
Anatomy of Entrepreneurial Leadership and Administration

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Abstract

Today's corporates need entrepreneurial leadership. Intricacies in business, coupled with global transformation, are pushing businesses to prioritize sustainability. And entrepreneurial leadership requires having a pool of individuals who are up to work given lack of resources or uncertainties and environmental turbulence and the recent COVID-19 pandemic bedeviling industry. Ordinarily, the possession of leadership qualities by corporate managers is just not sufficient enough to maintain growth, development and sustainability of enterprises. It is at this point that the philosophy of entrepreneurial leadership emerges. The paper explicitly examines entrepreneurial leadership characteristics and entrepreneurial capabilities of the current leaders in the small and medium enterprise. In order to achieve this, the paper systematically reviews the literature to assess the current status of entrepreneurial leaders' research, highlights knowledge gaps and offers prospective directions for future research. Today, the need for entrepreneurial leaders in businesses is increasing and cannot be overemphasized. The study findings show that there is a strong relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and organizational performance with characteristics' such as leaders paranoid, confidence, risk taking, proactive, visionary, decisiveness at the fore of entrepreneurial leaders. The need to produce a crop of leaders with cognitive ambidexterity, creative in scope and with predictive logic on how the future is likely to be cannot be overemphasized for corporate sustainability. The present study makes a theoretical contribution by highlighting the importance of EL in fostering team cohesion in the and ultimately driving it to perform better and engage in more innovative behavioursthat sustains organizations. The study further recommends for a crossbreed research on entrepreneurial leadership versus corporate vision across Sub-Saharan region.

Key words: Entrepreneurial leadership, entrepreneurship, corporate growth, corporate performance

“Management is about persuading people to do things they do not want to do, while leadership is about inspiring people to do things they never thought they could.” – **Steve Jobs**

1.1 Introduction

The 21st century requires leadership capable of responding to global uncertainties and challenges as well as emerging global opportunities to deliver life-long learning across the world (Duderstadt, 2006). The scarcity of knowledge on entrepreneurial leadership characteristics and competencies among many individuals working for institutions or other forms of organizations are a cause for concern (Fuchs et al., 2008; Hynes & Richardson, 2007). One of the main concerns of entrepreneurial leadership research is challenges of creating and producing entrepreneurial leaders who will handle the fast change pace of industrial events (Gupta, MacMillan, & Surie, 2004). The paper is structured in a systematic way to allow for the critical reflections on the study of entrepreneurial leadership. A brief background to EL is given, followed by problematic perspective and questions directing the study, purpose and significance of the study, methodology, literature review, findings, recommendations, direction for future research and conclusions.

1.2 Brief Background of Entrepreneurial leadership

Entrepreneurship is a relatively new, sometimes controversial, and burgeoning field of management research while Leadership has been studied since around 500 BC. Entrepreneurial leadership is emerging from these two disciplines of leadership and entrepreneurship. There have been very few qualitative studies on entrepreneurial leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa (Harrison et al., 2016a). Several researches conducted within the field of entrepreneurial leadership focused on characteristics deemed to be essential in entrepreneurial leaders (Darling and Beebe, 2007; Karanian, 2007). Early scholarly articles separated the terms ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘leadership’, (Gupta et al., 2004; Lippert, 1987; Chen, 2002) while more recent articles (from 2009 to 2014) have made more frequent use of the term ‘entrepreneurial leadership’. (Karamia, 2007; Flamholtz, 2011; Kan, 2018) In addition to the core concepts of ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘leadership’, ‘performance’ is a dominant term, and the positive influence of leadership on venture performance is highlighted. That this study is based on EL within the SMEs sector is an important component of contributing towards sustainable development for small and medium enterprises, and a brief highlight of what SMEs are, do and their present status in terms of the caliber of leadership capabilities is concerned.

There is a shared history of evolution between SMEs and the evolution of EL. In today's intense and dynamic competitive business environment, leaders of companies and especially leaders of small-scale Small and Medium enterprises should have and use the qualities of entrepreneurial leadership in order to continue their lives, compete with their competitors and develop themselves (Karcioglu and Yucel, 2004). In other words, administrators must be entrepreneurial leaders for the success and continuity of their business. People leading small and medium enterprises should have entrepreneurial leadership characteristics in order to gain competitiveness advantages, grow and develop their companies and survive in this competitive environment posed by globalization. SME growth depends upon substantive growth capabilities, which are shaped by the upstream issues of leadership and capability development. This explains why the study is grappling with and piecing through what the SMEs can do in order to remain competitive in an ever changing business environment. Fundamentally, dynamic capabilities are central to the development of a sustainable growth path for SMEs. Leaders in the SMEs need to be both willing and able to grow their firms if they are to compete effectively. Relying on the traditional entrepreneurship skills or leadership skills will not bring any glory to their survival. For SMEs to grow requires owners and employees to engage in both leadership behaviours and management practices. Growth capabilities in the SMEs are an outcome of leadership behaviours and management activities combined, developed through the result of interactions and complementarities among employees, systems and processes, and structures that are put in place by owner-managers or the founders of those firms. Based on this very condensed contextual situation faced by our SMEs in Africa, I propose that embracing and creating a team of entrepreneurial leaders could be one more step towards stabilizing and assuring the successful development of SMEs sector in a competitive global environment

1.3 Problematic perspective and questions directing the study

The present understanding of entrepreneurial leadership is paradoxical and is filled with mixed confusion and lack of clarity. Existing literature have discussed from different perspectives the entrepreneurial leadership discourse in their context, and no solid theory has been developed to articulate what characterize EL. The majority of literature is drawn from entrepreneurship and leadership studies (Gupta, 2004; Kan.2008; Greenberg et al., 2013; Pundit, 2015). The identification of the nexus and its critical roots between entrepreneurship and leadership is problematic. The primary research question for this study is centered on the examination of the primary characteristics building up an effective entrepreneurial leader in SMEs sector. Complementing the primary question is the quest to trace and track the evolving history of entrepreneurial leadership. In capping the study, the research also focus on the marriage between entrepreneurship and leadership leading to the birth of entrepreneurial leadership.

1.4 Purpose and significance of the study

The purpose of this paper is to provide [by and through a critical anatomy of existing literature] further clarity, on the specific characteristics making up an entrepreneurial leader in the context of SMEs. By doing so, the study contribute towards developing of EL specific domains and body of knowledge rather enabling its distinct identity and separating it from the already existing theories of management sciences, sociology, economics and anthropology and other related disciplines. The findings of this study have implications in theory and practice. It is significant in its contribution to exiting theory and body of knowledge to the discourse of entrepreneurial leadership in general and specifically to the small and medium enterprises in the context of developing economies. The findings provide an empirical, entrepreneurial leadership based model in the small and medium enterprises. A narrative literature review was conducted towards developing a conceptual understanding of entrepreneurial leadership for the present study. It is also significant to those firms that have a culture of innovation, in terms of its emphasis of cultivating entrepreneurial practices even under very difficult circumstances. The scholarly community can further undertake more related researches on the entrepreneurial phenomenon and broaden it to cover a wide variety of industry. The study at its best provokes specialist researchers in leadership, and entrepreneurs to share notes and practices because of the unavoidable marriage of the two in the context of the 21st century dynamics.

1.5 Methodology

Methodologically, this study is primarily a qualitative review of previous works from the scholarly community. As part of the review process, the study had to search for past published articles. To identify publications and articles for use and inclusion in this paper;I searched for the term ‘entrepreneur’ and “Leader” and “entrepreneurship”; then “entrepreneurial leadership” in ‘Abstract’ and ‘journal ISSN’ in the EBSCO metasearch engine , Google and Bing Search engines. These search engines offers a single access point, so searching a vast range of sources, including all EBSCO databases, Web of Science, Scopus, and JSTOR becomes possible. The research includes papers published as far as 2018. Data have been analyzed alongside continuous review and the researcher’s perspective are also included during the review write –up. Hence the study relies mainly on research outcomes by other researchers, researcher experiences from several publications to date, international conferences, lecturing the discipline of entrepreneurship, consultancy in business management and general exposure to inspirational speakers across the globe as well as observation based on past and present career interactions.

1.6 Literature Review

(EL) has become a hot topic for discussion in the past twenty years - with wide scholarly attention in the entrepreneurship and leadership domain (Ortiz-Villajo and Sotoca, 2018). It is

critical to set the thrust of this study clear from the onset. There is abundant confusion between leadership that we all tend to know and EL. Despite the growing interest in EL, research is limited and at an “infancy” stage (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004; Leitch & Volery, 2017). The differences will be explored later serve to categorically put across the aspect that EL exists at the crossroads of leadership and entrepreneurship. Many researchers suggest that EL is the process of creating an entrepreneurial vision and inspiring individuals to enact the vision in high velocity and uncertain environments (Chen 2007; Covin and Slevin 2002; Kuratko 2007; Surie and Ashley 2008). Another group of scholars sees it as the process whereby an individual or group of individuals create a new organization, or instigate renewal or innovation within an existing organization (Sharma and Chrisman, 1999; Chen, 2007). EL refers to those individuals in organizations who work in turbulent, ambiguous and uncertain environments within a formalized organizational structure, and fundamentally apply skills and techniques normally expected of an entrepreneur: identifying opportunities, assuming calculated risks, proactively seeking out and recognizing opportunities, and creatively pursuing innovations which create value (Tarabishy et al. 2005). Ireland, Hitt, and Sirmon (2003) call EL strategic entrepreneurship which is the ability to influence others to manage resources strategically in order to emphasize both opportunity-seeking and advantage seeking behaviors.

1.6.1 Centre of Entrepreneurial leadership

EL as a concept is at a crossroads. Entrepreneurial leadership is an emerging paradigm from the domains of leadership and entrepreneurship (Kan, 2018). Entrepreneurship and leadership still remain largely ambiguous concepts. One uses the path of leadership and focuses on an indirect approach of vision, process, influence, and conditions to achieve organizational outcomes. At the center of entrepreneurial theory are critical elements that must be taken into account (Ireland et al., 2003) are growth and wealth creation, and opportunity recognition and exploitation without regard to the resources. For doubters, the term “entrepreneurial leadership” is seen as an oxymoron, a combination of terms that are contradictory to what they have been accustomed in the past. Cogliser and Brigham (2004), did a comparative review of the fields, and are in agreement that both fields concur and converge categorically in the areas of vision, innovation, influence, planning, innovation and creativity. The critical heritage in understanding the thrust of the study is to clearly agree on whether one defines entrepreneurial leadership in terms of the entrepreneurial firm. If, however, or one defines entrepreneurial leadership in terms of entrepreneurial people. If it is looked at from the former then then entrepreneurial leadership’s task are to inculcate organization wide reliance on entrepreneurial behaviors of risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness that rejuvenates the organization. If it is defined from the latter’s perspective then the leaders task is to employ causal and effectual thinking skills and behavioral characteristics (risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness) to take advantage of opportunities by innovating to create added value, wealth, or social benefits. We have to agree or

disagree here that where one is talking about entrepreneurship as entrepreneurial people, then there are not referring to leadership but entrepreneurship perse.

I need to throw in the towel and argue that the central hole of EL- is that once the future is envisaged and created-it therefore must be sustained. Ironically some key attributes of EL do not lend the ELsto create a sustainable future. The problem is that the attributes of entrepreneurial leaders - calculated risk-taking, propensity for innovativeness, proactive behaviors - do not lend themselves to sustained innovation alone without catapulting essential aspects of ordinary leadership. This study argues at this early juncture that it needs to be established whether EL embeds OL or OL embeds EL or both needs each other as they appear to be inter-twined and inter-webbed. Cogliser and Brigham, (2004), articulate that, there are considerable overlaps and parallels, both historically and conceptually between both domains despite their independence from each other. Kurakto (2007) argue that Cogliser and Brigham's views conjure in his study, in which this convergence has led to the birth of "Entrepreneurial Leadership"..

1.6.2 Leadership

Most of the leadership researches for the past several decades have defined leadership as the ability of the person to influence another group without using force towards the achievement of goals. The leadership studies began with Ohio and Michigan research in 1930's. According to studies by Chen (2007) and Surie and Ashley (2008); people can become leaders through learning, teaching, and observation. Zaleznik (1977) has reported that managers and leaders are different. They differ in what they attend to and how they think, work, and interact. This argument concurs with the school of thought propounded by Steve Jobs who said;

"Management is about persuading people to do things they do not want to do, while leadership is about inspiring people to do things they never thought they could."

Vecchio, (2003) argues that the discipline of leadership shows the same theory evolution as entrepreneurship, and a number of the constructs used in entrepreneurship can also be found in mainstream leadership theories. Other researchers argue that leadership is generally a process of influencing employees of an organization in order to achieve organizational goals (Esmer and Dayi, 2016). Leadership is the ability to influence others and to be able to put into action for specific goals and targets (Sisman, 2014). There has been emergence of new leadership styles and have raised a lot of interest among researchers. These include transformational leadership, servant leadership, charismatic leadership, ethical leadership, moral leadership, cultural leadership, visionary leadership, and teaching leadership (Sisman, 2014). Leadership is a set of skills, knowledge and abilities that are learnable by and through training, perception, practices and experience. It is fundamental to state that leadership is central to understanding the growth

of entrepreneurial ventures. Leaders in SMEs are likely to have greater discretion than those in established formal organizations. Other studies argue that leadership has often been discussed as an important catalyst for team cohesion and in particular, a supportive leadership style can facilitate an open group climate and cohesive relations among team members (Wendt et al., 2009).

It therefore follows that leadership in SMES is likely to have greater impact on the growth and development of the enterprise. Cribbin (1981 in his work named “Leadership: strategies for organizational effectiveness” was defined the leadership as group of process and steps tend to influence the practices of an organized people to accomplish the goals. One of the articles reviewed showed that leadership can have a substantial impact on innovation when leaders exhibit a series of behaviours, such as scanning and analyzing the environment, using this analysis to define missions, and setting the parameters for idea generation, giving appropriate feedback and timely evaluation (Byrne, Mumford, Barrett, & Vessey, 2009).

Rauch and Behling (1984) leadership aims to discover the company's fate and its future as well drawing a pathway to follow this desired track. Organizations with good leadership strength and ability will further achieve success not only in the business but also in the personal scope; therefore, serious attention and concern should be highlighted to make leadership an ultimate target and priority. This study, from a cohort of literature gathered seeks for more than what this kind of leadership provides and without an excuse; this is where the EL is required to step in. It is argued from researches conducted to date that certain traits alone do not guarantee leadership success; evidence that effective leaders are different from other people in certain key respects exists. Effective leaders possess among others the following characteristics: drive, which includes achievement motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative; leadership motivation; honesty and integrity; self-confidence; cognitive ability; and knowledge of the business. A leader has to be entrepreneurial as well. It is argued that entrepreneurial leadership deals with concepts and ideas, and these are often related to problems that are not of an organizational nature (El-Namaki, 1992). This study thus argues that this is where the philosophy of entrepreneurial leadership anatomy sets in-believing that merely being a leaders does not catapult the organization further than the horizon.

1.6.3 Entrepreneurship

Drucker (1985), sees entrepreneurship as a systematic innovation which consists of a purposeful and organized search for changes. Entrepreneurship is considered to be the driving force behind economic growth and development, employment and social welfare in recent years.

Selection of the appropriate basis for defining and understanding entrepreneurs creates a challenging problem for entrepreneurial research. This is because of the different definitions provided for by as many researchers as those who write about it ((Paulin, Coffey, & Spaulding, 1982; Perryman, 1982; Peterson & Horvath, 1982; Spring 2005). The entrepreneur is defined as a person who evaluates the opportunities in the market and bears the risk of profit and loss by bringing production factors such as capital, natural resources and labour in order to produce goods or services (Yilmaz and Sunbul, 2009). Cantillon (1755) defined entrepreneurship as employing anything in itself. Another guru argues that entrepreneurship is the ability of correctly estimating deficiencies and imbalances in the market and exploring the opportunities (Kirzner, 1973).

Significant to note is that literature is replete with criteria ranging from creativity and innovation to personal traits such as appearance and style. Entrepreneurial people take advantage of opportunities to acquire added value. This definition sees entrepreneurship as a behavioral characteristic of employees and managers in a firm, not as a characteristic of the firm itself. Some scholars argue that entrepreneurs are seeking opportunities, needing to achieve set goals, being independence minded, taking risks, and innovating (Lepnurm & Bergh, 1995). McClelland (1961) argued that entrepreneurial behavior was confined to an individual's personality, the result of one's upbringing and personal background. A systematic review by van Praag and Versloot (2007), on entrepreneurship shows that entrepreneurship, not leadership is the principal driver of innovation and employment creation and, therefore, plays an important role in the economic and societal advancement of nations. According to Frese and Gielnik (2014, p. 414): the most important drivers of entrepreneurship research came from economics, psychology, and sociology. The subject of entrepreneurship cannot be discussed without touching the so called 'fathers of entrepreneurship origin'' (Schumpeter and McClelland). Schumpeter (1934) and later McClelland (1967), took a psychological perspective, with individuals being the major objects of entrepreneurship research.

Kucuk, (2014) provided a long list of what characterizes an entrepreneur -namely the personal characteristics of a successful entrepreneur which include self-confidence, determination, persistence, openness to new ideas, having vision, using initiative, reliability, positive thinking, flexibility, risk-taking, hard work, organizational ability, the ability to control, knowledge, communication and persuasion skills, reconciled with the environment, , rationality, seizing opportunities.

1.6.4 Entrepreneurial leaders

It is not very clear when exactly research in EL started. However others say research on EL began with Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) who posited that EL involves setting clear goals, creating opportunities, empowering people. Others suggest the concept of entrepreneurial leadership was introduced in 2000 by McGrath and MacMillan who suggested that in dynamic markets where there is increased uncertainty and competitive pressure a new type of leader is required. What is critical however is not the exact date when researchers started talking about it but what it does to the development of research and its impact on current business trends. A review of existing research suggests that entrepreneurs' leadership behaviour is a key component in the success, or failure, of entrepreneurial ventures (Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007; Leitch et al., 2013). The literature further shows that organizations increasingly embrace entrepreneurial behaviours and attitudes that foster innovation and adaptation. Individuals who are self-aware of themselves and the work environments, and act upon on- shape opportunities that create value for their organizations are said to be ELs (Wilson and Eisenman, 2010). Entrepreneurial leaders are driven by their desire to consider how to simultaneously create social, environmental, and economic opportunities. They Rather they tackle these situations by taking action and experimenting with new solutions to old problems, as our industry research shows (Wilson & Eisenman 2010). Entrepreneurial leadership is a unique type of leadership required for handling and managing challenges and crises of the current global organizational settings (Gupta, MacMillan & Surie, 2004). Other researcher sees it differently. Greenberg et al., (2011) states that entrepreneurial leaders are looking for opportunities outside of their new ventures. further review of existing studies shows that in entrepreneurial leadership, the leader also has the entrepreneurial qualities (Gunduz, 2010). Bayrakdar, (2011) argue that entrepreneurial leaders are people who are in the position of source of employer, speculator and information.

A significant development in the evolvement of EL, are arguments put forward by McGrath and Macmillan (2000), who argued that the first dimension of EL is directed discovery, referred to, as plotting a direction into the uncertain future and redirecting as reality unfolds. EL has the ability to capture and collapse opportunities into one coherent mode using very little or hazy information- a rare skill in the discipline of leadership. It facilitates in capturing the fleeting opportunities based on the sketchy information. Entrepreneurial leaders emphasize (when they spell their vision) building commitment through active engagement with the opportunities presented by the environment, and make a virtue of responding to customer needs, solving problems, and creating value (Gupta et al., 2004). Alvarez and Barney (2002), articulates that entrepreneurial leadership is a type of leadership that consists of actions towards establishment of a business at the individual level, actions towards following the innovations at the organizational level and actions towards benefiting from the opportunities that are distinguished at the market level (Altuntas, 2014).

Fernald et al., (2005) argues that entrepreneurial leadership has developed as a convergence of these fields and reflects the need to adapt to opportunities and challenges within entrepreneurial settings. Significantly, the concept of EL does conceptualize a dynamic process of the innovative future of the organization. While researchers have defined entrepreneurship as leadership within a narrower context (Vecchio, 2003), EL illustrates the diversity within the field of leadership. Fundamentally this leadership style enables EL to successfully direct their organization and solve the problems through different steps of the organization’s growth and development (Chen, 2007). In order to further have clarity on entrepreneurial leadership – I have also tried to compare it with the traditional leadership we all seem to be associated with. The table below does provide that synthesis. Fundamentally, the boundaries of entrepreneurship and leadership fields are permeable and often overlap.

Leitch and Harrison (2018a), argues:

“Even though both fields have followed similar evolutionary paths, debates in the more mature field of leadership, chronologically precede those in entrepreneurship, prompting entrepreneurship scholars, in particular, to recognize the mutual benefits to be gained from merging the two streams of literature”.

In that endeavour, one is made to see insights in terms of the benefits that can be accrued from blending the two disciplines –integrating entrepreneurship with leadership or leadership with entrepreneurship. Scholars of the likes of Vecchio, (2003), argue that the various constructs applied in entrepreneurship are also applied in leadership theory and therefore recognizes nothing distinctive about EL:

“It is more cogent and parsimonious to view entrepreneurship as simply a type of leadership that occurs in a specific context [...] a type of leadership that is not beyond the reach or understanding of available theory in the areas of leadership and interpersonal influence”

Studies conducted by researchers show that EL is a process of co-action where shifts among team members “indicate the continuous (re)construction of EL towards the orientation of new venture development” (Sklaveniti, 2017). This view is supported by Koryak et al. (2015) who remarked that once an opportunity is discovered, it should be infused into current processes and systems in order to exploit it. Literally speaking, entrepreneurial Leadership is a function of two dimensions namely entrepreneurship and Leadership.

Table 1 Comparison (similarities and differences) between leaders and entrepreneurial leaders

Ordinary Leaders (OL)	Entrepreneurial leaders (EL)
Adapt to changing environmental demands	Aggressively adapt to changing environmental demands
Proactive and risk-taking innovators	Continue to search for next opportunity to innovate and bring a new service or product to the market
Hierarchical; heroic , values based leadership	Flattened leadership; empowerment and autonomy
Establishes vision and seeks “buy in”	“Spots opportunities and inspires others to ‘join the

	cause”
Develops culture of high expectations	Develops culture of risk-taking; innovativeness; & proactiveness
Authority centered in heroic leader	Authority centered in entrepreneur
Emphasis on trust, empowerment, & autonomy	Emphasis on autonomy and flexibility
Exploitation/exploration	Exploration/Exploitation
Drive, which includes achievement motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative	Drive, which includes achievement motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative
Leadership motivation	Leadership motivation
Honesty and integrity;	Honesty and integrity;
Self-confidence; Cognitive ability; and	Self-confidence; Cognitive ability; and
Knowledge of the business	Knowledge of the business
Able to communicate	Able to motivate
Create an atmosphere conducive to growth	Aggressively create an atmosphere conducive to growth
	Entrepreneurial leader perseveres. True entrepreneurs simply do not quit, they keep going till they find what they’re looking for
	The leader not only invests significantly in learning and updating their knowledge, but they also create a learning environment in the organization
	Entrepreneurial leader creates an atmosphere that encourages everyone to share ideas, grow, and thrive.
	Are also undiscouraged by a lack of resources or by high levels of uncertainty.
	Nature and diversity of knowledge among the entrepreneurial leadership team has a positive bearing on growth
	The lack of resources or uncertainties do not discourage them, instead these problems motive them and lead them to search for new solutions to overcome these problems.
	The other important element in directed discovery is, ‘absorbing uncertainty’, which is measured through foresight, vision and confidence building
	Creative integration, organizing and optimally utilizing human, as well as, non- human resources for achieving the targets / goals. This effort leads to reducing the temporal or spatial inefficiencies, thereby adding value to the organizations
	dimension of entrepreneurial leadership is arena building wherein the leader has to focus on the new product development or searching new avenues for their organizational effectiveness depends upon entrepreneurial leadership attributes inherent in the work focalization
	Sustaining innovation and adaptation in high velocity

	and uncertain environment (Surie and Ashley, 2008).
Sources: Gupta,2004; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000. Cogliere and Brighan, 2004; Sharmal and Chrisna,1999; Kurakto, 2007; Vececio,2003; Ortiz-Villajo and Sotra,2018; Wilson and Eisemen, 2010; Kan,2018; lamohltz,2011; Lippit,1987;Ireland et al.,2000)	Sources: Gupta,2004; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000. Cogliere and Brighan, 2004; Sharmal and Chrisna,1999; Kurakto, 2007; Vececio,2003; Ortiz-Villajo and Sotra,2018; Wilson and Eisemen, 2010; Kan,2018; lamohltz,2011; Lippit,1987;Ireland et al.,2000)

Source: Compiled by Research (2020)

It should be noted that EL and leadership share some common flat forms such as, promoting the empowerment and autonomy of followers, tolerance of ambiguity, development of a shared vision and flattening the organization to allow leadership to permeate the organization at all levels.

1.6.5 Characteristics of entrepreneurial leadership

There are several characteristics of EL, as indicated by research findings conducted across the globe, with some characteristics being similar with those of what this study calls ‘ordinary leadership’. Researchers such as Gupta et al. (2004) identified 19 attributes which include foresight, convincing, improvement oriented, flexibility, proactiveness. According to Karanian (2007), every entrepreneurial leader should possess five core attributes: connection, vivid imagination, family and cultural background, an expectation for confrontation, and a unique gift of character. Darling and Beebe (2007) discuss communication attributes as being essential for entrepreneurial leaders. Other studies show key attributes including paradoxical thinking, controlled reflecting, intentional focusing, and instinctive responding (Greenberg, 2013, Surie and Ashley, 2008). ELs use their abilities to empower and motivate followers and inspire them to engage in entrepreneurial activities themselves (Renko et al., 2015) Dr. Derek Lidow in his new book, “Start Up Leaders – How Savvy Entrepreneurs Turn Their ideas into Successful Enterprises.” He shares insights to improve your chances for success by sharing five essential entrepreneurial leadership skills.

Table 2 Entrepreneurial skills as depicted by Lidow

Self-awareness	How well the leaders “know thyself,” their traits and skills, strengths and weaknesses? Ability to maximize them is key
Enterprise basics	How well the leader understands the basics of how one business operates-through projects, processes and cultures?
Relationship building	How well the leader understand the multi-relationships of their team and business, the shared objectives philosophy
Motivating others	How well a leader understands the principles of motivation and how to make the people who help you to feel masterful, purposeful, included and autonomous?
Leading change	How well the leader understand how to put into place and keep in place the five perquisites for change: comprehension, motivation, skills, resources, and communication

Source: Researched data from Lidow’sBook: ‘startup leaders’ (2020)

Another researcher –Fernald identified eight characteristics universal to both leaders and entrepreneurs. Fernald et al. (2005) identify eight characteristics common to both successful entrepreneurs and leaders. The table below provides a list of the identified characteristics. Studies conducted elsewhere do not lend themselves to look at the actual characteristics but focuses on what these leaders do their techniques and strategies in leading that distinguishes them from ordinary leaders (Strubler and Redekop, 2010). Entrepreneurial leader can be every individual who pursues opportunities beyond the resources they own, takes risks, and has the tenacity to push an idea through (Leitch & Harrison, 2018b). It is thus a matter of what individuals want to see, whether the glass of water is half full or is half empty. Thus that EL exists at the nexus of entrepreneurship and leadership and draws on the similarities evident in debates and discussions about entrepreneurs and leaders (Cogliser& Brigham, 2004; Renko et al., 2015; Leitch & Volery, 2017) is undisputed. Flamholtz(2011) in a study conducted concluded that some key roles of an EL include the tabulated aspects below.

Table 3 Entrepreneurial leadership characteristics and roles

Leadership characteristics	Author/ scholar/researcher and year of publication
Creating the vision, managing the organizational culture, coordinating operations, overseeing systems development ,leading, innovation and change	Flamholtz (2011)
Ability to motivate, ,achievement orientation, creativity, flexibility, persistence ,patience, risk taking, vision [Fernald et al., also sees these as applicable to ordinary leadership-hence classifies them as universal characteristics in their study].	Fernald et al. (2005)
Connection, vivid imagination, family and cultural background, an expectation for confrontation, a unique gift of character.	Karanian (2007),
Communication attributes of EL : paradoxical thinking, controlled reflecting, intentional focusing,, instinctive responding	Darling and Beebe (2007)
Risk taking, divergent thinking, sharp focus, personal, responsibility, economic orientation, learning from experience	The Lippitt (1987)
Supporting entrepreneurial skills, interpretation of the opportunities, protecting the innovations threatening the current, business model:, questioning the current business logic, reviewing the simple questions, associating	Cover and Slevin (2002)

entrepreneurship with strategic management	
Flexibility, humility, focus, decisiveness, stick-to-it-ness, vision:, paranoid confidence, ownership, positivity, salesmanship, self-awareness, ability to listen:	Young Entrepreneur Council, (2013)

Source: Characteristics sifted from Researched data

1.7 Findings

Evidence is quite robust that firm performance and growth are supported when organizations successfully possess entrepreneurial leaders. The review further suggest that entrepreneurial leadership has consistently been identified as a key driver in the creation and maintenance of dynamic and substantive growth capabilities (Chen,2007;Covin and Slevin,2002). The body of literature in this field has increased and, despite certain fragmentation and definitional disagreements, a convergence between entrepreneurship and leadership underpinned the development of the field. In line with the previous research findings of Kan (2018) and Pundit (2015) resultsof the present study suggested that EL hasa significant positive impact on employees’ innovative work behavior. The study shows that EL is particularly valuable to enterprises, where the individual is important and the context is characterized by constant change, turbulence and competition. In this context, not only the leader but also followers need to be involved in the exploration and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. At this level, I argue that every employee must be an entrepreneurial leader in terms of their areas of responsibilities –thus this type of leadership for it to be effective; it must not be limited to the leaders in authority or in management.This study also reveals that there is increased hybridization of the fields of and leadership and entrepreneurship, and convergence between these two disciplines. By bringing in these two concepts together (entrepreneurship and leadership) signifies a new development in terms of giving the two the respect they deserve-and that good leaders have to be entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs have to be good leaders.

This present study argues that “It is evident from the various studies and researches conducted that there is no clear conceptual consensus on entrepreneurial leadership as the majority of the researchers moves to and from and sometimes mixes up the same characteristics with that of the ‘common’ leadership traits we are all familiar with. Our small and medium enterprises need to understand and envisage the embracement –of the inherent traits that distinguish entrepreneurial leaders from other leaders. Taking the environmental and contextual factors that prompt organizational leaders to implement entrepreneurial principles and strategies in performing their tasks and roles cannot be overemphasized as reflected by the literature on this phenomenon. In complementing this the study identifies that social processes through which entrepreneurial leaders influence a group of people to enact their vision must be considered as critical aspects of

enabling entrepreneurial practices. Other researchers such as Kempster& Cope, (2010) and Gupta et al., (2004) precisely support the notion of contextual factors, environment and the social influence. What it suggests is that further empirical studies need to be conducted to gain more insight in terms of what differentiated from OL. This is not however the thrust of this study but it is fundamental correct that the characteristics of EL cannot be understood without understanding the fundamental characteristics of OL.”

It needs to be stressed that, despite the debates on the definition of entrepreneurial leadership, there has been relative consensus among researchers on the distinctive competencies that motivate and enable entrepreneurial leaders to lead an organization successfully (Nicholson, 1998). This study highlights that among the personal competencies required for entrepreneurial leaders, proactiveness, innovativeness, and risk-taking are the most cited ones that indicate entrepreneurial orientations at both personal and organizational levels (Chen, 2007; Kuratko, 2007; Gupta et al., 2004). The other key area raised is that of leadership functionality from an entrepreneurial perspective. Gupta et al., (2004) and Swiercz&Lydon, (2002) argue that functional competencies are the capabilities of entrepreneurial leaders that empower them to act differently from other types of leaders and these are related to the entrepreneurial leader's task performances such as operations, finance, marketing and human resources. An interesting revelation also from the studied literature and other scholarly articles on entrepreneurial leadership shows that enterprise innovativeness reflects the capacity of the organization and its founders to develop and implement novel ideas that lead to critical changes and improvements at the enterprise level (Eyal&Kark, 2004). The three key emerging pillars of the enterprise innovativeness are the capacity to explore new business opportunities, the tendency to take action and exploit the opportunity and the changes that implemented innovations create in enterprise performance performances.

Due to the wide proliferation of authors and researchers in the field of entrepreneurial leadership, and competing definitions in this field of inquiry, the present study recommends for a rigorous study based on critical review of existing literature and the other one based on a rigorous empirical study of entrepreneurial leadership across industrial sectors. Literature further shows that by working towards promoting shared beliefs, a sense of belonging and a task focus, entrepreneurs leaders can develop team cohesion and can further leverage the impacts of their leadership behaviour cognitively and pragmatically. The other finding coming out clearly is that of scarcity of empirical studies on entrepreneurial studies in the small and medium enterprises despite presents of anecdotal evidence of the identified characteristics. Renko (2015) shares the same sentiments of the limitations of EL from the study conducted

1.8 Recommendations

Findings from this study have a number of implications to the owners of SMEs who want to enhance the innovative capacity of their employees. The quest for having truly minded entrepreneurial leaders requires recruitment and selection mechanisms that are able to identify the potential of the recruiters before they are even accepted as members of the enterprise. Secondly, there is need to draw upon Leadership and Management development programmes –a practice that is mostly shun by small and medium enterprise firms. Thirdly there is need to put in place employee-leader empowerment programmes to encourage leaders to take ownership of their enterprise that they work for. Fourthly incentives must be put in place to reward entrepreneurial leaders who may not necessarily be owners of the enterprise. Fifthly there is need to put in place error and mistake acceptance policy because of the nature of risks involved in trying new innovations. Leaders must not be punished for making mistakes but rewarded from ‘trial and error’.

Given the findings from this study, I do recommend suggestively that in order to improve the innovative behaviour and performance of SMEs, enterprise owners should strive to encourage and enhance team cohesion through demonstrating ELbehaviours themselves. The development and implementation of innovative and creative ideas, creation of entrepreneurial vision, and act as an entrepreneurial role model to members should not be left to chance, but be used as a framework of in calculating entrepreneurial culture amongst all employees belonging to the organization. This study has its limitations which can be addressed in future researches. Future studies should consider collecting longitudinal panel data where the independent, mediating and dependent variables are measured at multiple time points. This may help in providing more conclusive conclusions on the effects of EL characteristics on growth and development of small and medium enterprises in Africa, guaranteeing them of a sustainable future. The need for entrepreneurial leaders in today’s companies is increasing day by day. The study therefore recommends, applied trainings, symposiums, seminars, conferences can be organized and projects can be implemented in companies in order to increase the number of entrepreneurial leaders.

1.9 Conclusion

As a matter of reaching a point of resting this study, and as a point of departure to future studies, the present study argues that the growing body of literature from both empirical and conceptual standpoints (Gupta et al., 2004; Renko et al., 2015), is most welcome, it is still premature to be content with these as there has been little scholarship which has specifically examined the subject from the perspective of a developing country as suggested by Hejazi et al., (2012) and Harrison et al., (2016a). At the confluence of an entrepreneur, leader and the entrepreneurial leader are issues such as setting of a new direction, building a team, a new idea, methods, or

product brought to fruition... but ELs must face the changing internal and external conditions to which they must adapt their organizations, regardless of whether there are opportunities or threats. What is interesting is the levels of engagement by the scholarly community to understand further the discourse of entrepreneurial leadership in Africa especially within the small and medium enterprises that are highly ‘thirst for growth’. The presents of realizable characteristics as obtained from this study is not sufficient enough to justify theory building. Extensive and intensive empirical studies need to be conducted across, a cross section of industry, longitudinal in order to arrive at a conclusive conclusion. Panel data can be obtained within and without the continent to further solidify the discourse of entrepreneurial leadership.

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