

# The Role of Entrepreneurial Leadership on MSMEs' Effectiveness: A Systematic Literature Review

Mesfin Gezahegn\*, Kassa Woldesenbet\*\*, Konjit Hailu\*\*\*

## Abstract

This paper presents a systematic literature review on the influence of entrepreneurial leadership (EL) on micro, small, and medium enterprises' (MSMEs') effectiveness. Entrepreneurial leadership is a rapidly evolving field of research that connects the field of entrepreneurship and leadership. Despite its significance for the MSMEs, our knowledge about the various EL attributes and their impacts on the effectiveness of enterprises is underdeveloped. To address this gap, we conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) of 60 papers published between 2000-2019 on the relationship between EL and the effectiveness of the MSMEs. The findings from the SLR showed the vital importance of entrepreneurial leadership to the MSMEs' performance in turbulent and competitive environments. In addition, the review found that a large number of MSMEs fail in their first few years in business operation, and that the lack of entrepreneurial leadership and resources, such as management skills, competences, and financial resources, account for such a failure. The review found that the link between entrepreneurial leadership and MSMEs needs clear operationalisation to develop cumulative knowledge on this area. The review concludes with suggestions for further research.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Leadership, MSMEs, Entrepreneurship

## Introduction

Many studies report that leadership styles can make a difference in employees' innovative behaviour, ability to identify and exploit opportunities, and engage in activities that boost organisational competitiveness and growth (Chen, 2007; Koryak et al., 2015). In the case of entrepreneurial leadership, studies showed that it significantly enables innovation and opportunity recognition for start-ups and established MSMEs in hyper-competitive and volatile environments (Freeman & Siegfried, 2015; Karol, 2015; Leitch et al., 2012), and influences the success, growth, and competitiveness of firms (Brännback et al., 2015). Further, entrepreneurial leaders play a key role in recognising and eliciting individuals' and groups of employees' potential endowments, enhancing their self-efficacy to generate new ideas, and streamlining their behaviour and attitudes to translate ideas into innovation (Brännback et al., 2015; Fontana & Musa, 2017; Freeman, 2014; Gupta et al., 2004). In turbulent and competitive environments, small and medium enterprises face challenges that affect achieving their business goals or result in failures. There are many antecedents for poor enterprise performances, of which lack of entrepreneurial leadership is likely a significant cause. Entrepreneurial leadership is thus considered a key success factor for enterprises. Ishak et al. (2021), for instance, found that EL plays a crucial role in achieving superior performance by micro and small businesses. The

\* Lecturer, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Email: [mesfin.gabera@aau.edu.et](mailto:mesfin.gabera@aau.edu.et)

\*\* Associate Professor, De Montfort University, The Gateway, Leicester, United Kingdom. Email: [kwoldesenbet@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:kwoldesenbet@dmu.ac.uk)

\*\*\* Assistant Professor, Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Email: [konjit.hailu@aau.edu.et](mailto:konjit.hailu@aau.edu.et)

role of entrepreneurial leadership has been proposed as a key element in which entrepreneurs can maintain their competitiveness when faced with dynamic and changing environments (Fernald et al., 2005). This paper reviews extant literature to synthesise the existing research knowledge on the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and its effect on the MSMEs. The paper identifies the salient attributes of EL and its potential influence on the MSMEs' effectiveness, and identifies gaps for future research. The review identifies key themes such as entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial leadership, leadership, MSMEs, and the link between EL and the MSMEs' effectiveness. The review contributes in furthering our knowledge on the interconnection between EL and the MSMEs, and in identifying issues for further research.

## Research Method

We conducted a systematic literature review to examine the relationship between EL and the MSMEs' effectiveness. The systematic literature review (SLR) follows an established protocol to audit the status of the field development, its importance, and limitations. As Tranfield et al. (2003) stated, SLR is a replicable, scientific, and transparent process that aims to minimise bias through exhaustive literature searches of published and unpublished studies, and by providing an audit trail of the reviewer's decisions, procedures, and conclusions. It is a well-recognised method for producing reliable knowledge from an evidence-based approach. This paper aims to map the current state of research in the area of EL and MSMEs. We seek to achieve the below three objectives by conducting a systematic literature review:

- Identify and assess the main issues examined in the extant studies.
- Analyse the outcomes/findings of the studies.
- Draw conclusions and discuss the identified gaps.

In doing so, the paper identifies, discusses, and synthesises the research knowledge, draws implications for practice and policy, and identifies gaps for further studies.

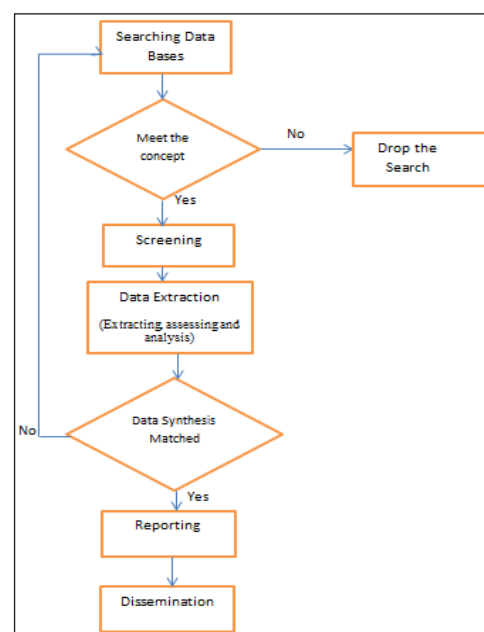
## Why a Systematic Literature Review?

SLR is characterised by a replicable methodology, transparency, and presentation. It involves a

comprehensive and systematic search to locate all relevant published and unpublished works that address one or more research questions, and a systematic presentation, analysis, and integration of the main search results (Crossan & Apaydin, 2010a; Siddaway et al., 2019). The SLR can be used to search various databases in the topic area; the search results are then scrutinised for their focus/aims, issues, methods employed, findings, and context to judge their relevance for the proposed research issue. The SLR process allows integration, synthesis, and critique of the issue examined, and to draw valid conclusions and implications. The SLR then paves the way to identify gaps between what we know and what we need to know (Siddaway et al., 2019).

## The SLR Processes

This review encompasses various publications in the area of EL and MSMEs from 2000-2019, to understand the concept, synthesise it, and finally identify gaps for further research. SLR improves the quality of the review process and outcome by employing a transparent and reproducible procedure. We followed transparent, step-by-step processes of searching, screening, data extraction, synthesis, reporting, and dissemination, as advocated by various scholars (Crossan & Apaydin, 2010b; Okoli & Schabram, 2010; Tranfield et al., 2003). The SLR protocol is shown in Fig. 1.



**Fig. 1: Search Flow**

## Searching

The first stage of the process aims to identify all studies that are broadly concerned with EL and the MSMEs' effectiveness. A search strategy was developed to ensure that all relevant studies are covered. It included the resources to be searched and the search terms to be used to identify the resources.

## Identification of Resources

The resources were searched/identified from internationally subscribed electronic databases. As Tranfield et al. (2003) stated, the literature search begins with keywords and search terms. Keyword searches is the most common method of identifying literature (Cronin et al., 2008). Accordingly, the strategies used to construct the keywords were:

- Understanding the research objectives and questions.
- Identifying key terms derived from the research title and research questions.
- Checking the keywords incorporated and identified by authors in the articles.
- Applying different Boolean connectors to search the articles.

## Use of Search Terms

To conduct the search, we mainly used terms/phrases such as micro enterprise; small enterprise; effectiveness; entrepreneurship; medium enterprises; entrepreneurial leadership; MSMEs; SMEs; leadership; and related terms. The initial search returned a total of 11,636 from PQDT, 1,124 from Scopus, 521 from Emerald, 403 from Ebscohost, 253 from JASTOR, and 275 from Sage databases. The bibliographic information of search results met the inclusion criteria. As an inclusion criteria, papers should be in English, and the focus of the paper must be entrepreneurial leadership and MSMEs concepts. The papers searched, which addressed the conceptual and empirical aspects of review ideas and were published starting in 2000 were incorporated for the purpose. The final list of articles were exported to Mendeley Desktop to create our own indexed searchable database. This database contained 227 publications/articles, of which 60 relevant articles from 52 journals were selected for the SLR. Table 1 shows the number of articles published in these journals. All identified articles were written in English.

**Table 1: Journals and Number of Articles Collected**

<i>Journal</i>	<i>No. of Articles</i>
Journal of Cleaner Production	2
Journal of International Business and Entrepreneurship Development	1
Economic Insights – Trends and Challenges	1
Cogent Economics & Finance	1
World Journal of Social Sciences	1
Journal of High Technology Management Research	1
Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences	2
Academic Journal of Business, Administration, Law and Social Sciences	1
Journal of Banking & Finance	1
Journal of Small Business Management	3
Entrepreneurial Leadership and New Ventures	1
International Small Business Journal	3
Journal of Business Research	1
International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal	1
Journal of Business Venturing	1
Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development	2
Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies	1

<i>Journal</i>	<i>No. of Articles</i>
Action Learning: Research and Practice	1
British Journal of Management	1
The Journal of Creative Behavior	1
Journal of Business Research	3
California Management Review	1
Procedia Computer Science	1
European Journal of Research and Reflection in Management Sciences	1
Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research	1
Journal of World Business	1
World Development	1
International Review of Entrepreneurship	1
The Leadership Quarterly	2
International Journal of Business and Management	1
Gender in Management: An International Journal	1
World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development	1
Asia Pacific Business Review	1
Academy of Management	1
International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	1
Management Science Letters	1
Journal of Economic Growth	1
International Business & Economics Research Journal	1
International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management	1
Management and Production Engineering Review	1
International Review of Entrepreneurship	1
International Journal of Business Performance Management	1
Journal of Entrepreneurship and Management leadership	1
Journal of Problems and Perspectives in Management	1
The Journal of Entrepreneurship	1
Total Quality Management & Business Excellence	1
Human Resource Management Review	1
International Journal of Economics and Management	1
International Journal of Engineering and Management Research	1
International Journal of Business and Management	1
International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	1
Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research	1
Total	60 Articles

## Screening

The screening process was undertaken to select proper publications, identified by the search terms, which meet the predetermined inclusion or exclusion criteria. As an inclusion criteria, papers should be in English, and must have concepts related to entrepreneurial leadership and

MSMEs. It addressed either the conceptual or empirical aspects of the content. The exclusion criteria included articles before 2000 and those not in English. Major journals in the area of entrepreneurship, small business, leadership, entrepreneurial leadership, and related topics were included as the sources of journals (see Table 1).

## Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data extraction involved extracting, assessing, and analysing all the selected articles. To record the required information leading to data synthesis, we used three data extraction levels with the help of Tables 1, 2, and 3. Data synthesis involved summarising the results of the identified resources as per the research questions of

each paper. We followed Crossan and Apaydin (2010b) to synthesise data, considering its value addition to the furthering and creation of knowledge. We used two categories to discuss the findings of the SLR: conceptual and empirical, as such a categorisation is likely to offer deeper and richer insights into the linkage between EL and the MSMEs' effectiveness (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Document Verification: Author, Date, and Journal**

<i>Author and Date</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Nature of Articles Conceptual/Empirical</i>	<i>Country</i>
Aboelmaged, 2018	Journal of Cleaner Production	Empirical	Egypt
Abubakar et al., 2018	Journal of International Business and Entrepreneurship Development	Empirical	Nigeria
Adisa et al., 2014	Economic Insights – Trends and Challenges	Empirical	Nigeria
Agwei, 2018b	Cogent Economics & Finance	Empirical	Ghana
Arham et al., 2013	World Journal of Social Sciences	Empirical	Malaysia
Agyapong, 2010	International Journal of Business and Management	Conceptual	Ghana
Bagheri, 2017	Journal of High Technology Management Research	Empirical	Malaysia
Bagheri & Pihie, 2010	Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences	Empirical	Malaysia
Beck et al., 2005	Journal of Economic Growth	Empirical	NA
Berisha & Pula, 2015	Academic Journal of Business, Administration, Law and Social Sciences	Conceptual	NA
Bianchi et al., 2015	International Journal of Business Performance Management	Empirical	Italy
Biggs & Shah, 2006	Journal of Banking & Finance	Empirical	SSA
Boter & Lundström, 2006	Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development	Empirical	Sweden
Brännback et al., 2015	Journal of Small Business Management	Empirical	SSA, USA
Simba & Thai, 2018	Journal of Small Business Management	Conceptual	NA
Headd & Kirchhoff, 2009	Journal of Small Business Management	Empirical	USA
Cant & Wiid, 2013	International Business & Economics Research Journal	Empirical	SA
Chen, 2007	Entrepreneurial Leadership and New Ventures	Empirical	Taiwan
Cocca & Alberti, 2002	International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management	Conceptual	NA
Dean & Ford, 2017	International Small Business Journal	Empirical	UK
Koryak et al., 2015	International Small Business Journal	Conceptual	NA
Dunne et al., 2016	Journal of Business Research	Empirical	USA
Franco & Matos, 2013	International Entrepreneur Management Journal	Empirical	Portugal
García-Vidal et al., 2019	Journal of Management and Production Engineering Review	Empirical	Ecuador
Gupta et al., 2004	Journal of Business Venturing	Empirical	SSA
Harrison & Burnard, 2019	International Review of Entrepreneurship	Conceptual	NA
Harrison et al., 2017	Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development	Empirical	Nigeria
Ishak et al., 2021	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Conceptual	NA

<i>Author and Date</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Nature of Articles Conceptual/Empirical</i>	<i>Country</i>
Klewitz & Hansen, 2013	Journal of Cleaner Production	Conceptual	NA
Kuratko, 2007	Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies	Conceptual	NA
Leitch et al., 2009	Action Learning: Research and Practice	Empirical	Ireland
Leitch et al., 2012	British Journal of Management	Conceptual	Ireland
Leitch & Volery, 2016	International Small Business Journal	Conceptual	NA
Mamman et al., 2018	Journal of Business Research	Conceptual	SSA
McCarthy et al., 2013	California Management Review	Empirical	Russia
Mgeni & Nayak, 2015	Journal of Entrepreneurship & Management	Empirical	Tanzania
Mishra & Misra, 2017	Procedia Computer Science	Empirical	India
Muriithi, 2017	European Journal of Research and Reflection in Management Sciences	Conceptual	Africa
Musambayi, 2018	Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research	Empirical	Kenya
Newman et al., 2018a	Journal of Business Research	Empirical	China
Paul et al., 2017	Journal of World Business	Empirical	No place
Rijkers et al., 2010	World Development	Empirical	Ethiopia
Roomi & Harrison, 2011	International Review of Entrepreneurship	Empirical	UK
Ruvio et al., 2010	The Leadership Quarterly	Empirical	Israel
Sakiru et al., 2013	International Journal of Business and Management	Empirical	Nigeria
Sawaeen & Ali, 2020	Management Science Letters	Empirical	Kuwait
Singh & Belwal, 2008	Gender in Management: An International Journal	Empirical	Ethiopia
Sitharam & Hoque, 2016	Journal of Problems and Perspectives in Management	Empirical	SA
Sklaveniti, 2017	International Small Business Journal	Conceptual	NA
Soomro et al., 2019	World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development	Empirical	Pakistan
Sandybayev, 2019	International Journal of Economics and Management	Empirical	UAE
Srinivas, 2013	International Journal of Engineering and Management Research	Empirical	India
Tambunan, 2019	Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research	Empirical	Indonesia
Vecchio, 2003	Human Resource Management Review	Conceptual	NA
Wakkee, 2015	The Journal of Entrepreneurship	Empirical	Netherlands
Wang et al., 2012	Asia Pacific Business Review	Empirical	China
Wright et al., 2015	International Small Business Journal	Conceptual	NA
Yang, 2018	Total Quality Management & Business Excellence	Empirical	Taiwan
Yukl, 2012	Academy of Management	Empirical	NA
Zainol et al., 2018	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Conceptual	Sydney

## Definitional Issues

One of the conceptual papers by Berisha and Pula (2015) identified inconsistencies in the use of definition criteria on micro, small, and medium enterprises. The identified

definitions were based on common characteristics of MSMEs, such as centralisation of decision making, level of formal managerial training and skills, personal relations and informality, access to resources, and market power (Cacciolatti & Lee, 2015). In this regard,



the Bolton report was the first formal attempt to define micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises based on their size. In addition, Cacciolatti and Lee (2015) classified enterprises as small, medium, or large.

The worldwide experience shows that MSMEs could be defined in terms of size, such as number of employees, total assets, annual turnover, and capital investments (Muriith, 2017). A study by Auciello (1975), and cited in the work of Muriith (2017), found more than 75 definitions in 75 countries. The main conclusion of such studies is that there is no common definition of MSMEs globally, and this in turn makes it difficult to develop cumulative knowledge of the MSMEs sector at the global level. In most jurisdictions, however, employment size is the most commonly used criteria for defining MSMEs (Ayyagari et al., 2003). For instance, OECD (2017) classifies micro enterprises as having 1 to 9 employees, small enterprises as having 10 to 49, and medium enterprises as having 50 to 249. The review further found that various bodies, such as international organisations, national government, and industries may adopt their respective definitions (Berisha & Pula, 2015). It is important to note the fact that variations in the definition of MSMEs across the countries could affect enterprise policy formulation and implementation on this context (Dababneh & Tukan, 2007).

Mamman et al. (2018) were researchers who worked on the African perspectives; they underlined the increasing acknowledgement of MSMEs' role in economic growth and in reducing unemployment. These authors recommended studies that focus on understanding the impacts of the MSMEs. Paul et al. (2017), with the focus on challenges the MSMEs face in exporting in the era of globalisation, identified the required skills and entrepreneurial leadership to succeed in such markets. The study by Simba and Thai (2018) found the vital importance of entrepreneurial leadership as a new style of managing and developing MSMEs. These authors suggest that it is time for future research to interrogate the connection between MSMEs and entrepreneurial leadership practices.

### **The Significance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**

MSMEs are the backbone of many economies globally. MSMEs contribute to generating employment, adding

value to the economy, innovation, and local generations (Dababneh & Tukan, 2007). Despite facing challenges of smallness in size, resource constraints, and the liability of newness, they can be considered as flexible, adaptable, and sources of entrepreneurial activities. Small and medium enterprises are considered as test beds for new innovation, bringing new products and services that can be scaled up to larger organisations and industry. According to Tassese (2002), as cited in Fjose et al., (2010), in most African countries, MSMEs contribute only 20% to the GDP, compared to the 60% contribution in developed countries. The International Trade Centre (2018) showed that MSMEs account for about half of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and 60-70 per cent employment. Compared to large firms, their expansion boosts employment, because they are more labour intensive than large enterprises (Beck et al., 2005). The World Economic Forum estimates that Africa's workforce will increase by a staggering 910 million people between 2010 and 2050, of which 830 million will be in Sub-Saharan Africa (International Trade Centre, 2018). Of this figure, a majority of the employment is likely to be created by the MSMEs, as they operate in all sectors, both formal and informal. In the case of Ethiopia, MSMEs create employment opportunities and a means to see the application of technologies (Rijkers et al., 2010). Managing the MSMEs helps in mobilising entrepreneurial initiatives and autonomy, while at the same time strengthening pluralistic and social emancipation processes (Singh & Belwal, 2008). The study of Ayyagari et al. (2007), based on the data from 76 countries, reported a significant variation in MSMEs' size and their economic activities by levels of economic development. They reported that MSMEs in developed countries achieve superior performance and make strong contributions to employment and GDP. One study in the context of Egypt reported that less attention was given by scholars to study the drivers and practices that enhance the MSMEs' competitive capabilities and success (Aboelmaged, 2018). Financial literacy, religion, and culture were identified as factors that play an important role in the performance of small enterprises.

### **MSMEs' Challenges**

Micro, small, and medium enterprises' failure and related problems have been covered by many articles. These

studies argue that in the context of a highly competitive environment, failures of small businesses are more rapid than their successes. The failure rate of MSMEs among African countries remains very high; five out of seven new businesses fail in their first year (Muriithi, 2017). Studies also showed that growing small enterprises would be a great challenge. In the case of Nigeria, Adisa et al. (2014) identified four reasons for the failure of MSMEs: lack of proper management skills, lack of adequate funding, inability to distinguish business capital from personal money, and lack of crucial infrastructural facilities. Further, these authors showed that thousands of small businesses start every year and significant numbers of them fail before or by the first year of their operation (Adisa et al., 2014). Because of the alarming failure rate, the expected benefits, such as an increase in employment and contribution to the economy, remain immaterialised (Adisa et al., 2014). These findings imply the need for a better understanding of the enterprise life cycle and its impact on survivability and performance (Headd & Kirchhoff, 2009). The study by Arham et al. (2013) showed that a large proportion of the small business failures are attributed to internal factors of the firm, such as poor leadership and lack of management.

## Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Leadership

### Entrepreneurship

Many researchers and practitioners may agree that leadership is a flexible developmental process (Zakeer Ahmed et al., 2016). It has an increasingly fundamental role in the MSMEs' success and effectiveness (Franco & Matos, 2013), influencing followers to explore and exploit

opportunities (Vecchio, 2003). When entrepreneurship is integrated with leadership, or the other way round, it becomes entrepreneurial leadership (Zaech & Baldegger, 2017).

Entrepreneurship is widely defined as “situations in which new goods, services, raw materials, markets and organizing methods can be introduced through the formation of new means-ends relationships” (Sutter et al., 2018). It is an integrated concept that permeates an individual's business in an innovative manner (Kuratko, 2011). Many countries in the world are actively seeking ways and means to promote entrepreneurship (Singh & Belwal, 2008). It is more cogent and parsimonious to view entrepreneurship as simply a type of leadership that occurs in a specific setting taking certain manifestations of leadership (Vecchio, 2003). Entrepreneurship is leadership within a narrow and specific context, and it is a unique leadership situation (Vecchio, 2003).

Scholars are fundamentally concerned with three sets of research questions about entrepreneurship: (1) why, when, and how opportunities for the creation of goods and services come into existence; (2) why, when, and how some people and not others discover and exploit these opportunities; and (3) why, when, and how different modes of actions are used to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Cunningham and Lischeron (1991b) extensively investigated different approaches of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial leadership in relation to the different fields of leadership disciplines. They identified six schools of thought for understanding the entrepreneurial process (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991b). These are described in Table 3.

**Table 3: Entrepreneurship Schools of Thought**

The “Great Person” School of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurs are born not made because of natural characteristics they possess (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991).</li> <li>• They are endowed with certain traits and qualities that differentiate them from other mortals.</li> <li>• Main traits: energy, perseverance, physical attractiveness, vision, single mindedness, popularity and sociability, knowledge, judgment and fluency of speech, diplomacy, and decisiveness (Ibid).</li> </ul>
The Psychological Characteristics School of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on personality factors. It sees entrepreneurs as having unique values and attitudes towards work and life (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991b; Lachman, 1980).</li> <li>• Certain individual values and needs are necessary preconditions for entrepreneurship, and these conditions are learned at an early stage of life.</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship cannot be inculcated at adulthood.</li> </ul>



The Classical School of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not consider traits or behaviours as determinants of entrepreneurship or factors that make a successful entrepreneur.</li> <li>• Innovation, creativity, or discovery are the key factors (Zainol et al., 2018b).</li> <li>• Critique: focuses on attaining entrepreneurs' own needs and wants without giving due attention to other stakeholders (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991).</li> </ul>
The Management School of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An entrepreneur is a person who organises or manages business undertakings and assumes the risk for the sake of profit.</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship is a series of learning activities which focus on central functions of managing a firm.</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship can be likened to management, which can be learned in school and training institutes (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991).</li> </ul>
The Leadership School of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurs need to be skilled to appeal to others to join the cause (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991).</li> <li>• There exists a mutual benefit for the leader and the followers, to contribute their best in achieving an enterprise's success (Zainol et al., 2018b).</li> <li>• Entrepreneur is a leader able to define a vision of what is possible and attract people to rally around that vision, and transform it into reality (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991).</li> </ul>
The Intrapreneurship School of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It evolved in response to the lack of innovativeness and competitiveness within the organisations (Cunningham &amp; Lischeron, 1991).</li> <li>• Innovation can be achieved in existing organisations by encouraging people to work as entrepreneurs in semi-autonomous units (Zainol et al., 2018b).</li> </ul>

## Entrepreneurial Leadership

Gupta et al. (2004) define entrepreneurial leadership as “leadership that creates visionary scenarios that are used to assemble and mobilize a ‘supporting cast’ of participants who become committed by clear vision to the discovery and exploitation of strategic value creation”. Kuratko (2007b) opined that EL is the leadership style of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is needed for all types of organisations.

One might question whether entrepreneurial leadership is truly a new style of leadership, an escape from management, or both. Since the 1980s, major corporations have lost their competitiveness because of their emphasis on management rather than leadership (Fernald et al., 2005). Since organisations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century continue to face unprecedented changes because of advances in new technology and a turbulent environment, organisational success and adaptation become subject to exercising entrepreneurial leadership (Gupta et al., 2004). Entrepreneurial leadership (EL) is thus a new type of leadership that attracts a lot of attention from both academicians and practitioners (Abubakar et al., 2018). These are leaders who are not emphasising conventional approaches to leadership, but leadership that handles uncertain environments (Gupta et al., 2004). Indeed, EL is a style that links entrepreneurship and leadership.

According to Kuratko (2007b), leadership should be perceived as a constituent of entrepreneurship, in the sense that an entrepreneurial mind-set and behaviours are essential for effective leadership. Cogliser and Brigham (2004) adopt an approach in the middle and argue that this field of study emerged from the theoretical overlap between the fields of entrepreneurship and leadership due to historical and conceptual parallels. Roomi & Harrison (2011) stated EL is a fusion of these two constructs: having and communicating the vision to engage teams to identify, develop, and take advantage of opportunities to gain a competitive advantage. Accordingly, Harrison et al. (2015) underlined a common thread running through their focus on the traits, characteristics, and behaviours of entrepreneurial leaders and leadership rooted in entrepreneurial literature.

In terms of characteristics or attributes, Gupta et al. (2004) identified characteristics such as innovation, vision, risk-taking, pro-activeness, strategic initiative, problem solving, strategic planning, and decision making that connect leadership and entrepreneurship and that influence organisational performance (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004; El-Annan, 2013; Fernald et al., 2005). These attributes assist entrepreneurial leaders in achieving the goals that distinguish entrepreneurial leadership from other leadership styles: recognising and

exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities (Brännback et al., 2015). Dean and Ford (2017) identified new meanings associated with the notion of entrepreneurial leadership. Their empirical research generates three themes relating to entrepreneurial leadership: making a difference in the lives of peoples, passion, and valorising masculinity for inhibiting performance. Leitch and Volery (2017), based on the review, conceptualised EL in four ways. First, the needs of entrepreneurial leadership in a wide range of entrepreneurial and small enterprises contexts. Second, the scope of analysis on individual entrepreneurial leaders, entrepreneurial leadership team, and inter-organisational dynamics. Third, how to understand EL in terms of culture and across countries, and fourth, they identified how scholars consider studies based on more processes and relational views. When seen in a synthesised manner, EL can be conceptualised in relation to setting clear goals, creating opportunities, and empowering people (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991b); high risk-taking behaviour, openness, and the need for achievement (Nicholson, 1998); opportunity-and advantage-seeking behaviours (Ireland et al., 2003); and idea generation, structuring, and promotion (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004). Entrepreneurial leadership thus creates visionary scenarios (Gupta et al., 2004), enables opportunity identification (Koryak et al., 2015), and sustains innovation and adaptation to turbulent and uncertain environments (Surie & Ashley, 2008). According to Brännback et al. (2015), EL influences and directs the performance of group members towards the achievement of organisational goals.

The review and synthesis of leadership by Koryak et al. (2015) showed that leaders in MSMEs have greater discretion than leaders in established organisations. Their leadership is likely to have a greater impact on firm behaviours and outcomes. Though the above contention is still valid, scholars like Leitch et al. (2012) argue that entrepreneurial leadership's human and social capital dimensions in small firms are far less well-understood. Their argument suggests that entrepreneurial leadership efficacy in creating and exploiting opportunities for small firms can be enhanced with the endowment of human and social capital.

Many scholars consider entrepreneurial leadership (EL) as a distinctive leadership style applicable to both small ventures and large organisations (Gupta et al., 2004; Koryak et al., 2015; Surie & Ashley, 2008; Yang, 2018).

It is seen as a new way of thinking and acting, a business worldview and decision-making logic fundamentally different from non-entrepreneurial leaders (Greenberg et al., 2011). There are several reasons to consider EL as a new paradigm that straddles the discipline or practice of entrepreneurship and leadership. From an ontological perspective, numerous scholars understand the entrepreneur to be a leader by definition (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991a; Fernald et al., 2005).

EL involves more than personal traits or styles; it focuses on changing and inculcating values, skills of setting clear goals, and creating opportunities (Zainol et al., 2018a). These include the skill of empowering people, preserving the organisational intimacy, and developing a human resource system (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991a). In general, EL can be seen as the best approach, as it possesses the qualities of entrepreneurial individuals as well as entrepreneurial organisations; it not only possesses the qualities of entrepreneurs, but also has the ability to set vision and motivate people towards attaining it (Zainol et al., 2018a).

Entrepreneurial leadership involves a new model of thought and action, which begins with a fundamentally different worldview of business and applies a different decision-making logic. Entrepreneurial leaders have developed unique mental models that support the power of human action to create and build a better world (Greenberg et al., 2011). This requires understanding how to handle and deal with the risk, uncertainty, and ambiguity faced by all entrepreneurial organisations (Roomi & Harrison, 2011). According to Abubakar et al. (2018), what distinguishes entrepreneurial leadership includes the willingness to take calculated risks, the formulation of effective venture teams, and the creative skills to marshal the needed resources. EL competences in either new ventures or established organisations is demonstrated through specific leadership capabilities required to lead successfully competitive and challenging activities (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004; Fernald et al., 2005; Gupta et al., 2004; Yang, 2018).

Currently the concept of EL is recognised as distinctive, which takes the specificities of the exercise of leadership into consideration in both MSMEs and in innovative corporations evolving in a global, hypercompetitive environment (Pietersen, 2009). Along these lines, the

concept of EL captures leadership behaviours that influence and direct group members towards goals that include the recognition and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities (Brännback et al., 2015). Researchers like Leitch et al. (2012) conducted a quantitative research to evaluate a leadership development programme for small enterprises' effectiveness. Their findings are interesting in that they show that: 1) people and organisations benefit from a carefully designed and delivered leadership programme; 2) organisational benefits are achievable in a small business context; and 3) both entrepreneurship and leadership theories are useful.

### EL and Other Leadership Styles

The conceptualisation of entrepreneurial leadership is different from other leadership styles. The construct is closely aligned with two other leadership styles: transformational and creativity-enhancing leadership styles (Brännback et al., 2015), but within its focus on entrepreneurship as a phenomenon in organisational and group contexts, entrepreneurial leadership shares similarities with the entrepreneurial orientation construct (Brännback et al., 2015). More of it is change management, creative thinking, opportunity seeking, and innovativeness (Bagheri & Pihie, 2010; Fernald et al., 2005). According to Gupta et al. (2004), entrepreneurial leadership has some similarities with transformational leadership in a way that both leader types consider the higher needs of followers and evoke their performance. As Gupta et al. (2004) stated, entrepreneurial leadership formulates a clear vision of the future to be enacted by the followers and then shoulders the burden of responsibility for being wrong about the future. As Leitch and Volery (2017b) show, despite the apparent fragmentation around the concept of EL, considerable progress has been made over the past 20 years to consolidate the knowledge.

The foregoing findings from the systematic review show that EL is positioned at the nexus of the leadership and entrepreneurship fields, and suggest that both fields benefit from mutual cross-fertilisation while studying entrepreneurial leadership (Leitch & Volery, 2017b). However, our knowledge of how EL influences the performance of the MSMEs and to what extent business owners possess EL attributes (Brännback et al., 2015), and its effects on MSMEs are very limited (Zaech &

Baldegger, 2017). Furthermore, the empirical research findings on the association between leadership and innovative behaviour of employees are inconclusive (Bagheri, 2017).

### Entrepreneurial Leadership and MSMEs' Effectiveness

One of the key questions for the management of MSMEs is how they can optimally use their available scarce resources and compete successfully in the competitive markets that include large operatives. It is time to focus on studying as they face serious challenges in the area of leadership because of combined constraints such as underdeveloped human, financial, or organisational resources (Muriith, 2017). Some studies examined the status of research knowledge on the link between MSMEs' effectiveness/performance and leadership. A study from Portugal concluded the suitability of transformational leadership to MSMEs' growth and competitiveness (Franco & Matos, 2013). These authors also indicated that very little work has been done on micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises' effectiveness. Brännback et al. (2015) opined that EL lacks conceptual development and adequate tools to measure leaders' entrepreneurial characteristics and behaviours. Chen (2007) investigates the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and a new venture's innovative capability, and finds that when leader entrepreneurs have higher risk-taking, proactiveness, and innovativeness characteristics, they can stimulate their entrepreneurial team to be more creative. The seminal study of Gupta and colleagues (2004) is informative, as it suggests a notion of EL having universal appeal across cultures and contributes to societal differences. These authors' analysis shows that organisations embedded in high-power distance culture are less likely to endorse EL compared to organisations in egalitarian societies; and access to knowledge, technology, and finance moderate the effectiveness of entrepreneurial leadership.

Entrepreneurial leadership has been identified as an important process for both opportunity-seeking and advantage-seeking behaviours (McCarthy et al., 2010b), and enhances organisational effectiveness (Mishra & Misra, 2017). Mishra and Misra (2017), for example, reported that EL has a high degree of creative integration, and helps people mobilise their resources and energies

for joint discovery. They concluded that organisational effectiveness depends on EL attributes inherent in the workforce (Mishra & Misra, 2017). These attributes are directed to the discovery of opportunities for creative integration of the network of people and resources.

Given the fact that MSMEs play a critical role in socio-economic development, how does EL improve the MSMEs' effectiveness and their contribution to society? This is an important question to address in this review, so that we identify the mechanisms through which EL enables the effectiveness of the MSMEs. Scholars like Madanchian and Taherdoost (2019) underscored the importance of a leader's ability to inspire, facilitate, motivate, influence, be accountable, create a positive attitude, and monitor the performance of subordinates. A review by Zainol et al. (2018a) established a linkage between EL attributes and MSMEs' performance. These authors identified vision, innovation, pro-activeness, and risk-taking as basic attributes of EL, of which vision and innovation have the most significant effect on performance of MSMEs (Zainol et al., 2018a).

The existing studies demonstrated that EL has a significant positive effect on employees' innovation (Bagheri, 2017), small-firm innovation and organisational success (Dunne et al., 2016), and maintain favourable earnings and manage financial resources (Yukl, 2008). Sawaeen and Ali (2020) reported that entrepreneurial leaders' knowledge, experience, and interpreting abilities have a positive and direct influence on innovation capacity, and that organisations would be able to implement innovative products and processes (Dunne et al., 2016). Hence, the critical factors ensuring the success of an innovation are knowledge and effectiveness of entrepreneurial leadership in a firm. In terms of attributes, the entrepreneurial leaders' vision is found to be vital for entrepreneurial processes in both commercial and social ventures (Ruvio et al., 2010).

MSMEs' effectiveness could be seen in terms of growth (revenue, profit), and return on investment or stock. Indicators such as the ability to offer innovative products and services, increase in employment, increase in resources, sustained increase in market share or customer base, and having satisfied/motivated employees can be used to gauge MSMEs' effectiveness.

## Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications

This article sought to review the research knowledge on the link between entrepreneurial leadership (EL) and MSMEs' effectiveness using a systematic literature review protocol. The review found that the MSMEs play a critical role in the socio-economic development of any country around the world, but also face overwhelming challenges that threaten their sustainability, survivability, and growth. The review reinforced the findings of previous studies that showed the vital importance of MSMEs to economic growth, employment, wealth creation, innovation, and entrepreneurship. The review further validated the fact that the MSMEs' sustained performance is subject to the availability and accessibility of human capital (set of knowledge and skills), financial resources, social capital, and munificent business environment. Another important finding is related to the interface between entrepreneurship and leadership discipline and practice. This SLR-established entrepreneurial leadership can provide a unique/distinctive approach and mechanism that enables MSMEs' effectiveness during a time of unprecedented turbulence and volatility in environments. However, such mechanisms, the review found, were not uniform across the reviewed literatures; some literature emphasise on leaders' vision, goal setting, and effective communication. Other studies identify entrepreneurial leaders' creativity, innovation, risk-taking, motivation of employees, and motivational behaviours. Some ambiguities still remain in terms of the leaders' mindset, personal traits and behaviours, and what makes EL distinctive when compared to other styles of leadership, such as transformational, strategic, and team leadership. This shows that we do not yet have commonly agreed EL characteristics (attributes) that can be used universally; we suspect that this may hinder cumulative knowledge development in this area.

Our review on entrepreneurial leadership showed that the research knowledge on this issue has been evolving, and that its relationship with the effectiveness of MSMEs' is yet to be established with rigorous empirical data. We also have less knowledge of the effects of EL on African MSMEs, as this continent has been rarely studied. Thus, there is an urge to operationalise the concepts of EL and



the MSMEs' effectiveness that allows us to have valid and reliable instruments for future studies.

## Limitations

As is the case with all other studies, this review paper has its own limitations. The first limitation is the relatively small number of journal articles reviewed; this may limit the quality of the reported findings. Second, though synthesised, the review findings come from various journals of differing quality and study contexts; hence, precaution should be taken when interpreting the results.

Further, the review identified a gap in our knowledge that requires further research. These include: 1) the main EL attributes that can be useful across the contexts; 2) how and why EL differs across cultures or levels of economic development; 3) the EL attributes that have more positive impacts on the sustainability and performance of MSMEs, and in what contexts; 4) the factors that moderate the effect of EL on MSMEs' performance/effectiveness; 5) whether the developing or emerging economy context differently influence the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and MSMEs; and 6) how we can develop and deliver effective entrepreneurial leadership programmes.

## References

- Aboelmaged, M. (2018). The drivers of sustainable manufacturing practices in Egyptian SMEs and their impact on competitive capabilities: A PLS-SEM model. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 175, 207-221.
- Abubakar, L. S., Zainol, F. A., & Binti Wan Daud, W. N. (2018). Entrepreneurial leadership and performance of small and medium sized enterprises: A structural equation modelling approach. *Journal for International Business and Entrepreneurship Development*, 11(2), 163-186.
- Adisa, T., Abdulraheem, I., & Mordi, C. (2014). The characteristics and challenges of small businesses in Africa: An exploratory study of Nigerian small business owners. *Economic Insights-Trends and Challenges*, 11(4), 1-14.
- Agyapong, D. (2010). Micro, small and medium enterprises' activities, income level and poverty reduction in Ghana – A synthesis of related literature. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(12), 196-205.
- Agyei, S. K. (2018). Culture, financial literacy, and SME performance in Ghana. *Cogent Economics and Finance*, 6(1), 1-16.
- Arham, A. F., Boucher, C., & Muenjohn, N. (2013). Leadership and entrepreneurial success: A study of SMEs in Malaysia. *World Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(5), 117-130.
- Ayyagari, M., Beck, T., & Demirguc-Kunt, A. (2003). Small and medium enterprises across the globe. In *The World Bank* (Vol. 29, Issue August). doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-006-9002-5
- Ayyagari, M., Beck, T., & Demirgüç-Kunt, A. (2007). Small and medium enterprises across the Globe. *Small Business Economics*, 1-36.
- Bagheri, A. (2017). The impact of entrepreneurial leadership on innovation work behavior and opportunity recognition in high-technology SMEs. *Journal of High Technology Management Research*, 28(2), 159-166.
- Bagheri, A., & Pihie, Z. A. L. (2010). Entrepreneurial leadership learning: In search of missing links. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7(2), 470-479.
- Beck, T., Demirguc-Kunt, A., & Levine, R. (2005). SMEs, growth, and poverty: Cross-country evidence. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 10, 199-229.
- Berisha, G., & Pula, J. S. (2015). Defining small and medium enterprises: A critical review. *Academic Journal of Business, Administration, Law and Social Science*, 1(1), 16-28. doi:https://doi.org/ISSN 2410-3918
- Bianchi, C., Cosenz, F., & Marinković, M. (2015). Designing dynamic performance management systems to foster SME competitiveness according to a sustainable development perspective: Empirical evidences from a case-study. *International Journal of Business Performance Management*, 16(1), 84-108.
- Biggs, T., & Shah, M. K. (2006). African SMES, networks, and manufacturing performance. *Journal of Banking and Finance*, 30(11), 3043-3066.
- Boter, H., & Lundström, A. (2006). SME perspectives on business support services the role of company size, industry and location. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 12(2), 244-258.
- Brännback, M., Renko, M., El Tarabishy, A., & Carsrud, A. L. (2015). Understanding and measuring entrepreneurial leadership style. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53(1), 54-74.
- Cacciolatti, L., & Lee, S. H. (2015). Entrepreneurial marketing for SMEs. In *Entrepreneurial Marketing for SMEs*. doi:https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137532589



- Cant, M. C., & Wiid, J. A. (2013). Establishing the challenges affecting South African SMEs. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)*, 12(6), 707.
- Chen, M.-H. (2007). Entrepreneurial leadership and new ventures: Creativity in entrepreneurial teams. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 16(3), 239-249.
- Cocca, P., & Alberti, M. (2010). A framework to assess performance measurement systems in SMEs. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 59(2), 186-200.
- Cogliser, C. C., & Brigham, K. H. (2004). The intersection of leadership and entrepreneurship: Mutual lessons to be learned. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15, 771-799.
- Cronin, P., Ryan, F., & Coughlan, M. (2008). Undertaking a literature review: A step-by-step approach. *British Journal of Nursing*, 17(1), 38-43.
- Crossan, M. M., & Apaydin, M. (2010a). A multi-dimensional framework of organizational innovation: A systematic review of the literature. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00880.x>
- Crossan, M. M., & Apaydin, M. (2010b). A multi-dimensional framework of organizational innovation: A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(6), 1154-1191.
- Cunningham, J. B., & Lischeron, J. (1991a). Defining entrepreneurship. *Journal of Small Business Management*, January, 45-61.
- Cunningham, J. B., & Lischeron, J. (1991b). *Defining entrepreneurship* (pp. 45-61).
- Dababneh, R., & Tukan, F. (2007). *Booklet of standardized small and medium enterprises definition* (Issue August).
- Dean, H., & Ford, J. (2017). Discourses of entrepreneurial leadership: Exposing myths and exploring new approaches. *International Small Business Journal*, 35(2), 178-196.
- Dunne, T. C., Aaron, J. R., McDowell, W. C., Urban, D. J., & Geho, P. R. (2016). The impact of leadership on small business innovativeness. *Journal of Business Research*, 1-6.
- El-Annan, S. H. (2013). Innovation, proactive, and vision are three integrated dimensions between leadership and entrepreneurship. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 1(12), 148-163. Retrieved from <http://www.ejbss.com/recent.aspx>
- Fernald, L. W., Solomon, G. T., & Tarabishy, A. (2005). A new paradigm: Entrepreneurial leadership. *Southern Business Review*, 30(2), 1-10. Retrieved from [http://search.proquest.com/docview/228226067?accountid=10382%5Cnhttp://link.library.curtin.edu.au/openurl??url\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&genre=article&sid=ProQ:ProQ:abiglobal&atitle=A+New+Paradigm:+Entrepreneurial+Leadershi](http://search.proquest.com/docview/228226067?accountid=10382%5Cnhttp://link.library.curtin.edu.au/openurl??url_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&genre=article&sid=ProQ:ProQ:abiglobal&atitle=A+New+Paradigm:+Entrepreneurial+Leadershi)
- Fjose, S., Grünfeld, L. A., & Green, C. (2010). *SMEs and growth in Sub-Saharan Africa – Identifying SME roles and obstacles to SME growth*. MENON Business Economics, MENON Publication No. 14/2010, Oslo, Norway.
- Fontana, A., & Musa, S. (2017). The impact of entrepreneurial leadership on innovation management and its measurement validation. *International Journal of Innovation Science*, 9(1), 2-19. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIS-05-2016-0004>
- Franco, M., & Matos, P. G. (2013). Leadership styles in SMEs: A mixed-method approach. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*.
- Freeman, D. (2014). Emotional intelligence and resilience as predictors of leadership in school administrators. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(3), 400-41. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1002/jls>
- Freeman, D., & Siegfried, R. L. (2015). Emotional intelligence and resilience as predictors of leadership in school administrators. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(4), 35-39. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1002/jls>
- García-Vidal, G., Sánchez-Rodríguez, A., Pérez-Campdesuñer, R., & Martínez-Vivar, R. (2019). Entrepreneurial leadership in SMEs: Perceptions of owner – managers vs. employees. *Management and Production Engineering Review*, 10(3), 97-110.
- Greenberg, D., McKone-Sweet, K., & Wilson, H. J. (2011). *The new entrepreneurial leader: Developing leaders who shape social and economic opportunity*. Berrett-Koehler.
- Gupta, V., Macmillan, I. C., & Surie, G. (2004). Entrepreneurial leadership: Developing and measuring a cross-cultural construct. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 19, 241-260.
- Harrison, C., Burnard, K., & Paul, S. (2018). Entrepreneurial leadership in a developing economy: A skill-based analysis. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 25(3), 521-548.
- Harrison, C., Burnard, K., & Paul, S. (2019). Entrepreneurial leadership: A systematic literature review. *International Review of Entrepreneurship*, 14(2), 235-264.

- Harrison, R., Leitch, C., & McAdam, M. (2015). Breaking glass: Toward a gendered analysis of entrepreneurial leadership. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53(3), 693-713.
- Headd, B., & Kirchhoff, B. (2009). The growth, decline and survival of small businesses: An exploratory study of life cycles. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 47(4), 531-550.
- International Trade Centre. (2018). *Promoting SME Competitiveness in Africa Data for De-risking Investment*.
- Ireland, R. D., Hitt, M. A., & Sirmon, D. G. (2003). A model of strategic entrepreneurship: The construct and its dimensions. *Journal of Management*, 29(6), 963-989.
- Ishak, S., Rafli, A., Omar, C., & Manaf, A. A. (2021). Entrepreneurial leadership in the micro and small enterprises (MSEs) research context: A literature review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(5), 397-403.
- Karol, R. A. (2015). Emotional intelligence and resilience as predictors of leadership in school administrators. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(4), 30-34. doi:https://doi.org/10.1002/jls
- Klewitz, J., & Hansen, E. G. (2013). Sustainability-oriented innovation of SMEs: A systematic review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 1-19.
- Koryak, O., Mole, K. F., Lockett, A., Hayton, J. C., Ucbasaran, D., & Hodgkinson, G. P. (2015). Entrepreneurial leadership, capabilities and firm growth. *International Small Business Journal*, 33(1), 89-105.
- Kuratko, D. F. (2007). Entrepreneurial leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Guest editor's perspective. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 13(4), 1-11.
- Kuratko, D. F. (2011). Entrepreneurship theory, process, and practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 13(1), 8-17.
- Lachman, R. (1980). Toward measurement of entrepreneurial tendencies. *Management International Review*, 20(2), 108-116. Retrieved from <http://otago.summon.serialssolutions.com/link/0/eLvHCXMwY2BQsExJsJQzTTNIMk9ONE8BAsNkxRgGWgKLC3TjMFxvSE2iCGV5m6iDNJuriHOHrqwUjE-JScn3hBYugKbGYZiDLyJoFXfeSXg3WEpADy3Gw8>
- Leitch, C. M., McMullan, C., & Harrison, R. T. (2012). The development of entrepreneurial leadership: The role of human, social and institutional Capital. *British Journal of Management*.
- Leitch, C. M., McMullan, C., & Harrison, R. T. (2009). Leadership development in SMEs: An action learning approach. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 6(3), 243-263.
- Leitch, C. M., & Volery, T. (2017a). Entrepreneurial leadership: Insights and directions. *International Small Business Journal*, 35(2), 147-156.
- Leitch, C. M., & Volery, T. (2017b). Entrepreneurial leadership: Insights and directions. *International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship*, 35(2), 147-156. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242616681397>
- Madanchian, M., & Taherdoost, H. (2019). Assessment of leadership effectiveness dimensions in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). *Procedia Manufacturing*, 32, 1035-1042. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.promfg.2019.02.318
- Mamman, A., Bawole, J., Agbebi, M., & Alhassan, A. R. (2018). SME policy formulation and implementation in Africa: Unpacking assumptions as opportunity for research direction. *Journal of Business Research*, 1-12.
- McCarthy, D. J., Puffer, S. M., & Darda, S. V. (2010a). Convergence in entrepreneurial leadership style: Evidence from Russia. *California Management Review*, 53(1), 154-170.
- McCarthy, D. J., Puffer, S. M., & Darda, S. V. (2010b). Convergence in entrepreneurial leadership style: Evidence from Russia. *California Management Review*, 52(4), 48-72.
- Mgeni, T. O., & Nayak, P. (2015). Impacts of entrepreneurial leadership style on business performance of female owned SMEs in Dar es salaam, Tanzania. *Journal of Entrepreneurship & Management*, 4(2), 40-50.
- Mishra, P., & Misra, R. K. (2017). Entrepreneurial leadership and organizational effectiveness: A comparative study of executives and non-executives. *Procedia Computer Science*, 122, 71-78.
- Muriithi, S. M. (2017). African small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contributions, challenges and solutions. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Management Sciences*, 5(1), 2056-5992.
- Musambayi, N. J. (2018). Leadership and firm entrepreneurial performance in county governments in Kenya. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 8(1).
- Newman, A., Tse, H. H. M., Schwarz, G., & Nielsen, I. (2018). The effects of employees' creative self-efficacy on innovative behavior: The role of entrepreneurial

- leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, 89(April), 1-9.
- Nicholson, N. (1998). Personality and entrepreneurial leadership: A study of the heads of the UK's most successful independent companies. *European Management Journal*, 16(5), 529-539.
- OECD. (2017, June). Enhancing the contributions of SMEs in a global and digitalised economy. Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level.
- Okoli, C., & Schabram, K. (2010). A guide to conducting a systematic literature review of information systems research. *Sprouts: Working Papers on Information Systems*, 10(26), 10-26.
- Paul, J., Parthasarathy, S., & Gupta, P. (2017). Exporting challenges of SMEs: A review and future research agenda. *Journal of World Business*, 52(3), 327-342.
- Pietersen, E. (2009). Entrepreneurial leadership. *Leadership in the African Context*, 4792, 247-277.
- Rijkers, B., Ruggeri Laderchi, C., & Teal, F. (2010). Who benefits from promoting small enterprises? Some empirical evidence from Ethiopia. *World Development*, 38(4), 523-540.
- Roomi, M., & Harrison, P. (2011). Entrepreneurial Leadership: What is it and how should it be taught? *International Review of Entrepreneurship*, 9(3), 1-44.
- Ruvio, A., Rosenblatt, Z., & Hertz-Lazarowitz, R. (2010). Entrepreneurial leadership vision in nonprofit vs. for-profit organizations. *Leadership Quarterly*, 21, 144-158.
- Sakiru, O. K., D'Silva, J. L., Othman, J., Silong, A. D., & Busayo, A. T. (2013). Leadership styles and job satisfaction among employees in small and medium enterprises. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8(13), 34-41.
- Sandybayev, A. (2019). Impact of effective entrepreneurial leadership style on organizational performance: Critical review. *International Journal of Economics and Management*, 1(1), 47-55.
- Sawaeen, F. A. A., & Ali, K. A. M. (2020). The impact of entrepreneurial leadership and learning orientation on organizational performance of SMEs: The mediating role of innovation capacity. *Management Science Letters*, 10(2), 369-380.
- Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *The Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), 217-226.
- Siddaway, A., Wood, A. M., & Hedges, L. V. (2019). How to do a systematic review: A best practice guide for conducting and reporting narrative reviews, meta-analyses, and meta-syntheses. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 1-50.
- Simba, A., & Thai, M. T. T. (2018). Advancing entrepreneurial leadership as a practice in MSME management and development. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(S2), 397-416. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12481>
- Singh, G., & Belwal, R. (2008). Entrepreneurship and SMEs in Ethiopia: Evaluating the role, prospects and problems faced by women in this emergent sector. *Gender in Management*, 23(2), 120-136.
- Sitharam, S., & Hoque, M. (2016). Factors affecting the performance of small and medium enterprises in KwaZulu. *Journal of Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 14(2-2), 277-288.
- Sklaveniti, C. (2017). Processes of entrepreneurial leadership: Co-acting creativity and direction in the emergence of new SME ventures. *International Small Business Journal*, 35(2), 197-213.
- Soomro, B. A., Shah, N., & Mangi, S. (2019). Factors affecting the entrepreneurial leadership in small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of Pakistan: An empirical evidence. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 15(1), 31-44.
- Srinivas, K. T. (2013). Role of micro, small and medium enterprises in inclusive growth. *International Journal of Engineering and Management Research*, 3(4), 57-61.
- Surie, G., & Ashley, A. (2008). Integrating pragmatism and ethics in entrepreneurial leadership for sustainable value creation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 81(1), 235-246.
- Sutter, C., Bruton, G. D., & Chen, J. (2018). Entrepreneurship as a solution to extreme poverty: A review and future research directions. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 1-18. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2018.06.003>
- Tambunan, T. (2019). Recent evidence of the development of micro, small and medium enterprises in Indonesia. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 9(1).
- Tranfield, D., Denyer, D., & Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence – Informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14(3), 207-222.

- Vecchio, R. P. (2003). Entrepreneurship and leadership: Common trends and common threads. *Human Resource Management Review*, 13, 303-327.
- Wakkee, I. (2015). Effective growth paths for SMEs. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 24(2), 169-185.
- Wang, C. L., Tee, D. D., & Ahmed, P. K. (2012). Entrepreneurial leadership and context in Chinese firms: A tale of two Chinese private enterprises. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 18(4), 505-530.
- Wright, M., Roper, S., Hart, M., & Carter, S. (2015). Joining the dots: Building the evidence base for SME growth policy. *International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship*, 33(1), 3-11.
- Yang, C.-C. (2018). The effectiveness analysis of the practices in five quality management stages for SMEs. *Total Quality Management and Business Excellence*, 31, 9-10.
- Yukl, G. (2008). How leaders influence organizational effectiveness. *Leadership Quarterly*, 19(6), 708-722.
- Yukl, G. (2012). Effective leadership behavior: What we know and what questions need more attention. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 66-85.
- Zaech, S., & Baldegger, U. (2017). Leadership in start-ups. *International Small Business Journal*, 35(2), 157-177. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242616676883>
- Zainol, F. A., Daud, W. N. W., Abubakar, L. S., Shaari, H., & Halim, H. A. (2018b). A linkage between entrepreneurial leadership and SMEs performance: An integrated review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(4), 104-118.
- Zakeer Ahmed, K., Allah, N., & Irfanullah, K. (2016). Leadership theories and styles: A literature review. *Journal of Resources Development and Management*, 16(January), 1-7.