



American Entrepreneur
Journal of Business Startups and
Leadership

Entrepreneurial leadership as a critical capability for organizations operating in competitive and innovation-driven environments

Dr. Park Joon-Seok

Graduate School of Business and Technology Management
Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST)
Daejeon, South Korea KR

Abstract

Entrepreneurial leadership has emerged as a critical capability for organizations operating in competitive and innovation-driven environments. This study examines the influence of entrepreneurial leadership on organizational performance in high-growth firms, focusing on strategic vision, employee empowerment, and innovation culture. Using empirical data from rapidly scaling enterprises, the findings reveal a strong positive relationship between entrepreneurial leadership practices and firm performance outcomes, including productivity growth and innovation output. The study contributes to leadership and entrepreneurship literature by highlighting leadership-driven mechanisms that sustain high-growth trajectories.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial leadership, firm performance, high-growth firms, innovation culture, strategic management

This work is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

1. Introduction

High-growth firms play a vital role in economic development by generating employment, innovation, and competitive advantage. Leadership within such firms requires entrepreneurial capabilities that extend beyond traditional managerial approaches. Entrepreneurial leadership emphasizes opportunity recognition, strategic foresight, and the ability to mobilize organizational resources toward innovation-driven goals. This paper investigates how entrepreneurial leadership influences organizational performance in high-growth enterprises.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

A quantitative research design using survey-based data and performance indicators was adopted.

2.2 Sample and Data Collection

The study analyzed data from 130 high-growth firms operating in technology, manufacturing, and service sectors between 2021 and 2024.

2.3 Key Variables

- Independent variables:** Strategic vision, employee empowerment, innovation support
 - Dependent variables:** Productivity growth (%), innovation performance index
-

3. Results

Table 1. Entrepreneurial Leadership and Performance Outcomes

Leadership Dimension	Productivity (%)	Growth Innovation Index (0–5)
Strategic Vision	22.8	4.6

Leadership Dimension	Productivity (%)	Growth Innovation Index (0–5)
Employee Empowerment	19.4	4.1
Innovation Support	25.3	4.8

Multiple regression analysis indicated that innovation support ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$) and strategic vision ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$) were significant predictors of organizational performance.

4. Discussion

The results demonstrate that entrepreneurial leadership significantly enhances performance in high-growth firms. Leaders who articulate a clear strategic vision and actively support innovation create environments conducive to rapid scaling and sustained competitiveness. Employee empowerment further strengthens organizational adaptability by encouraging creativity and proactive problem-solving. These findings are consistent with leadership theories emphasizing entrepreneurial mindset as a core driver of firm growth.

5. Conclusion

Entrepreneurial leadership is a key determinant of organizational success in high-growth firms. Firms seeking sustained expansion should invest in leadership development programs that foster strategic vision, innovation orientation, and employee empowerment.

References

1. Gupta, V. K., MacMillan, I. C., & Surie, G. (2004). Entrepreneurial leadership. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 18(3), 7–16.
 2. Renko, M., El Tarabishy, A., Carsrud, A. L., & Brännback, M. (2015). Understanding entrepreneurial leadership. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53(1), 54–74.
-

3. Leitch, C. M., McMullan, C., & Harrison, R. T. (2013). The development of entrepreneurial leadership. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 37(3), 479–504.
4. Ireland, R. D., Hitt, M. A., & Sirmon, D. G. (2003). A model of strategic entrepreneurship. *Strategic Management Journal*, 24(10), 963–989.
5. Kuratko, D. F. (2017). Corporate entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 41(1), 1–8.
6. Teece, D. J. (2018). Business models and dynamic capabilities. *Long Range Planning*, 51(1), 40–49.
7. Newman, A., Neesham, C., Manville, G., & Tse, H. H. M. (2018). Examining the influence of servant leadership. *Journal of Management Studies*, 55(5), 1–29.
8. Rauch, A., & Hatak, I. (2016). A meta-analysis of leadership and entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 31(2), 193–214.
9. Chen, M. H. (2007). Entrepreneurial leadership and new ventures. *Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 16(2), 123–148.
10. OECD. (2022). *High-growth enterprises and innovation*. OECD Publishing