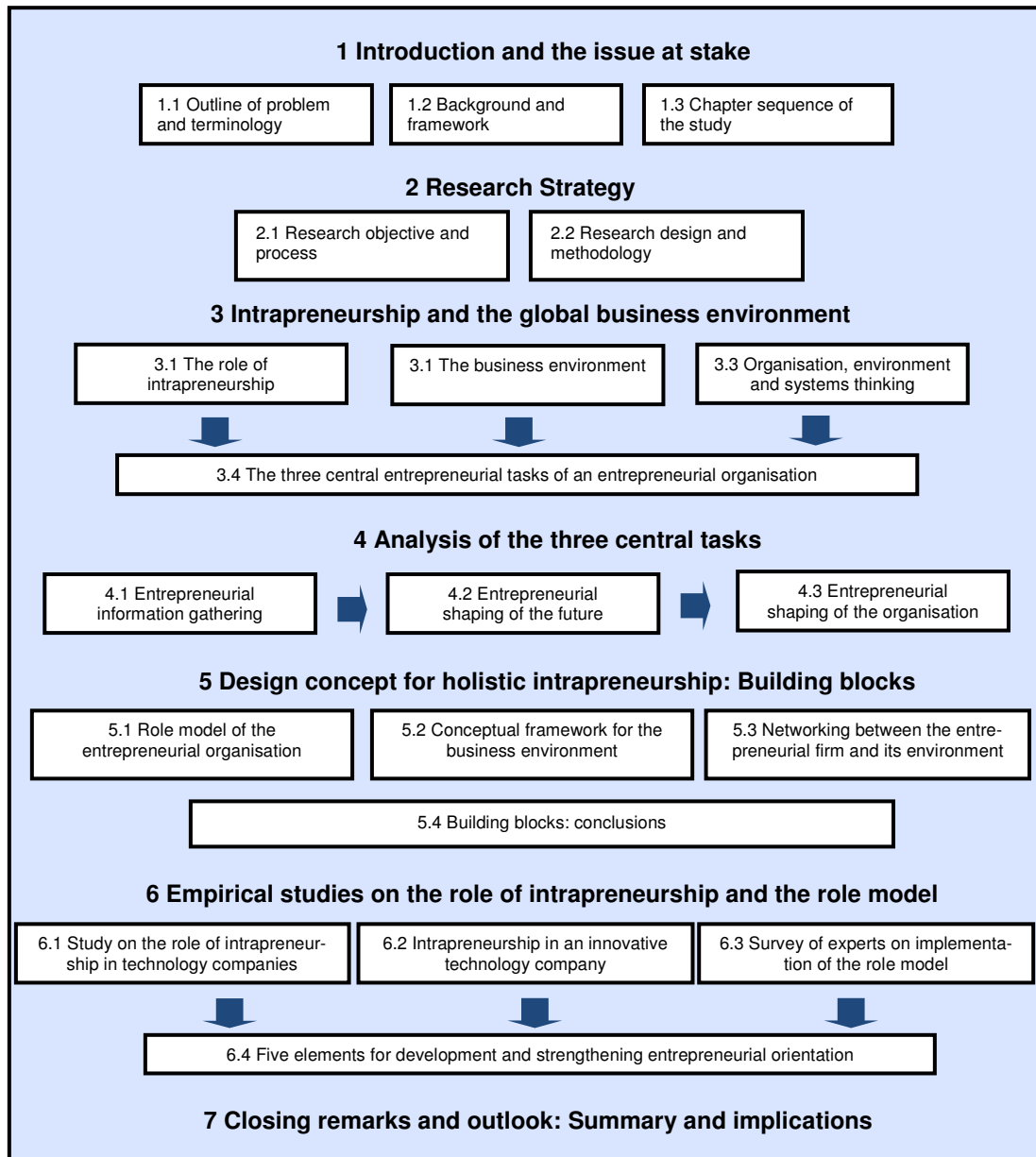


Figure 3: Structure of study and examination process

The following chapter 2 gives an outline of the research strategy used to arrive at the research road map of the study (see figure 3). Consequently, the essence of the relevant literature is presented and condensed in design elements of holistic intrapreneurship (as a dynamic end state) and identifies central entrepreneurial tasks (chapter 3). The three derived entrepreneurial tasks are further analysed and defined to develop a design concept for the vital entrepreneurial learning organisation (chapter 4). The synthesis based on the literature review, analysis and empirical study is done in chapter 5 and 6 to outline theoretical constructs for the vital entrepreneurial learning organisation.