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(JEPM) Effect of Innovation Culture and Proactiveness on Health  
Sector Organizational Performance: A Literature Review



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## Effect of Innovation Culture and Proactiveness on Health Sector Organizational Performance: A Literature Review

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** Globally, healthcare reforms aimed at enhancing access, quality, and efficiency have yielded mixed results, with Sub-Saharan Africa continuing to experience suboptimal health sector performance despite devolution and infrastructural improvements. This paper explores the problem of persistent healthcare delivery challenges by examining the potential of intrapreneurship practices as alternative measures for enhancing organizational performance. Specifically, this paper synthesizes existing empirical evidence on the effects of innovative culture and proactiveness on organizational performance.

**Methodology:** A systematic literature review was conducted, drawing from peer-reviewed articles sourced from databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science, with a thematic focus on 15 studies published between 2016 and 2022.

**Findings:** The key findings revealed that innovative culture consistently enhances organizational effectiveness, intrapreneurship, and new product performance across various industries. Meanwhile, proactiveness positively influences profitability, organizational resilience, and SME performance, though its effects are often mediated by organizational capability and learning orientation.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** One limitation of this review is its reliance on published studies from diverse contexts, which may limit direct generalizability to specific healthcare settings. Nevertheless, the paper underscores how intrapreneurial dimensions can inform strategic management in health facilities. It is recommended that policymakers develop frameworks empowering hospital boards to champion innovation, that practitioners cultivate intrapreneurial cultures within their institutions. Lastly, future research should empirically investigate the moderating role of board structure in the intrapreneurship-performance nexus.

**Keywords:** *Intrapreneurship Practices, Innovative Culture, Proactiveness, Organizational Performance*

**JEL Codes:** *L26, O32, I19*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the primary responsibilities of a government worldwide is to guarantee health care delivery to its citizens. To achieve this, deliberate health interventions are designed and implemented to have a healthy productive citizen who able to spur economic development and address emerging issues sustainably. Government should adequately resource health sector, initiate technological advancement, offer continuous training to health care employees, research on emerging pandemics for innovative solutions, maintain a steady medical supply and equipment in predetermined proportions at various levels of public health care facilities for better healthcare performance. In pursuing enhanced health outcomes and greater social value, spurred by dynamic health needs and ambitious goals, the global healthcare landscape has witnessed a wave of reforms and innovations. These reforms are underscored by the Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3), championed by the UN General Assembly in 2015, which advocates for good health and well-being as a global imperative (UN General Assembly, 2015). Consequently, nations worldwide have embarked on healthcare reforms and innovations to ensure accessible, high-quality, and efficient healthcare services (Rahman, 2020; Cherrington *et al.*, 2021; Jaziri & Alnahdi, 2022; Asiaei *et al.*, 2020; Marques *et al.*, 2019).

However, despite these reform efforts, concerns persist regarding the performance of the healthcare sector, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Access to quality healthcare remains challenging in the region due to various factors, including limited pharmaceutical industries, disease burden, technical and infrastructural limitations, and supply chain issues (Adebisi *et al.*, 2022). Socio-cultural barriers, shortages of medical supplies, physical inaccessibility, and workforce shortages further compound these challenges (Sanogo *et al.*, 2019). This lack of progress in achieving optimal health sector performance, despite healthcare reforms, has underscored the need to explore alternative strategies. One such strategy is intrapreneurship within the healthcare sector.

The concept of intrapreneurship is traced back to Gifford Pinchot in 1984, who first defined intrapreneurs as dreamers who get things done by creating any innovation within an organization (Okun, Arun & Begec, 2020). Essentially, intrapreneurship is a people-centric, bottom-up approach to developing innovations in-house. Historically, the focus on innovation has been outside the organization. However, organizations that desire to increase competitiveness and market share leverage people within them and offer support to develop, create, and scale existing ideas (de Villiers, 2022). With the dynamism of the economy and society, organizations have no option but to adopt an intrapreneurial mindset that allows people to operate within the organization's boundaries, stretch existing services, products, and technologies, enabling them to develop new capabilities, diversify more, and foster disruption (Reibenspiess *et al.*, 2022).

Intrapreneurship, defined as entrepreneurial activities within existing organizations, is increasingly recognized as an effective organizational strategy (Blanka, 2019). Dimensions of intrapreneurship

have demonstrated importance in health sector performance globally. For instance, an innovative culture in health sector entrepreneurship is crucial for driving advancements in medical technologies and patient care. One notable example is Google Health. Google's parent company, Alphabet, launched this initiative to leverage innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve healthcare outcomes. Through projects like DeepMind Health, Google Health fosters an innovative culture, exploring ways to enhance disease detection, streamline medical data analysis, and personalize patient treatments (Powles & Hodson, 2017).

Another intrapreneurship dimension that has received recognition in the health sector is proactiveness. Proactiveness in health sector entrepreneurship is evident in the case of telemedicine platforms like Teladoc Health. Teladoc proactively identified the growing need for remote healthcare services, especially in underserved areas. By offering virtual consultations, they addressed the demand for accessible and timely medical advice, showcasing how proactiveness can create innovative solutions that cater to evolving healthcare needs (Paul & McDaniel, 2016).

In Kenya, proactiveness in healthcare is manifested in the beyond-zero campaign launched by the former first lady her excellency Margaret Kenyatta. Although rarely featuring in studies focusing on entrepreneurship discourse, the cross-functional collaboration dimension is fundamental in health sector entrepreneurship, bringing together diverse expertise for comprehensive solutions. One prime example is the collaboration between IBM Watson Health and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. By combining IBM's powerful artificial intelligence capabilities with oncologists' clinical expertise, they developed Watson for Oncology (Strickland, 2019). This collaboration showcases how the synergy of technical expertise and medical knowledge can lead to groundbreaking solutions, emphasizing the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration in health entrepreneurship.

In Kenya, significant healthcare reforms occurred at the sub-county level, particularly with the devolution of health management from the central government to county governments in 2013 (McCullum *et al.*, 2018). The objectives of this devolution were to enhance efficiency, community participation, and equity in healthcare. Therefore, harnessing the power of intrapreneurship characterized by innovative culture, adept risk management, proactive initiatives, and cross-functional collaboration is poised to significantly elevate intrapreneurship within sub-county hospitals. This strategic approach serves as the remedy to the modest achievements seen in healthcare sector reforms. By integrating these four dimensions, sub-county hospitals can foster a culture of innovation, ensuring the development and implementation of cutting-edge healthcare solutions. Efficient risk management practices will navigate the intricate regulatory landscape, allowing for the sustainable growth of novel healthcare initiatives. Proactiveness, embedded within the entrepreneurial spirit, will drive timely responses to emerging healthcare challenges, enabling hospitals to stay ahead of the curve. Furthermore, fostering cross-functional collaboration will facilitate the amalgamation of diverse talents and expertise, leading to holistic and impactful healthcare innovations.

Health sector performance in the context of the sub-Saharan Africa is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions. Access, the first crucial aspect, refers to the ease with which individuals can obtain healthcare services when needed. This includes factors like geographical proximity to healthcare facilities, availability of medical professionals, and affordability of services. Limited pharmaceutical industries and challenges in the supply chain system often result in medication shortages, hindering access to essential drugs for patients (Adebisi *et al.*, 2022). Quality, the second dimension, emphasizes the standard of care provided by healthcare institutions. It involves the proficiency of medical staff, the adequacy of facilities, adherence to clinical guidelines, and patient outcomes. In the regions like the sub-Saharan Africa, a high burden of communicable diseases like malaria in the tropics and HIV/AIDS, along with the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, necessitates a healthcare system capable of addressing diverse and complex medical conditions. However, the shortage of medical supplies and skilled healthcare professionals often compromises the quality of care provided (Sanogo *et al.*, 2019). Efficiency, the third vital aspect of healthcare performance, focuses on optimizing resource utilization to achieve the best possible outcomes. This involves prudent allocation of budget, minimizing wastage, and streamlining administrative processes. In many sub-Saharan African countries, including Kenya, challenges such as workforce shortages and socio-cultural barriers create inefficiencies within the healthcare system. Additionally, infrastructural limitations and lack of decision-making power at the local levels can lead to delays and bureaucratic hurdles, hampering the effective delivery of healthcare services.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on a systematic review of literature focusing on the relationship between intrapreneurial practices and organizational performance. For this particular paper, the review focused on the effects of two intrapreneurial practices, namely innovative culture and proactiveness. The review process involved a structured search of peer-reviewed articles from prominent academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science. The focus was on articles and research reports published between 2016 and 2022. The search strategy utilized a combination of keywords such as ‘intrapreneurship’, ‘innovative culture’, proactiveness’ and ‘health sector organizational performance’. The review employed a thematic analysis approach, with a particular focus on the two key intrapreneurship dimensions. A total of 15 empirical and conceptual studies were selected and critically analysed to identify their geographical contexts, methodological approaches, key findings, and identified gaps. The analysis was presented narratively, comparing and contrasting findings across different studies to build a coherent argument for the existing research gaps.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Innovative Culture and Organizational Performance**

In the study conducted by Rao and Giri (2021), the impact of innovative culture on organizational effectiveness was explored within Indian technical education institutions. Data were collected using self-reported questionnaires from 732 faculty members. They used the Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) to analyse data. The research identified a positive relationship between innovative culture and organizational effectiveness. Although insightful, the study context was limited to Indian technical education institutions, potentially affecting its generalizability. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data might have introduced response bias, influencing the study outcomes.

In another study, Gursoy and Guven (2016) examined the relationship between innovative culture and intrapreneurship within a construction audit and consultancy firm in Ankara, Turkey. The primary focus of this study was 430 employees of the company engaged in construction audit and consultancy services in Ankara. Using a survey method and structural equation modelling, the study demonstrated a significant and positive impact of innovative culture on intrapreneurship. The findings highlighted the critical role of an innovative work environment in fostering entrepreneurial initiatives within organizations. However, the study's scope was confined to a specific industry and region, potentially limiting the applicability of its results.

Meanwhile, Zeb-Obipi and Maduabuchi (2021) conducted a literature review that offered a comprehensive analysis of how innovation culture influences corporate performance. The synthesis of existing literature emphasized the enhancement of corporate performance, including aspects such as product quality and operational efficiency, through the cultivation of innovation culture. While the review provided valuable insights, it relied on previously published studies, leading to potential variations in methodologies and contexts. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings may be influenced by the heterogeneity of the source studies.

In a study by Xie *et al.* (2021), the impact of organizational innovation culture on new product performance was investigated in Chinese and Vietnamese manufacturing firms. They employed a survey approach to collect data from 433 manufacturing firms (331 Chinese firms and 102 Vietnamese firms), and hierarchical regression analysis for the analysis. The research revealed a positive relationship between organizational innovation culture and new product performance. Moreover, the study identified organizational cohesion as a moderator, enhancing these relationships. However, the study was confined to specific industries (manufacturing) and regions (China and Vietnam). Additionally, the utilization of self-reported data might have introduced response bias, affecting the study's outcomes.

A study by Ghasemzadeh *et al.* (2019) investigated the impact of innovation culture (IC) on the relationship between organizational learning (OL) and innovation performance (IP) in

pharmaceutical companies. The research model included OL, IC, and various dimensions of IP (product, process, and objective innovation). Drawing from the responses of 625 completed questionnaires from pharmaceutical companies, the results indicated that OL activities and IC can result in product and process innovation. However, this relationship was not supported for objective innovation. IC played a significant moderating role, enhancing the impact of OL on IP dimensions. The findings contribute valuable insights into how organizational commitment and an innovative culture can maximize the benefits of continuous OL in product and process innovation.

Another study by Ryu *et al.* (2021) explored the mediating effect of investment in education and training on the relationship between innovative culture and organizational performance in medical device companies. In the panel data's industrial classification system, sectors associated with medical devices were identified and thoroughly examined, involving 8,629 employees across 368 companies. The study investigated the relationship between innovative culture (independent variable) and corporate performance (dependent variable), with investment in training and education serving as a mediating factor. Quantitative analysis of the data was conducted using SPSS software. The study revealed a positive impact of innovative culture on organizational satisfaction and performance. Investment in education and training positively influenced organizational satisfaction, indicating the importance of fostering an innovative culture within companies to enhance their performance.

Antunes *et al.* (2017) analyzed the relationship between innovation and total quality management (TQM) and its effects on organizational performance. The study found that companies adopting process innovation experienced improvements in both operational and financial performance, while product innovation led to financial improvements. TQM practices encouraged the definition of innovation strategies. The research provided valuable insights into the interdependencies between innovation, TQM, and organizational performance, particularly in small- and medium-sized Portuguese companies.

In a study by Kim (2018), the relationships between innovative culture, employee participation, turnover intention, and organizational performance were explored using data from the Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education & Training's human capital corporate panel survey conducted in 2015. The analysis involved 411 companies as the study's sample size. Utilizing a structural equation model, the research demonstrated significant positive associations: innovative culture was found to be positively related to both employee participation and organizational performance. Additionally, a negative relationship was identified between turnover intention and innovative culture, participation, and performance, indicating that companies fostering innovative cultures and active employee involvement experienced lower turnover rates and improved organizational stability. However, it is important to note that the study's generalizability might be limited due to the specific sample size and industry focus, which should be taken into account when interpreting the findings.

In the study conducted by Tang *et al.* (2020), the impact of innovation culture, technological capability, and organization size on the performance of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in China was explored. The research focused on 1124 SMEs in China, comprising 701 manufacturing and 423 service firms, which had undergone Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) in the SME bond market between 2006 and 2014. Data were collected for the 2015 financial year, and the study utilized the Return on Sales (ROS) as the dependent variable, calculated by dividing operating profit by total sales. To measure innovation culture, text analysis of annual reports was performed, counting the occurrences of the term “innovation.” Technological capability was determined by the ratio of technological employees to total employees. Organization size was measured as the natural logarithm of total assets. The research employed regression analysis and found that innovation culture had a statistically positive effect on SMEs' performance, as measured by ROS. While the study provides valuable insights, the findings were only applicable to the SME context. Additionally, the study's reliance on text analysis for innovation culture measurement might have inherent limitations related to subjectivity and context.

In the study conducted by Strychalska-Rudzewicz and Rudzewicz (2021) in Poland, the relationship between organizational innovativeness, innovation culture, and firm performance was explored. The study was conducted among 121 random manufacturing businesses, and employed regression analysis to assess these relationships. The findings revealed that both organizational innovativeness and innovation culture had substantial positive impacts on firm performance. The study emphasized the importance of nurturing a culture of innovation and understanding the factors driving it for businesses striving to achieve strong performance, providing valuable insights for management practices in the context of Central-Eastern European industrial businesses.

### **3.2 Proactiveness and Organizational Performance**

In the study conducted by Bature *et al.* (2018), the mediating role of organizational capability in the relationship between proactiveness, innovativeness, and SME performance was examined. The research employed a cluster sampling technique, collecting data from 305 manufacturing small and medium enterprises in the north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria through a self-administered survey questionnaire. Partial least squares-structural equation modelling version 3.2.7 was used to analyse the relationships among the variables. The results revealed that organizational capability plays a crucial role as a mediator, influencing how pro-activeness and innovativeness indirectly impact SME performance. This finding underscores the importance for SME owners/managers, policy-makers, and organizations supporting SMEs to focus on developing organizational capabilities. By enhancing these capabilities, businesses can effectively adapt to rapid changes in market demands, thereby improving their performance in dynamic and competitive business environments. However, it's worth noting that the study's scope was limited to a specific geographic area and industry, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied context. Moreover, the study looked at indirect effects of proactiveness on SME performance.

In their study, Abdulsamad *et al.* (2020), aimed to explore the influence of entrepreneurial orientation components, specifically risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness, on the organizational performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Yemen's food and beverage industry. The study involved 459 owners/managers of SMEs and utilized Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) for analysis. The findings revealed that both innovativeness and risk-taking had a significant and positive impact on organizational performance, although their effects were comparatively lower than proactiveness. The importance-performance analysis indicated that proactiveness held greater significance than the other components in influencing the organizational performance of food and beverage SMEs in Yemen. While the study provides valuable insights into the entrepreneurial orientation of SMEs, it is important to note that the research context was limited to a specific industry within Yemen, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings to other sectors or regions.

Ijeoma and Onuoha (2018) explored the relationship between corporate entrepreneurship (CE) and organizational performance in the banking sector of Rivers State, Nigeria. The study, rooted in Schumpeter's Innovation Theory, employed a descriptive sample survey approach, focusing on 369 executives in 17 banks in Rivers State. A questionnaire, utilizing a five-point Likert scale, was administered, and 192 completed surveys were used for analysis. The study applied the Kendall tau\_b correlation coefficient to test the hypotheses. The results revealed significant relationships between risk-taking, innovativeness, proactiveness, and profitability in the banking sector of Rivers State. Specifically, the findings indicated that risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness positively influenced profitability in the banking industry. The study concluded that a high level of corporate entrepreneurial orientation leads to superior organizational performance. Recommendations included creating an environment that encourages employees to be innovative to gain a competitive advantage through the development of innovative financial services, ultimately enhancing financial performance and sectoral growth. However, it's worth noting that the study's findings were specific to the context of Rivers State's banking sector and may not be generalizable to other regions or industries.

In their study, Harun *et al.* (2021) assessed the influence of entrepreneurial leadership's organizational dimension on organizational performance in the solar energy sector of Kenya. Employing a descriptive correlational research design, the study focused on 11 solar energy firms, encompassing a total of 289 managers. Stratified random sampling was employed to select the study participants, resulting in a sample size of 165 respondents. Data was collected through a questionnaire. The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between the organizational dimension of entrepreneurial leadership and organizational performance. Specifically, the study found that creativity had a statistically significant positive impact on organizational performance. However, resource allocation did not exhibit a statistically significant influence on organizational performance. Furthermore,

proactiveness was determined not to have a statistically significant relationship with organizational performance. It is important to note that these findings were specific to the solar energy sector in Kenya and may not be generalizable to other sectors.

In another study, Coleman and Adim (2019) investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial proactiveness and organizational resilience in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Employing a quantitative approach, the research design utilized a cross-sectional survey method. The study focused on the Regional Offices or Mega Centers of four major communication firms: MTN Nigeria, GLOBACOM Nigeria, AIRTEL Nigeria, and 9Mobile Nigeria. The study population included 177 senior staff members (managerial and supervisory) identified from these offices and centres. A sample size of 123 was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the assistance of SPSS version 23. The results of the analysis revealed a significant influence of entrepreneurial proactiveness on the measures of organizational resilience. The study concluded that organizational proactiveness, driven by learning and knowledge development, plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational resilience. The study recommended that organizations should focus on market changes and customer satisfaction issues to foster proactiveness and adaptability in the dynamic business environment, particularly in the mobile telecommunication industry in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Abdissa *et al.* (2021) explored the mediating effects of learning orientation on the relationships between three dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation (innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking) and the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Holeta Town, Ethiopia. Given the competitive and volatile business environment, these dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation have gained significant attention in strategic management studies. The study employed a survey method, gathering data from 379 SME managers in the manufacturing sector of Thailand. The collected data were analysed using the partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) technique. The research findings indicated that the innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking abilities of SMEs exerted a significant positive influence on the learning orientation and business strategy of the firms. These results contributed valuable insights to managers, emphasizing the importance of fostering a learning-oriented culture and strategic business planning. However, the SME context specific nature of the study means that the study requires replication in other contexts.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The reviewed literature established a strong theoretical and empirical foundation for the positive influence of intrapreneurship practices on organizational performance. Specifically, studies across diverse geographical and industrial contexts consistently demonstrate that an innovative culture significantly enhances organizational effectiveness, intrapreneurial initiatives, new product development, and overall firm performance by fostering creativity, learning, and employee

engagement. Similarly, proactiveness, as a critical dimension of entrepreneurial orientation, has been shown to positively impact organizational performance and resilience by enabling firms to anticipate market changes and seize emerging opportunities. However, the review also reveals that these relationships are often context-dependent and can be mediated by factors such as organizational capability and learning orientation. A significant gap identified is the lack of research on the moderating role of governance mechanisms, particularly board structure, in the relationship between intrapreneurship practices and performance within the healthcare sector in developing countries. This review underscores the potential of intrapreneurship to address persistent performance challenges in the sub-Saharan African health systems and highlights the critical need to understand how autonomous hospital boards can shape these dynamics to foster sustainable healthcare delivery.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Drawing insights from the reviewed literature, it is recommended that sub-county hospitals and other healthcare facilities intentionally cultivate an intrapreneurial culture. This involves creating formal mechanisms to encourage and support employee-driven innovations, establishing cross-functional teams to solve persistent operational challenges, and developing clear policies for risk management in new initiatives. Management should proactively scan the healthcare environment for emerging needs and technological advancements to stay ahead of the curve. On their part, policymakers should consider formulating guidelines that empower hospital boards to champion intrapreneurship. This could include providing seed funding for innovative projects developed by hospital staff, offering legal protection for prudent risk-taking in the pursuit of improved service delivery, and mandating the inclusion of innovation metrics in the performance evaluation of hospital boards and management. Strengthening the capacity of board members through training on their strategic role in fostering innovation is also crucial.

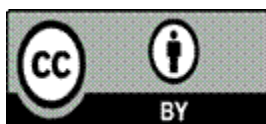
Given the identified gap in the literature, future research should empirically investigate the moderating role of board structure (including composition, diversity, decision-making autonomy) on the relationship between intrapreneurship practices (innovative culture, risk management, proactiveness, cross-functional collaboration) and health sector performance. Meanwhile, there is a need for more empirical studies within the Sub-Saharan African healthcare context, specifically in devolved settings like Kenya's county governments. Quantitative studies using robust statistical methods, such as Structural Equation Modelling, could test the conceptual framework suggested by this review, while qualitative case studies could provide deeper insights into the mechanisms through which intrapreneurship impacts performance in resource-constrained environments.

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