




RESEARCH ARTICLE

# From dreamers to doers: A personal and job resources interaction among intrapreneurial managers

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## Abstract

Drawing on job-demands resources and self-consistency theories, this study investigates individual and contextual factors influencing managers' intrapreneurial intention (INI). We focus on the role of personal resources (organization-based self-esteem and proactivity) related to INI. Further, we analyze job resources (top management support and role clarity) shaping INI, and their interaction with proactivity. Our data comprises 193 Kosovan managers employed in companies varying in size and industry. The results show that organization-based self-esteem and proactivity are positively related to INI. Additionally, proactivity serves as the underlying mechanism, mediating organization-based self-esteem-INI relationship. Furthermore, job resources – top management support and role clarity – strengthen the likelihood of INI among proactive employees, suggesting a moderated mediation model.

By jointly examining individual and contextual antecedents of INI, this study contributes to the debate of who the intrapreneur is and what nurtures his/her inclinations. Furthermore, this is among the few studies to examine INI using a managerial sample and in an emerging economy context.

**Keywords:** intrapreneurship; organization-based self-esteem; proactivity; role clarity; top management support

## Introduction

Intrapreneurship is an important topic for practitioners and academics (Blanka, 2019; Neessen, Caniëls, Vos, & De Jong, 2019; Perlins, Ariza-Montes, & Blanco-González-Tejero, 2022). Numerous authors contemplate intrapreneurship as the equivalent of entrepreneurship, which occurs within an existing organization (e.g., Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Sinha & Srivastava, 2013), influencing firm growth and profitability (Augusto Felício, Rodrigues, & Caldeirinha, 2012; Narayanan, Yang, & Zahra, 2009). Intrapreneurship is a behavior initiated at the individual level, different from corporate entrepreneurship or pursuing new endeavors from an organizational perspective (Farrukh, Meng, & Raza, 2021).

Most prior research has adopted the organizational perspective, applying the corporate entrepreneurship concept; hence, there is a paucity of studies on individual-level intrapreneurship (Blanka, 2019; Gawke, Gorgievski, & Bakker, 2018). In this study, we take the latter approach and study intrapreneurship from an individual perspective.

Individual employees, especially those in leadership roles, are bearers of inbound entrepreneurship (Clark, Pidduck, Lumpkin, & Covin, 2024). Hence, it is important to understand the drivers of such behaviors to act intrapreneurially (Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013). Given the significance of intentions in the empirical investigation of intrapreneurship (Razavi & Ab Aziz, 2017), our research employs intrapreneurial intention (INI) or the behavioral intention to act entrepreneurially within

organizations as they offer a lens to understand intrapreneurship-related behaviors (Chouchane, Fernet, Austin, & Zouaoui, 2021).

Management research has investigated a plethora of factors that explain or predict intrapreneurship (Perlines et al., 2022). Previous studies have primarily focused on individual or contextual factors separately, with personal traits or characteristics as predictors of intrapreneurial behavior being the dominant perspective (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021; Lajçi, Berisha, & Krasniqi, 2022; Sinha & Srivastava, 2013). However, recent literature suggests that intrapreneurship is influenced by a combination of both individual and contextual factors (for a review, see Blanka, 2019; Neessen et al., 2019). In a recent study, Niemann, Mai, and Dickel (2022) tested individual and organizational antecedents of intrapreneurship concurrently. The authors call for more multi-level empirical research to enrich the list of individual and contextual drivers of intrapreneurial outcomes. Accordingly, we aim to integrate these perspectives by examining the simultaneous impact of individual and contextual factors on INI and echo the call of Niemann et al. (2022).

Given the strong influence of entrepreneurship scholarship on the conceptualization of intrapreneurship, we aim to investigate the intentions of intrapreneurs from an organizational behavior perspective. We build our conceptual model based on the job-demands resources (JD-R) framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) by tincturing resources as standalone underpinnings (Gawke, Gorgievski, & Bakker, 2017). Subtly, relying on self-consistency theory (Korman, 1970), we investigate the role of individual antecedents of INI, namely organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) and proactivity, as well as the mediating role of proactivity on OBSE-INI nexus. Additionally, we analyze the interaction of individual and contextual factors that facilitate intrapreneurship by focusing on the moderating role of top management support and role clarity.

The contributions of this study are threefold. First, to improve our understanding of intrapreneurship, we explore both individual and contextual antecedents of INI. This includes testing hypotheses on the personal resources related to intrapreneurship (e.g., OBSE and proactivity) and job resources (e.g., top management support and role clarity) situated at the organization and work-level, respectively. In doing so, we contribute to the debate of who the intrapreneur is and what nurtures his/her inclinations. Concerning the latter, our contribution is mapping job resources that influence intrapreneurship at different levels – which are yet to be identified (Gawke et al., 2017).

Second, we test the intrapreneurship hypothesis using a managerial sample. Much of the current understanding on INIs and behaviors comes from the least generalizable and representative samples, such as students. Managers are generally in more favorable positions to identify and implement opportunities due to their ability to influence decision-making, access resources, and better internal ties (De Jong, Parker, Wennekers, & Wu, 2015; Hornsby, Kuratko, Holt, & Wales, 2013); thus, the knowledge on managerial intrapreneurship is critical.

Third, this is among the first attempts to study intrapreneurship in a non-western context. Limited research exists on intrapreneurship within the Western Balkans' emerging economy, with a previous focus primarily on entrepreneurial intentions (Berisha, Krasniqi, Shiroka-Pula, & Kutllavci, 2021).

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. In the next sections, the literature is reviewed, theoretical frameworks are outlined, and hypotheses are developed. Then, the methodology is explained, results are presented and discussed before implications are drawn. Finally, limitations of the study and future research direction are indicated.

## Theoretical background

### *Individual factors of intrapreneurship*

Like any behavior, intrapreneurship is a function of the individual and the context. Concerning the former, personal resources are recognized as strong predictors of intrapreneurial behaviors and intentions (Gawke et al., 2017). Personal resources are positive self-evaluations that refer to an individual's self-beliefs of his/her ability to successfully control and impact their environment (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003). Research has shown that personal resources such as self-efficacy,

self-esteem, and proactivity amount to an increased inclination of employees to behave innovatively within organization (for a review, see Kwon & Kim, 2020).

Based on the JD-R literature, we focus on two key personal resources, namely the self-esteem of individuals in the organization (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007, 2009) and proactivity (Dikkers, Jansen, de Lange, Vinckenburg, & Kooij, 2010; Schaufeli, 2017), which were found to be vital on enabling employees to control and influence their work environment effectively. Considering the nascent state of the research into the relationship between personal resources and intrapreneurship, this study aims to expound this nexus dwelling on the self-consistency propositions (Korman, 1970). Specifically, we draw on self-consistency theory to explain how employees' self-perceptions, such as self-esteem and proactivity, influence their inclination to engage in intrapreneurial activities (Wen, Wu, & Long, 2021; Wu, Lyu, Kwan, & Zhai, 2019).

In the present research, we investigate the INI of managers from the lens of their self-esteem as an ever-present concept in micro-organizational research (Brutus, Ruderman, Ohlott, & Mccauley, 2000; Di Fabio, 2014). Self-esteem in the workplace context is conceptualized as OBSE and represents the degree to which an employee perceives him/herself as adequate (worthy) as an organizational member (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, & Dunham, 1989). Given the extensive focus of previous research on global self-esteem, the role of OBSE in intrapreneurial research has been largely overlooked. To address this gap, we investigate whether self-consistency propositions hold in an intrapreneurial context by examining OBSE as a personal resource in a sample of managers. Hence, we propose OBSE on the left side of intrapreneurship.

Additionally, we purport to shed light on the underlying mechanism through which OBSE influences the intent to undertake intrapreneurial initiatives, examining the mediating role of proactivity. Proactivity is a crucial prerequisite to developing intrapreneurship (Amo, 2006) and holds its outright significance as a self-initiated, future-focused, and change-oriented behavior (Gawke et al., 2018). In this study, we incorporate proactivity as a distinct personal resource related to intrapreneurship and examining its direct and indirect impact on the outcome variable. By doing so, we endeavor to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the multidimensional nature of intrapreneurship and its constituent elements.

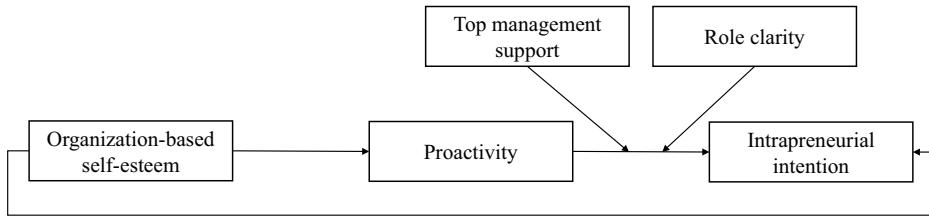
### *Contextual factors of intrapreneurship*

While personal resources comprise the individual characteristics that drive intrapreneurial behavior, contextual factors are crucial in facilitating organizational entrepreneurial initiatives (Åmo & Kolvereid, 2005). The systematic literature review of Neessen et al. (2019) reveals that the most extensively used contextual factors in intrapreneurship research are management support, organizational structure, work discretion, rewards, and resource availability. Other researchers (e.g., Foss, Woll, & Moilanen, 2013; Hornsby, Kuratko, Shepherd, & Bott, 2009; Kuratko, Montagno, & Hornsby, 1990; Souto, Brito, & Pereira, 2022) have particularly emphasized the importance of top management support and role clarity among the most potent influencers of intrapreneurial tendencies.

Nonetheless, to date, the role of top management support and role clarity on managers' intentions toward intrapreneurship remains unexplored. Accordingly, we investigate the interplay between individual proactivity and these contextual factors and aim to enhance our understanding of the complex dynamics shaping INIs among managers. In this way, we respond to Gawke et al.'s (2017) call to integrate the literature on proactivity and intrapreneurship by studying how different types of job resources react as a result of individuals engaging in proactive work behaviors.

### *Bridging individual and contextual factors of intrapreneurship*

Intrapreneurship scholars contemplate that individual factors, in conjunction with contextual factors, are the key determinants of intrapreneurship (Amo, 2010; Urbano, Alvarez, & Turró, 2013).



**Figure 1.** Hypothesized framework.

Building on Gawke et al. (2017) and Gawke, Gorgievski, and Bakker's (2019) work, we adopt the job resource component of the JD-R model to examine how top management support and role clarity moderate the proactivity-INI relationship. JD-R distinguishes job aspects into demands and resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), the former being identified as unfavorable job aspects, whereas the latter refers to factors that mitigate the adverse effects and lead to favorable outcomes (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). However, besides the interaction or the buffering effect of job resources on job demands, the former also have their own significance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Namely, job resources can either stand in their own right or aid the achievement or protection of other valued resources. Later, JD-R was extended to include personal resources or individuals' self-perceptions about their ability to influence their environment effectively (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). In this study, we focus on the role of personal and job resources as accelerators of intrapreneurship and use the JD-R framework to bridge individual and contextual antecedents of INI.

According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), job resources may be located at the organization, interpersonal/social relation, work organization, and task level. Building on the JD-R propositions, we depict top management support as an organizational-level resource and role clarity as a work-level resource, both moderating the relationship between proactivity and INI. Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2009) maintain that personal and job resources are reciprocal. The authors suggest that resourceful employees not only build a more resourceful work environment but personal resources may be promoted by a positive environment characterized by an abundance of job resources. Hence, we propose that the strength of the proactivity-INI relationship varies according to the extent of top management support and role clarity because entrepreneurial behavior in the workplace is largely influenced by the availability of organizational and work-level resources (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001; Hornsby, Naffziger, Kuratko, & Montagno, 1993; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Bishop, 2005). The conceptual framework is presented below (Fig. 1). Subsequently, the concepts are outlined.

## Literature review

### *Intrapreneurial intention*

The term intrapreneur was coined by Pinchot (1987), who depicts intrapreneurs as 'dreamers who do' concerned with increasing organizational effectiveness through innovation. Based on later considerations by other scholars, intrapreneurship refers to proactive, innovative, and risk-taking intentions and behaviors that drive organizational improvement (Valsania, Moriano, & Molero, 2016). This includes product/service development, process-related improvements, production or marketing advancement, and new resource appliances (De Jong, Parker, Wennekers, & Wu, 2011).

Understanding the intention-behavior nexus at the individual level and its extrapolation into organizational action has become a critical issue in management research (Fini, Grimaldi, Marzocchi, & Sobrero, 2012). In this regard, the theory of planned behavior states that an individual's actual behavior is determined by that person's intention to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In our study, we investigate INIs or intentions to conduct entrepreneurial activities in an existing company

(González-Serrano, Moreno, Valantine, & Hervás, 2019) as they provide a lens through which intrapreneurship-related behaviors can be understood (Chouchane et al., 2021).

### *Organization-based self-esteem*

Self-esteem is the extent to which individuals consider themselves competent and able to satisfy their needs (Brockner, 1988). In the work and organizational context, the concept of OBSE was introduced to capture the degree to which an individual perceives him/herself to be capable, significant, and worthy as an organizational member (Pierce et al., 1989). Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) portray OBSE as a 'state-like' psychological construct and use it as an indicator of personal resources in relation to work engagement. Nonetheless, as tenure increases, OBSE becomes less changeable, and for job-experienced employees, it is a highly stable construct (Pierce et al., 1989).

Compared to global self-esteem, OBSE is more malleable and is a stronger predictor of work outcomes (Lin, Chen, Ashford, Lee, & Qian, 2018). This denotes that employees' self-esteem is shaped by work and organizational experiences, which in turn play a significant role in determining their motivations, attitudes, and behaviors (Pierce & Gardner, 2004).

### *Proactivity*

Intrapreneurship is inherently rooted in proactivity, a notion encompassing self-initiated and future-oriented actions aimed at driving organizational change (Neessen et al., 2019). Proactivity is grounded on positive features of personal initiative and proactive personality (for a review, see Grant & Ashford, 2008). In this study, we adopt a dispositional approach and operationalize proactivity using the proactive personality concept, an established practice in proactivity research (Crant, Hu, & Jiang, 2016). Crant (2000) delineates proactivity as either general-purpose or context-specific and postulates that the proactive personality captures the former.

Bateman and Crant (1993) define proactive personality as a relatively stable personal disposition or behavioral tendency that drives individuals to take initiative and actively shape their environment. Proactive personality is among the most important antecedents of proactive behavior (McCormick, Guay, Colbert, & Stewart, 2019) and has been used as a proxy for assessing proactive behavior as an outcome in several studies (e.g., Chiaburu, Marinova, & Lim, 2007; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). In Dikkers et al.'s (2010) work, proactive personality emerges as an essential personal resource positively associated with job engagement.

### *Top management support*

Management support was coined and conceptualized by Hornsby, Kuratko, and Zahra (2002, p. 253) to indicate the 'willingness of senior management to facilitate and promote entrepreneurial activity in the organization, including championing innovative ideas as well as providing necessary resources, expertise or protection'. Proponents of the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003) depict supervisor support as a relevant job resource rooted in interpersonal and social relationships between an employee and her supervisor. In the present study, our concept of top management support goes beyond the relational support provided by the immediate supervisor. Instead, we consider top management support for intrapreneurship as a job resource provided systematically by a group of senior leaders or business units, either by facilitating entrepreneurial activity in the workplace or providing necessary expertise and resources (Hornsby et al., 2002).

### *Role clarity*

Role clarity is the extent to which employees have adequate information about their priorities, responsibilities, and goals (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Extending propositions from

the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), we consider role clarity as a job resource located at the work level. Past research indicates that role clarity fosters innovative work behavior (Kundu, Kumar, & Lata, 2021) and contributes to developing an entrepreneurial and wellbeing-friendly work environment (Souto et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the role of role clarity in the intrapreneurial context is still obscure.

## Hypotheses development

### *INI and OBSE*

Among the most frequently used theoretical underpinning of self-esteem is Korman's (1970, p. 32) self-consistency theory, which posits that 'all other things being equal, individuals will engage in and find satisfying those behavioral roles which maximize their sense of cognitive balance or consistency'. This denotes that in work settings, individuals with high self-esteem will manifest favorable work attitudes to be consistent with their perception of competency (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). In intrapreneurship research, self-esteem is a fundamental component of intrapreneurial capital – the constellation of intrapreneurial resources used to cope with career challenges (Di Fabio & Gori, 2016) – and has been attested as an antecedent of intrapreneurial tendencies (Ronen, 2010).

Dwelling on self-consistency propositions (Korman, 1970), OBSE and INI are expected to be positively related, mainly because employees with high self-esteem are more likely to behave in a manner consistent with their self-image. Employees who envisage themselves as trustful and worthy organizational members have a sense of responsibility of sincere payback to the organization and colleagues, which in turn enables them to engage in intrapreneurial endeavors (Wu et al., 2019). Moreover, given that intrapreneurship is associated with time pressure and uncertainty (González-Serrano et al., 2019), high OBSE intrapreneurs perceive themselves as competent and more willing to take risks and pursue novel endeavors (Wen et al., 2021). Previous research has investigated the influence of OBSE on innovative behavior (Wen et al., 2021; Zeng & Xu, 2020), which is a closely interlinked concept with intrapreneurship. Nonetheless, the effect of OBSE on INI has been largely overlooked. Therefore, we propose the following:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a positive relationship between organization-based self-esteem and intrapreneurial intention.

### *INI and proactivity*

There is a consensus among scholars that intrapreneurship at the individual level encompasses proactivity, innovation, and risk-taking as integral dimensions (Neessen et al., 2019; Rigtering & Weitzel, 2013). However, recent conceptualizations of intrapreneurship consider proactiveness as part of the innovation domain and operationalize INI as a two-dimensional construct comprised of innovation and risk-taking (e.g., Baena-Luna, Sánchez-Torné, Pérez-Suárez, & García-Río, 2022; González-Serrano et al., 2019; Lara-Bocanegra, García-Fernández, Bohórquez, & González-Serrano, 2022). Although the two concepts are positively linked (Amo, 2006), it is imperative to recognize that proactivity is a specific dimension and is not always innovation-related (Gawke et al., 2018). Rather, proactivity primarily denotes the inclination to anticipate changes, characterized by its temporal component (Crant & Bateman, 2000).

Previous research has depicted proactivity as a distinguishing disposition for fostering intrapreneurship (De Jong et al., 2011). Building on the concept of INI proposed by González-Serrano et al. (2019), we expand the current model by examining the influence of proactivity as an additional distinct attribute on INI. Consequently, we propose the following:

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a positive relationship between proactivity and intrapreneurial intention.

### *The mediating role of proactivity*

Owing to the arguments presented in the preceding sections, we propose that OBSE influences managers' INI through its effect on their proactivity. Employees with high OBSE are more likely to be proactive, exhibiting a higher degree of initiative (Pierce & Gardner, 2004; Wen et al., 2021). Previous research has demonstrated a positive association between OBSE and proactivity (Lin et al., 2018). Proactive employees with high OBSE are more likely to take the initiative, anticipate changes, and proactively drive organizational improvement (González-Serrano et al., 2019; Matsuda, Pierce, & Ishikawa, 2011), namely, act intrapreneurially.

Therefore, we posit that proactivity might act as a mechanism through which self-perceived value, competence, and contribution to the organization are translated into proactive actions. In other words, individuals who perceive themselves as faithful and trustful (e.g., OBSE in this study) are more likely to be action and future-oriented (e.g., proactivity in this study) and intrapreneurially inclined by carrying out risky and innovative initiatives (e.g., INI in this study). Hence, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 3:** Proactivity mediates the relationship between organization-based self-esteem and intrapreneurial intention.

### *The moderating role of management support*

Top management support for intrapreneurship is among the most important enablers of entrepreneurial behavior within an organization (Kuratko et al., 1990). It encompasses championing innovative ideas and providing the resources people require to take entrepreneurial actions (Hornsby et al., 2013). Kuratko et al. (1990) suggest that any organization needs an environment that supports entrepreneurial activities, outlining the importance of top management support. Previous studies found that allowing trial-and-error and creative processes through management support is pivotal for intrapreneurship (Alpkan, Bulut, Gunday, Ulusoy, & Kilic, 2010; Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Along the same line, Zhang, Kimbu, Lin and Ngoasong (2020) note that direct support from immediate supervisors is an important opportunity for intrapreneurs to progress their ideas within their organizations.

Successful intrapreneurs are proactive individuals who know the organization inside out, they are diplomats, and good communicators with supervisory authorities (González-Serrano et al., 2019). Therefore, when proactive employees experience an abundance of top management support in terms of both tangible and intangible means, the risk is shared, their morale increases and their venturesome intention is accentuated (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Hence, we formulate the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4:** Top management support moderates the positive relationship between managers' proactivity and intrapreneurial intention such that the relationship is stronger when management support is high rather than low.

### *The moderating role of role clarity*

Previous studies (Deprez, Peeters, & Gorgievski, 2021; Ramamoorthy, Flood, Slattery, & Sardesai, 2005) have shown that a clear definition of one's role and intrapreneurial expectations are preconditions for employee innovative behavior. This holds true particularly for managers, as a clearly defined scope of action is essential due to their responsibility for decision-making and allocation of resources (Hall, 2008; Hornsby et al., 2013).

As a general self-initiated and future-oriented behavior (Crant, 2000), proactivity is nourished by role clarity. In this sense, when role clarity is low, proactive individuals tend to exhibit general self-initiated efforts or provide inefficient solutions to workplace issues (Hassan, 2013;

Kundu et al., 2021). Therefore, we posit that role clarity influences the strength of the proactivity-INI relationship. When individuals clearly understand their tasks, responsibilities, and work processes, it allows for more focused intrapreneurial efforts (Souto et al., 2022). Consequently, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 5:** Role clarity moderates the positive relationship between managers' proactivity and intrapreneurial intention such that the relationship is stronger when role clarity is high rather than low.

## Methodology

### *Procedure and sample*

We expected the drivers of INI to surface best in a context where engagement in intrapreneurship is paramount for both firm-level success and career advancement. Kosovo, one of the fastest-growing economies in the Western Balkans (Mara, 2020) and boasting one of the youngest populations in Europe (World Bank, 2019), seamlessly aligned with this study goal. Managers as central figures are often considered the 'usual suspects' in exerting intrapreneurial and innovative behavior (Davis, 1999); for this reason, we chose managers as respondents in our study. Moreover, given Kosovo's historical context and the nascent stage of its economy, the importance of individual-level intrapreneurship for firm success is more or less the same across industries and firm sizes (Krasniqi, Berisha, & Pula, 2019). Within the small nation, we do not expect systematic industry or firm size effects.

Primary data were collected using self-report questionnaires. Since no sampling frame of managers exists in Kosovo, the non-random and convenient sampling approach was followed (Cumming, 1990). Initially, HR managers or CEOs of selected companies were contacted and briefed about the study's goal. Upon their approval, respondents received either an online version of Qualtrics or a pen-and-paper questionnaire. To avoid biases, we limited the number of respondents per company to 10. The back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970) was followed to ensure accurate translation of items into Albanian. The questionnaire consisted of workplace-related instruments and the demographic section. Out of 350 distributed questionnaires, 206 responses were received (58.9% return rate). Thirteen questionnaires were discarded due to missing data.

The respondents are managers employed in Kosovan companies varying in size and industry. The sample comprised 193 respondents (62.7% male; 37.3% female). The mean age was 31.76 years (SD = 6.30). Concerning education, over 95% of the sample hold either a Bachelor's (56.0%) or a Master's (39.4%) degree. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of the sample.

### *Instruments*

*Intrapreneurial intention.* Managers' INI was measured using the scale developed by González-Serrano et al. (2019). The scale consists of two dimensions, namely innovation (e.g., 'I would try to generate new useful ideas within the company') and risk-taking (e.g., 'I would try new things within the company even if there were possibilities of not working') with a total of seven items. An average score of all items along two dimensions was used to assess managers' propensity toward intrapreneurship. González-Serrano et al.'s (2019) study shows good internal consistency of the scale, reporting alphas coefficients of .89 and .90.

### *Organization-based self-esteem*

The OBSE of managers was measured using Pierce et al.'s (1989) 10-item scale. Sample items include 'I count around here' and 'I am a valuable part of this place.' Pierce et al. (1989) support the psychometric properties of the scale, reporting Cronbach's  $\alpha$  from .86 to .96.



**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the sample

	M ± SD	N = 193	%
<b>Age</b>	31.76 ± 6.30		
<b>Gender</b>			
Female		72	37.3
Male		121	62.7
<b>Education</b>			
High school		4	2.1
Associate degree		4	2.1
Bachelor's degree		108	56.0
Master's degree		76	39.4
PhD		1	0.5
<b>Marital status</b>			
Single/divorced/widowed		90	46.6
Married		103	53.4
<b>Managerial level</b>			
Low-level management		36	18.7
Middle-level management		90	46.6
Senior-level management		67	34.7
<b>Industry</b>			
Manufacturing		28	14.5
Service		165	85.5
<b>Organizational tenure</b>	6.39 ± 5.25		

### *Proactivity*

Proactivity was measured using the shortened version (Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999) of the Proactive Personality Scale (Bateman & Crant, 1993). The shortened version includes 10 items (e.g., 'I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life'). Seibert et al. (1999) support the validity and reliability of the shortened version of Proactive Personality Scale ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and suggest that it is comparable to the full 17-item version.

### *Top management support*

The five-item dimension developed by Hornsby et al. (2013) was used to measure the willingness of top management to support intrapreneurship. A sample item is 'Those employees who come up with innovative ideas on their own often receive management encouragement for their activities.' Coefficient alphas in Hornsby et al.'s (2013) samples reached .63 and .73.

### *Role clarity*

Role clarity of managers was measured by adapting the six-item instrument developed by Rizzo, House and Lirtzman (1970). Sample items include 'I have clear, planned goals and objectives for my job' and 'I know exactly what is expected of me.' The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Rizzo et al. (1970) report good psychometric properties of the scale; alpha estimates range from .78 to .80.

For all constructs, respondents' self-rated responses were recorded. Answers are scored using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

### *Control variables*

Building upon previous research (De Jong et al., 2015; Gawke et al., 2017; Hornsby et al., 2009), we controlled for the effect of six personal characteristics on the outcome variables. The included covariates are operationalized as follows: gender (0 = female, 1 = male), age (in years), education (1 = high school, 2 = associate degree, 3 = bachelor's degree, 4 = master's degree, 5 = PhD), organizational tenure (in years), management level (1 = low-level management, 2 = middle-level management, 3 = senior-level management), industry (0 = manufacturing, 1 = service).

### *Analytical approach*

Before conducting detailed analyses, we performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the factor structure of our measures. Further, the convergent and discriminant validity as well as reliability of the measures were assessed. For hypotheses testing, we rely on mediation and moderation models using PROCESS macro 4.2 developed for SPSS (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Parameter estimates were made under the 5,000 bootstrap samples using 95% confidence intervals. Effects are significant if the lower-level confidence interval (LLCI) and the upper-level confidence interval (ULCI) do not contain zero (MacKinnon, 2008).

## **Results**

### *Preliminary analyses*

Several ex-ante and ex-post interventions and diagnostics were performed to ensure data quality. To mitigate the issue of common method variance, we assured respondents verbally and with a cover letter that the survey was anonymous and that the measures were independent (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). After data collection, we performed Herman's single factor test, which showed that the percentage of variance was 29.69%, lower than the 50% threshold (Fuller, Simmering, Atinc, Atinc, & Babin, 2016), indicating no common method bias. Additionally, we checked for multicollinearity using the variable inflated factor. Variable inflated factor ratios ranged between 1.10 and 1.78, thus meeting the  $<5$  cutoff (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019), implying no issue of multicollinearity.

Considering that our study examines the relationship between constructs measured by established theoretical instruments (Brown, 2015), we performed CFA. Initially, we assessed skewness and kurtosis, ensuring that our scores were within limits and had data normality (Byrne, 2016). Then, the CFA is performed for each study variable, and loading scores are checked to determine item retention or exclusion. Based on the predetermined theoretical cutoffs for loadings in CFA, we applied the .4 cutoff (Stevens, 2012) as criteria for item omission. The factor loadings and fit indices for the study measures are presented in Table 2.

The initial measurement model for INI produced unacceptable fit indices. After omitting item 6, the respecified model demonstrated a good fit to the data:  $\chi^2/df = 1.050$ , GFI = .988, CFI = .999, TLI = .999, RMSEA = .016, and SRMR = .023. In the OBSE scale, apart from RMSEA (.088), which is slightly above the threshold ( $\leq .08$ ; Brown & Cudeck, 1992), the other fit indices are deemed acceptable. For proactivity, the initial measurement model with the original items demonstrated an unacceptable fit to the data. Consequently, we omitted poor loading items (1, 3, 4, 10), which improved the model fit significantly. Finally, concerning our moderating variables, both top management support and role clarity yielded good factor loadings and great fit indices.

### *Measures' properties and correlations*

Table 3 summarizes descriptives, correlation scores, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  reliabilities, and convergent and discriminant validity of study variables. First, the internal consistency of the scales is examined. In this study, OBSE (.90), proactivity (.85), INI (.86), top management support (.83), and role clarity

**Table 2.** Factor loadings and fit indices of study measures

Indices	Acceptable range	Reference	INI	INI (6 items)	OBSE	Proactivity	Proactivity (6 items)	Top management support	Role clarity
$\chi^2/df$	$\leq 3$	Kline (1998)	10.867	1.050	2.248	4.687	1.448	1.799	1.576
GFI	$\geq .90$	Hu and Bentler (1999)	.831	.988	.932	.846	.983	.989	.984
CFI	$\geq .95$	West et al. (2012)	.806	.999	.958	.801	.992	.993	.993
TLI	$\geq .90$	Bentler and Bonett (1980)	.710	.999	.935	.744	.983	.977	.981
RMSEA	$\leq .08$	Browne and Cudeck (1992)	.227	.016	.088	.139	.048	.064	.055
SRMR	$\leq .08$	Hu and Bentler (1999)	.102	.023	.045	.082	.025	.019	.033
Item									
Factor loadings									
1			.653	.634	.673	.303	Deleted	.48	.643
2			.791	.771	.846	.64	.567	.751	.597
3			.871	.894	.511	.204	Deleted	.84	.733
4			.85	.858	.64	.229	Deleted	.659	.485
5			.674	.733	.703	.647	.66	.739	.834
6			.38	Deleted	.584	.527	.61		.783
7			.572	.602	.685	.755	.764		
8					.719	.72	.756		
9					.71	.759	.802		
10					.875	.392	Deleted		

$\chi^2/df$  – chi-square divided by degrees of freedom; GFI – goodness of fit index; CFI – comparative fit index; TLI – Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA – root mean square error of approximation.

**Table 3.** Validity of measures and correlations

Measures	Mean	SD	$\alpha$	CR	AVE	Correlations				
						1	2	3	4	5
INI	4.20	.55	.86	.89	.57	(.76)				
OBSE	4.43	.46	.90	.91	.49	.65**	(.70)			
Proactivity	4.11	.52	.83	.85	.49	.69**	.55**	(.70)		
Top management support	3.43	.73	.82	.83	.50	.14*	.25**	.21**	(.70)	
Role clarity	4.37	.49	.84	.82	.44	.54**	.48**	.54**	.26**	(.66)
Male	.63	.48				.53**	.49**	.65**	.11	.35**
Age	31.76	6.30				.05	.02	.01	-.04	.11
Education	3.34	.64				.00	-.08	-.10	.15*	-.05
Organizational tenure	6.39	5.25				.03	.08	.07	.01	.11
Managerial level	2.16	.71				.15*	.15*	.09	.07	.16*
Service industry	.85	.35				.42**	.39**	.41**	.09	.25**

Square roots of AVEs are presented diagonally in brackets.  
 $\alpha$  – Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ; SD – standard deviation; CR – composite reliability; AVE – average variance extracted.  
 \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

(.82) showed good psychometric properties, with a Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  within the accepted range (Nunnally, 1978).

Following the CFA results, we further tested the measures’ convergent and discriminant validity. We relied on the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) scores for the former. The CR scores for all five measures are above the theoretical benchmark of .70 (Hair et al., 2019). AVE for top management support and INI was above the .50 recommended threshold (Hair et al., 2019), whereas OBSE (.49), proactivity (.49), and role clarity (.44) did not meet the cutoff. However, AVEs lower than .50 are still acceptable, provided that CRs are above .60 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), which holds in our study. Thus, these results indicate good convergent validity.

Further, we examined discriminant validity by comparing AVE square roots with scale correlations. As the AVE square root for each variable is greater than the correlation scores between that variable and other study measures, discriminant validity is confirmed (Moores, Smith, & Limayem, 2018).

Correlation scores show that OBSE ( $r = .65, p < .01$ ) and proactivity ( $r = .69, p < .01$ ) are strongly positively related to INI. Further, there is a positive relationship between OBSE and proactivity ( $r = .55, p < .01$ ). Of the correlations with demographic and control variables, INI is positively correlated to gender ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ) and managerial level ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ). Meaning that being male and in higher managerial levels is associated with higher levels of intrapreneurial propensity. Gender, or being male, is also positively correlated to OBSE ( $r = .49, p < .01$ ) and proactivity ( $r = .65, p < .01$ ). Results indicate that level of management is significantly and positively related to OBSE ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ), but not to proactivity. Further, the correlation results yield a positive correlation between industry (i.e., service industry) and OBSE ( $r = .39, p < .01$ ), proactivity ( $r = .41, p < .01$ ), and INI ( $r = .42, p < .01$ ).

**Hypotheses testing**

Table 4 contains the results of the hypotheses testing. In this study, two regression analyses were performed, which differ in terms of the second-stage moderator.

**Table 4.** Results of regression analyses

Outcome	Proactivity			Intrapreneurial intention (INI)					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>p</i>	(SE)	<i>B</i>	<i>p</i>	(SE)	<i>B</i>	<i>p</i>	(SE)
Intercept	-1.74	.00	.35	1.46	.00	.36	1.92	.00	.36
Male	.51	.00	.07	.04	.58	.07	.08	.27	.07
Age	.00	.76	.01	.01	.17	.01	.00	.44	.01
Education	-.01	.75	.04	.06	.17	.04	.06	.17	.04
Organizational tenure	.00	.56	.01	-.01	.12	.01	-.01	.21	.01
Managerial level	-.01	.74	.04	.05	.23	.04	.04	.32	.04
Service industry	.17	.05	.09	.10	.20	.08	.13	.11	.08
Organization-based self-esteem (OBSE)	.31	.00	.07	.49	.00	.07	.39	.00	.07
Proactivity				.44	.00	.07	.33	.00	.08
Top management support				-.06	.08	.04			
Proactivity × Top management support				.18	.00	.06			
Role clarity							.23	.00	.07
Proactivity × Role clarity							.24	.02	.10
Model <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.51	.00		.63	.00		.63	.00	
<i>F</i>	27.57			30.41			30.65		
<i>df</i> (regression, residual)	(7, 185)			(10, 182)			(10, 182)		
Indirect effect				<i>Effect</i>	<i>SE</i>		<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	
OBSE → Proactivity → INI				.14	.04		.07	.23	

*N* = 193 respondents. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

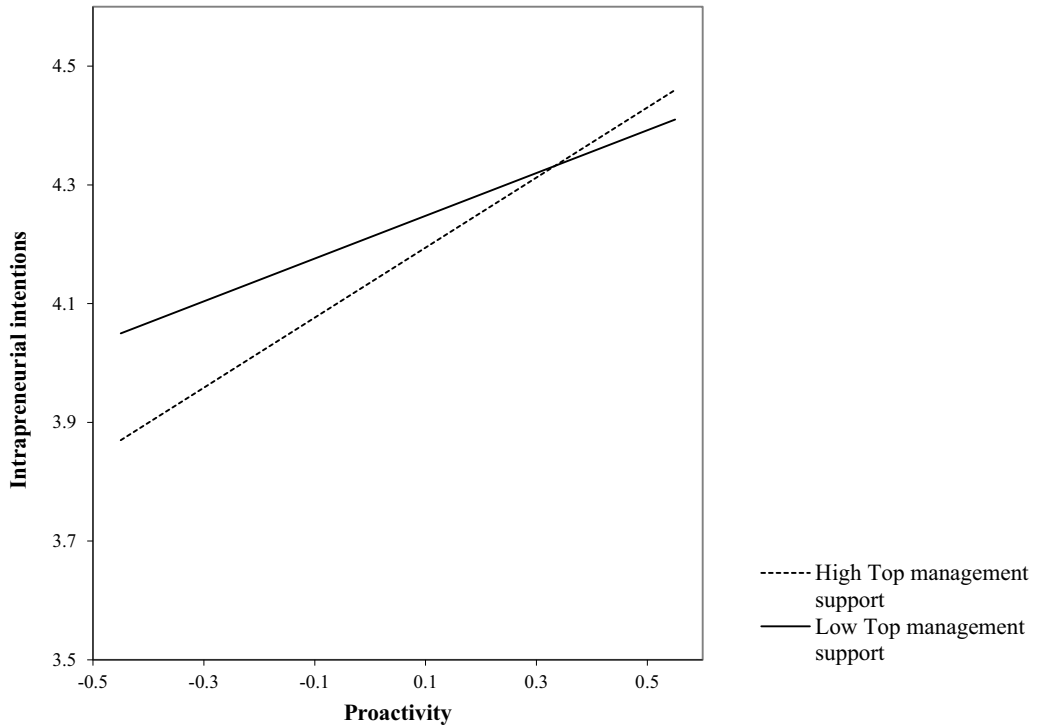
First, we tested the direct effect. The results show that OBSE is positively and significantly related to INI ( $B = .49, p = .00$ ). Moreover, the relationship between proactivity and INI is positive and significant ( $B = .44, p = .00$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are supported, respectively.

Hypothesis 3 hypothesized an indirect effect of OBSE on INI via proactivity. The bootstrap mediation yields that the OBSE-INI relationship mediated by proactivity is positive and significant (indirect effect = .14,  $SE = .04$ ;  $ULCI = .07$ ;  $LLCI = .23$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Regarding moderation, the interaction term *Proactivity × Top management support* ( $B = .18, p = .00$ ) positively relates to INI. Hence, Hypothesis 4 is supported. This means that for individuals who experience a high level of top management support, the increase in INI due to proactivity is higher than for individuals who receive a lower amount of top management support. Figure 2 illustrates this relationship.

Similarly, the interaction term *Proactivity × Role clarity* ( $B = .24, p = .02$ ) positively relates to INI; thus, Hypothesis 5 is also confirmed. In other words, for individuals with a high level of role clarity, the increase of INI due to proactivity is higher than for individuals with a lower level of role clarity. Figure 3 illustrates this relationship.

To further substantiate the moderation graphs, we report the slope results. Table 5 shows the conditional direct effect of proactivity on INI in the presence of top management support and role clarity, at different levels of these moderators ( $M, \pm 1SD$ ). The results indicate that our job resources, significantly moderate proactivity-INI relationship at different moderator level, namely low ( $-1SD$ ), at the mean, and high ( $+1SD$ ).



**Figure 2.** Interaction graph of the proactivity with top management support on intrapreneurial intentions.

Concerning control variables, gender and industry were found to be statistically significant. Meaning, males ( $B = .51, p = .00$ ) and managers from the service industry ( $B = .17, p = .05$ ) yielded a positive significant variance in proactivity levels.

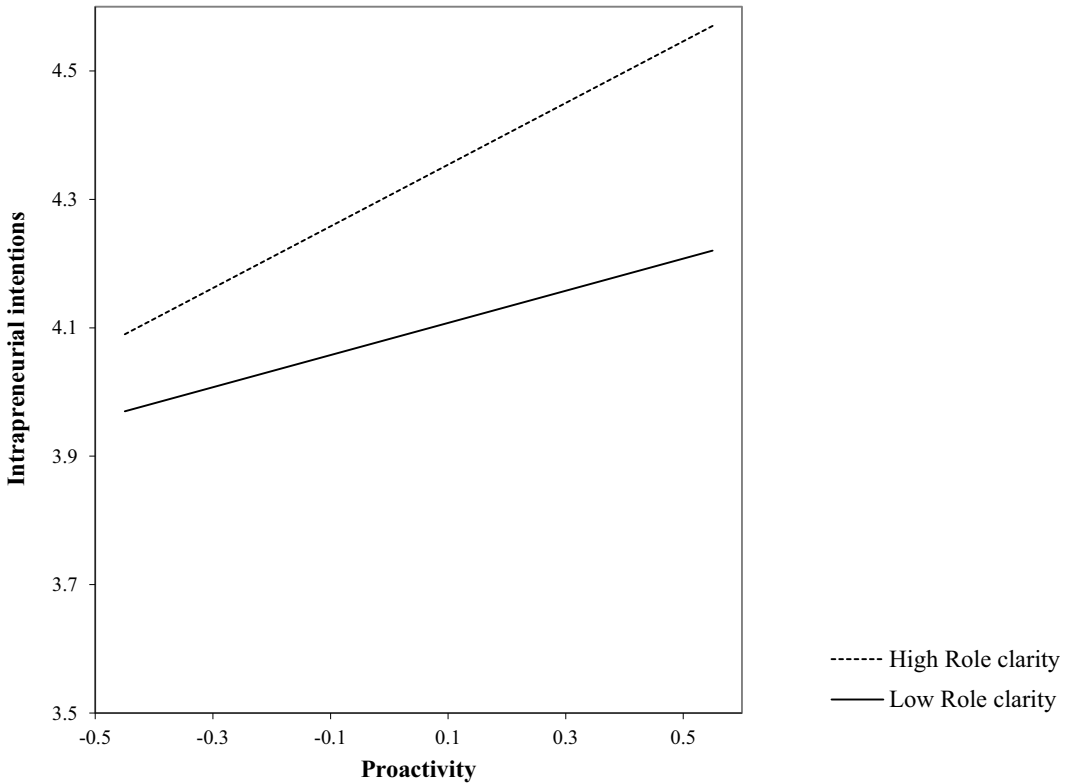
### Supplementary analyses

To ensure the robustness of the findings, we conducted additional tests for the mediation and moderated mediation effects (Heubeck, 2023). We performed Sobel's test to validate the robustness of the mediation effect (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Sobel, 1982). Based on Sobel's test, the mediating impact of proactivity on OBSE-INI relationship is significant, further confirming Hypothesis 3 ( $b = 3.70, p = .00$ ). Namely, proactivity plays an important role as the underlying mechanism, mediating the relationship between OBSE and INI.

Further, we examined the moderated mediation effects in greater detail. Namely, we tested the conditional indirect effects at specific values ( $M, \pm 1SD$ ) of the top management support and role clarity as moderators (see Table 6).

First, the effect of OBSE on INI via proactivity is significant and positively moderated by top management support; thus, a moderated mediation exists (Index = .06; SE = .03; ULCI = .01; LLCI = .12). Specifically, proactivity mediates the relationship between OBSE and INI when top management is low ( $-1 SD$ ) at the mean, and when top management is high ( $+1 SD$ ).

Second, the effect of OBSE on INI via proactivity is significant and positively moderated by role clarity as well; hence a moderated mediation exists (Index = .07; SE = .03; ULCI = .03; LLCI = .13). Namely, proactivity mediates the relationship between OBSE and INI when role clarity is low ( $-1 SD$ ), at the mean, and when top management is high ( $+1 SD$ ).



**Figure 3.** Interaction graph of the proactivity with role clarity on intrapreneurial intentions.

**Table 5.** Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderators

Moderator		Effect	SE	<i>p</i>	95% LLCI	95% ULCI	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> change	<i>F</i> statistics	<i>p</i>
Top management support	Low (-1 SD)	.36	.08	.00	.21	.52	.02	8.73	.00
	Mean (0)	.44	.07	.00	.30	.58			
	High (+1 SD)	.59	.08	.00	.43	.74			
Role clarity	Low (-1 SD)	.25	.10	.01	.06	.43	.01	5.79	.02
	Mean (0)	.32	.08	.00	.17	.48			
	High (+1 SD)	.48	.08	.00	.32	.64			

Dependent variable = intrapreneurial intention.  
*N* = 193 respondents. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

Proactivity’s consistent mediation effect on OBSE-INI relationship across different levels of both top management support and role clarity suggests that proactivity plays a crucial role in translating OBSE into INI. The findings indicate that regardless of the level of support from top management or the clarity of roles, managers with higher levels of OBSE tend to exhibit more proactivity, which in turn fosters INI.

**Discussion**

With this study, we aimed to examine the role of OBSE and proactivity as personal resources in fostering INI. Moreover, we tested the moderating effect of two job resources, namely top management

**Table 6.** Results of conditional indirect effects

Moderator	Level	Conditional indirect effects				Index of moderated mediation			
		Effect	SE	95% LLCI	95% ULCI	Index	SE	95% LLCI	95% ULCI
Top management support	Low (-1 SD)	.11	.04	.05	.2	.06	.03	.01	.12
	Mean (0)	.14	.04	.07	.22				
	High (+1 SD)	.18	.05	.01	.29				
Role clarity	Low (-1 SD)	.08	.04	.01	.16	.07	.03	.03	.13
	Mean (0)	.1	.04	.04	.18				
	High (+1 SD)	.15	.04	.08	.24				

*N* = 193 respondents. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

support and role clarity, in the proactivity-*INI* relationship. The present research strived to increase the understanding of intrapreneurship among managers by examining the interaction of personal and job resources from an organizational behavior perspective. However, these effects are limited because they stem from a specific context (Kosovo) and a non-random sample, suggesting a limited possibility to generalize the results. Also, while our study shows a significant positive relationship between certain variables, the cross-sectional nature of our data does not allow to infer causality. Concerning generalization, extending findings to the population can be challenging. In this study, however, we refrain from generalization to the population, rather we generalize to theory (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

The results show that *OBSE* is positively related to *INI*. Employees with high *OBSE* perceive themselves as an important and valuable part of the organization, which explains their increased tendency toward intrapreneurship. Self-esteem emanates from positive consideration provided by others and past achievements in the workplace (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). First, workplace appreciation shapes intrapreneurs' self-esteem and perception of how far they can go (Zeng & Xu, 2020). When employees are evaluated, trusted, and taken seriously, they build a strong sense of responsibility for sincere return and, thus, are more willing to carry out intrapreneurial activities for the organization (Wen et al., 2021). In other words, managers need to be 'cherished to flourish'. Our findings align with the self-consistency perspective or the notion that high self-esteem will manifest favorable work attitudes to be consistent with the attitude that they are competent (Korman, 1970; Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Because of the high expectations from their coworkers and supervisors, managers have a point to prove; thus, they are more likely to perform challenging tasks and have a greater sense of ownership and responsibility.

Second, employees' previous achievements in the workplace enhance their confidence to undertake new endeavors. This highlights the importance of past milestones in demonstrating *INI* and supports the idea that *OBSE* becomes more stable with tenure (Pierce et al., 1989). Therefore, our sample's relatively long organizational tenure (mean = 6.4 years) explains the positive relationship between *OBSE* and *INI*.

Next, the results yield a positive relationship between proactivity and *INI*. This finding is intuitive and self-evident, as extant research and practice have shown that intrapreneurship is inherently grounded in proactivity (Farrukh et al., 2021; Gawke et al., 2019; Neessen et al., 2019). Our finding supports proactive personality as a relatively stable disposition that affects environmental change (Crant & Bateman, 2000), such as intrapreneurial venturing in this study. In work settings, proactivity means taking the initiative and being creative by improving work methods or influencing colleagues (Parker & Collins, 2010). Therefore, individuals with a proactive disposition are more likely to possess a higher dose of intrapreneurialism because they often need to anticipate changes and sell issues internally in advance to prepare for the implementation on the ground.



The empirical results indicate that proactivity mediates the OBSE-INI relationship. However, given the positive significant direct effect of OBSE on INI (Hypothesis 1), in this case, a partial mediation exists. Although the direct relationship between OBSE and INI holds and the mediating role of proactivity as a mechanism is not full, the latter has its own significance. In other words, OBSE creates a psychologically safe environment built on trust (Matsuda et al., 2011), which enables individuals to feel more liberated to exhibit their proactiveness by taking the initiative to change the workplace, even if it entails the risk of failure (Pierce & Gardner, 2004; Wen et al., 2021). Consequently, this new-found freedom nurtures an intrapreneurial mindset, facilitating risky and innovative activities (De Jong et al., 2015).

Regarding moderation, we find that top management support moderates the positive relationship between proactivity and INI. Moreover, the empirical results reveal that the indirect effect of OBSE on INI through proactivity is moderated by management support. In line with JD-R theorization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), top management support emerges as a pivotal organizational-level resource in the intrapreneurial context. Top management support provides employees the resources and encouragement to take the initiative and engage in more challenging tasks (Hornsby et al., 2013). In turn, top management support accentuates employees' willingness to behave intrapreneurially.

Top management can support proactive employees in their intrapreneurial journey through tangible and intangible means (Hornsby et al., 2002). Tangible support includes budget allocation and access to external capital. Nevertheless, intangible support from top management is particularly important, including mentorship, training, advising, agency, removing barriers and bureaucracy, and access to the networks.

Finally, we found that role clarity moderates the positive relationship between proactivity and INI. Moreover, the empirical results reveal that the indirect effect of OBSE on INI through proactivity is moderated by role clarity. In line with JD-R theorizations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), role clarity appears to be a paramount work-level resource for proactive employees. Role clarity can increase INI by providing clear expectations and objectives for each role (Deprez et al., 2021; Ramamoorthy et al., 2005). It enhances their understanding of job aspects, responsibilities, and how their work contributes to the organization's success. Consequently, role clarity increases awareness, enabling employees to identify bottlenecks and seize new opportunities. Specifically, role clarity empowers proactive individuals to exert more focused interventions; it enhances certainty regarding the authority scope so that managers know how far they can go (Kundu et al., 2021; Souto et al., 2022).

In our study, both moderators showed statistical significance. However, role clarity has a stronger impact than top management support in influencing the proactivity-INI relationship. We purport that the higher moderating effect of role clarity could be explained by higher self-regard of role clarity due to self-serving bias inherent in cross-sectional survey studies (Friedrich, 1996). Additionally, an alternate explanation for the higher rating of role clarity over top management support could be attributed to contextual characteristics.

Given the low specialization in the labor market in Kosovo, managers are considered jacks of all trades, and many end up in generalized roles (Krasniqi & Mustafa, 2016). Consequently, we presume this might induce some of these managers to evaluate role clarity higher. Au contraire, in a collectivist culture such as Kosovo, supervisory support is commonly perceived as self-evident rather than a scarce resource (Tuzun & Kalemci, 2012). This aligns with Pinchot's (1987, p. 18) proposition that intrapreneurs 'come to work each day willing to be fired' and with the idea that they work underground and are very likely to drive their projects forward regardless of management support (Pinchot & Soltanifar, 2021).

To conclude, our findings are generally in line with prior research, suggesting that managers from a non-western economy exhibit similarities with those from other contexts. Notwithstanding the absence of unsurprising results, our findings shed light on a nuanced perspective. In other words, positive self-evaluations of the participants across constructs in our study and confirmed hypotheses might be attributed to the unique characteristics of the context and our sample.

First, given the prevalent job insecurity in Kosovo, managers might be more inclined to engage in entrepreneurial activities within their organizations rather than seeking external opportunities (Yukongdi & Lopa, 2017). Consequently, they may lean toward reporting their INIs more favorably. Second, Kosovo has one of Europe's youngest populations, averaging 30.2 years (World Bank, 2019), which was also reflected in our sample (average age = 31.8). Hence, this youthful presence might explain the higher levels of self-esteem and proactivity, as demonstrated in previous research (Ensley, Pearson, & Pearce, 2003). Third, our sample indicates a high level of education (over 95% possess a Bachelor's or Master's degree). This educational background could influence their evaluation of personal and job resources, particularly regarding role clarity. We posit that some managers may be employed in positions below their qualifications, potentially leading to an increased perception of their role clarity (Krasniqi & Mustafa, 2016).

## Implications

Our study has significant theoretical implications, particularly within intrapreneurship and JD-R research. Primarily, the present research supports the notion that intrapreneurship is best understood by considering both individual and contextual (Niemann et al., 2022; Perlines et al., 2022). In this regard, we find JD-R as a valuable framework to bridge individual and contextual factors to explain intrapreneurship.

Additionally, this is among the first attempts to use the JD-R model in an intrapreneurial context. We follow Gawke et al.'s (2017) propositions and add further evidence on the particular significance of resources as standalone underpinnings. Along this line, we integrate the literature on work proactivity and intrapreneurship and analyze the manifestation of job resources when proactive individuals engage in intrapreneurship (Gawke et al., 2017).

At the individual level, our findings confirm OBSE and proactivity as pivotal personal resources influencing INI, which also positively interact with job resources and jointly enhance intrapreneurial tendencies. Further, top management support (organizational-level) and role clarity (work-level) emerge as important contextual factors; thus, we add empirical evidence on their positive impact on proactivity and propensity toward intrapreneurship.

Further, by applying the self-consistency theory to the context of managers, this study extends the theory's validity beyond student samples typically utilized in previous studies. Our findings align with the notion that maintaining a positive self-perception is pivotal for managers pursuing intrapreneurial initiatives. For managers, maintaining a high level of OBSE becomes particularly crucial due to the inherent demands and challenges associated with their roles (Brutus et al., 2000).

Finally, the results suggest important practical implications as well. First, managers with high self-esteem are more likely to be proactive and intrapreneurial when their efforts are appreciated, emphasizing the need for a culture of recognition and a psychologically safe environment. Second, nurturing proactivity via job resources is crucial for intrapreneurial success, requiring support from top management and clear job roles for focused intrapreneurial actions. In the Kosovan context, with a predominantly youth population entering the workforce, with a fair representation in managerial roles, is it required from top management to nurture an environment that encourages proactivity. This means providing opportunities to showcase new ideas, experiment with new initiatives, and potentially develop new business opportunities. Given the evidenced influence of OBSE on proactivity and INI, we purport that the top management of Kosovan companies should empower individuals and teams to spend time working on their ideas and encourage their further development through incentives and other mechanisms. We suggest that in doing so top management can channel managers' efforts toward new and innovative ideas. Acknowledging accomplishments and encouraging more of the same is appreciated by employees. Our study has evidenced that top management support is a prerequisite for proactivity and INI, so this enabling mechanism should be pervasive and sustained. In the Kosovan context, with high masculinity, where assertiveness is inherently high (Berisha, 2013), honing self-esteem by top management will only encourage proactive and intrapreneurial behavior.

## Limitations and future research

This study is not without limitations, which provide avenues for future research. First and foremost, the present research is grounded on cross-sectional data, which restricts drawing conclusions about the causal relationships. Thus, future research should employ longitudinal data to better understand managers' intrapreneurial tendencies.

The empirical data is collected using self-report measures, which are subject to biases and are based on individual perceptions and tendencies (Chan, 2009). Moreover, given the sample frame limitations and the study's exploratory nature, non-random convenience sampling is used. Future research should use more robust sampling strategies and data-gathering techniques, such as random and longitudinal data. Longitudinal studies are especially required to capture temporal behavior alterations as a function of shifting individual and organizational characteristics.

Further, it is important to recognize that our dependent variable captures the intention toward intrapreneurship. Although actual behavior is inherently guided by formed intentions (Ajzen, 1991), future research should track the development of intrapreneurship. Another shortcoming is related to the operationalization of proactivity using a trait-based measure. Proactive personality captures employees' general proactivity or tendency to proactively approach different work situations (Crant, 2000), which aligns with our study's objective. Moreover, it provides a more efficient research method that can be used whenever an economically usable scale is needed (Frese & Fay, 2001; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Nonetheless, future research might adopt supervisor-rated or interview-based methods for measuring intrapreneurial behavior (Farrukh et al., 2021) and proactivity (Grant, Parker, & Collins, 2009).

Concerning control variables, we relied on similar studies to depict confounding variables. Future research should extend the depth of control variables in all levels of analysis. At the individual level, personality characteristics should be included as control variables in future research. At the same time, including company size and age as confounders for the organizational-level factors would be interesting. Moreover, group-level factors should be included as control variables (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016).

Finally, our study investigates on INI within the context of Kosovo. While our findings contribute to the understanding of intrapreneurship in an emerging economy context with a young population, we acknowledge the limitation in generalizability to other contexts. The single-country focus may pose a bias in the work experiences of young managers driven by an Eastern geographic context. Therefore, cross-cultural studies in developed economies with an older population are encouraged to better understand variations in intrapreneurship. Additionally, for reliability and validity reasons, cross-validation with samples from specific industries is imperative. Cross-validation facilitates a comparative analysis of intrapreneurship across different contexts, thereby enriching our understanding of the phenomenon.

**Conflict of interest.** The authors declare none.

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