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Effect of Entrepreneurial Leadership on MSME's growth in Zamfara state

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ABSTRACT
This research work aimed to investigate theeffect of Entrepreneurial Leadership on MSME's growth in Zamfara state. Specifically, the study examined the effect of entrepreneurial innovation trait, entrepreneurial risk taking, technical leadership trait, psychological leadership trait and ethical leadership threat on MSME's growth in Zamfara state. The study employed quantitative research approach and in particular survey research design. Data was collected from a sample size of 300 respondents that are MSME's owners in Zamfara state, using structured questionnaire. Structural equation modellingwere used for both the measurement and structural models, it was also used to validate and confirmed the hypotheses relationships. The study finding revealed that there is a significant statistical relationship between the entrepreneurial innovation trait and MSME growth in Zamfara State, equally confirming that there is no positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial risk-taking and MSME growth in the state. The study also stated that there is a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial technical leadership traits and MSME growth. It also stated that there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial psychological leadership traits and MSME growth in the state and there is a significant negative relationship between entrepreneurial ethical leadership traits and MSME growth in Zamfara State.
The state should establishment of innovation hubs or centers of excellence where MSME leaders can collaborate, experiment with new ideas, and accessing resources for innovation should be prioritized in the state.
Keyword: Entrepreneurial, Leadership, innovation, psychological, risk-taking& MSME

I. INTRODUCTION

Micro Small and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) are crucial to national economies in many developing nations, especially those in Africa (Haroon and Shariff, 2016). They engaged in the creation of job opportunities and the encouragement of technological innovation, MSMEs play a significant role in a nation's economic growth. In addition, MSMEs support entrepreneurship and act as suppliers to major industry players. They are crucial in achieving inclusive and balanced growth, acting as both a catalyst and a major driver. MSMEs are essential to the private sector's operations and play a key role in the process of economic transformation. Universally, MSMEs act as growth stabilizers when growth is negative (Yunoh and Ali 2015). Nowadays, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) face tremendous competition. To ensure ongoing, long-term development and to be able to survive, MSMEs need to improve their competitive abilities and skills. Small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) can enhance their competitive advantage and adapt to changing circumstances by utilizing various tactics and instruments(Ko & Liu, 2017).In Nigeria MSMEs are recognized as crucial for job creation, GDP contribution, and export earnings (Tekola, & Gidey, 2019). The performance of MSMEs in these areas has been suboptimal and necessitate policy reforms (Ogbuanu,Kabuoh & Okwu, 2014). The manufacturing MSME sector in Zamfara state, has shown potential for reducing unemployment and accelerating economic growth (Ogbuanu,Kabuoh & Okwu, 2014).

However, MSMEs potentials of delivering economic growth and wealth creation are leveraged on Entrepreneurial leadership efficiency(Campos, 2021). Entrepreneurial leadership is the process by which leaders reorganize organizations to take advantage of new opportunities and enhance their capacity to produce the necessary varieties that allows them to compete in a highly unpredictable environment. By investigating untapped sources of materials or developing new markets for goods and services, entrepreneurs can modernize the design of

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the production process through inventive practices or by manufacturing current products using cutting-edge techniques (Zehir, et al. 2015). Entrepreneurial leaders embrace management philosophies and techniques that enable the integration of resources in order to accomplish organizational goals.

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) is a combination of Entrepreneurship and Leadership in an Organization/Company. Entrepreneurial Leadership is a combination of the concept of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial management, and the concept of Leadership. Entrepreneurial leadership is the ability to influence others in strategically managing resources to seek opportunities and profit-seeking behavior. EL creates a vision scenario that is used to arrange and mobilize helpers from participants who are committed to the search for and exploitation of strategic value creation. Entrepreneurial Leadership involves setting clear goals, creating opportunities, empowering people, keeping the organization intact, and developing resource systems.

1.1 Statement of problems

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in the economic development of Zamfara State by generating employment, fostering innovation, and contributing to the overall GDP. Despite their importance, MSMEs in Zamfara State face numerous challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. These challenges include innovation trait, risk taking, technical leadership trait, psychological leadership trait, ethical leadership threat and limited entrepreneurial leadership capabilities. One critical factor that can influence the success and growth of MSMEs is entrepreneurial leadership. Entrepreneurial leadership involves the ability of business leaders to inspire, innovate, and drive their organizations towards achieving business objectives. Effective entrepreneurial leadership can lead to improved innovation trait, risk taking, technical leadership trait, psychological leadership trait, ethical leadership threat and limited managerial capabilities (Shafique, Ahmad, & Kalyar, 2020). However, there is a paucity of empirical studies examining the impact of entrepreneurial leadership on the growth of MSMEs in Zamfara State. Therefore, the problem that this study seeks to investigate is the effect of entrepreneurial leadership on the growth of MSMEs in Zamfara State.This study seek to answer the following questions;

- What is the effect of entrepreneurial innovation trait on SME's growth in Zamfara state?
- What is the influence of entrepreneurial risk taking on SME's growth in Zamfara state?
- What are the relationship between technical leadership trait and SME's growth in Zamfara state?
- What are the relationship between psychological leadership trait and SMEs growth in Zamfara state?
- What is the impact of ethical leadership threat on MSMEs growth in Zamfara state?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Entrepreneurial Leadership

The business environment has shifted its focus to entrepreneurial leadership as a result of the challenges posed by the opening up of the global economy in the 21st century (Mishra and Misra, 2017). MSME owners and executives need to be aware of the changes occurring in the international business landscape. Without a distinct vision formulated by the organization's leadership and bolstered by entrepreneurial actions, no business can endure and prosper. To accomplish this, executives, directors, and operation managers alike must have a clear understanding of their own strengths, styles, and leadership philosophies in addition to their ultimate goals. They need to seize opportunities, be imaginative, creative, and risk-takers when needed. Entrepreneurial leadership is a style of management that combines the principles of entrepreneurship with effective leadership. It is characterized by the ability to identify and exploit opportunities, drive innovation, inspired and motivate others to achieve a common vision(Moccia, Zhao & Flanagan, 2020). According to Bagheri & Harrison, (2020), entrepreneurial leadership is defined in the literature as combining the key elements of leadership and entrepreneurship. These elements collectively consider having the ability to develop, innovate, organize, and steer strategy, and are characterized by a set of unique attributes that define the leader, including visionary, manager, strategist, and innovator.

Entrepreneurial leadership combines leadership and entrepreneurship behaviors, focusing on recognizing and exploiting opportunities while influencing others toward organizational goals (Mehmood, Jian, Akram, & Tariq (2021). Entrepreneurial leadership involves

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risk-taking, innovation, and proactiveness (Corrêa, Queiroz, Cruz, & Shigaki, 2022). Entrepreneurial leaders create value by leveraging unique innovations and resources to address opportunities. This leadership style is more prevalent among founder-leaders than non-founders. The concept has gained importance in the business world, with managers expected to possess entrepreneurial qualities. Research suggests that entrepreneurial abilities can be nurtured through various influences, challenging the notion that entrepreneurs are born. The success of entrepreneurial leadership may be influenced by environmental, organizational, and follower-specific factors (Jardim, 2021).

Entrepreneurial leadership, according to [30], entails eminent leaders who forge visions necessary to actualize and inspire a group of devoted followers to carry out the vision in order to achieve strategic value creation. In the meantime, [31] noted that when making decisions, entrepreneurial leadership takes the environment and ethics into consideration. He discovered that entrepreneurial leadership can legitimately contribute to the expansion, sustainability, and growth of non-profit businesses.

Harrison, Burnard & Paul (2018). Posited that entrepreneurial leadership revolves around addressing two primary challenges. The first challenge, known as scenario enactment, involves creating an environment that highlights potential opportunities to reshape the current situation. The second challenge, termed cast enactment, requires leaders to convince stakeholders and followers of the feasibility of achieving the scenario's goals by recruiting additional personnel and utilizing the necessary resources for transformation. Harrison, Burnard & Paul (2018). Identified five critical actions that entrepreneurial leaders must undertake entrepreneurial innovation trait, Entrepreneurial risk taking, Entrepreneurial technical leadership trait, Entrepreneurial Psychological leadership trait and Entrepreneurial ethical leadership trait

2.2 Entrepreneurial innovation trait

Research suggests that entrepreneurial innovation is closely linked to specific personality traits and behaviors. Entrepreneurs exhibit higher levels of innovative behavior compared to managers, particularly in generating new ideas, overcoming obstacles, and engaging in preparatory activities for implementation (Amini Sedeh, Pezeshkan, & Caiazza, (2022)). Key entrepreneurial traits associated with innovation include risk-taking, creativity, vision, and the ability to spot opportunities (Corrêa, Queiroz, Cruz & Shigaki 2022). Narcissism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and internal locus of control are proposed to positively influence start-up innovativeness, while neuroticism and external locus of control may have negative effects. The interaction between entrepreneurship and innovation is crucial, with entrepreneurs distinguished by their capacity for creative destruction and risk-taking. These traits, combined with factors such as family background and the ability to implement new ideas, contribute to entrepreneurial success and innovative output (Shahzad, Khan, Saleem, & Rashid, 2021).

Entrepreneurial innovation is a multifaceted trait essential for the success and sustainability of new ventures. It involves a combination of creativity, risk-taking, vision, and adaptability, supported by theoretical frameworks and practical methodologies (Henriksen, Henderson, Creely, Carvalho, Cernochova, Dash & Mishra, 2021). Understanding and cultivating this trait can significantly enhance an entrepreneur's ability to identify opportunities, develop innovative solutions, and achieve long-term success. Therefore, the role of entrepreneurial innovation trait needs to be explored further. As such, this study hypothesizes that:

$H_0$1: There is no significant statistical relationship between entrepreneurial innovation trait and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state

2.3 Entrepreneurial Risk Taking

Entrepreneurship is associated with a higher degree of risk-taking tendency, Guo, & Jiang, (2020) claim that entrepreneurs do take risks. Risk-taking is typically a trait of entrepreneurs who seek to set themselves apart from their rivals. According to Akkuş, (2024). Individuals who are risk-takers emerge as leaders in the current competitive business landscape, while others fall behind. The path to opportunity and advancement is to take calculated risks. According to Rahaman, Luna, Ping, Islam & Karim, (2021). Entrepreneurs have the ability to become industry leaders by taking calculated risks that the competition is unwilling to take.It is believed that taking risks is a necessary part of being an entrepreneur. This phrase was first used to characterize the dangers that people face when they decide to remain independent contractors rather than hire staff members. Large companies typically use risk management, with the exception of situations in which senior management heavily invests in

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ventures that carry a high degree of risk and have uncertain outcomes (Cabral, Francis & Kumar, 2021). But in accordance with Luht-Kallas, (2020) defines risk-taking as the inclination to participate in costly and risky sports activities rather than those that require caution and careful thought. There is a strong correlation between risk tolerance and an entrepreneurial spirit.Risk is the subjective probability of systemic failure, possible loss, or any disadvantageous natural occurrence of an unfortunate event while engaging in an activity or work experience. Risk as a personality trait influences attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Many people are hesitant to become successful entrepreneurs for a wide variety of reasons, including the inherent risk associated with working in the entrepreneurial sector of the economy (Hubbard, 2020). Moreover, this study hypothesizes that;

$H_0$2; There is a no positive significant relationship between entrepreneurialrisks taking
MSMSE Growth in Zamfara state.

2.4 Entrepreneurial technical leadership trait

Entrepreneurial technical leadership combines the qualities of an entrepreneur with those of a technical leader. This blend is crucial for driving innovation and success in technology-driven organizations (Omeihe, Harrison, Simba & Omeihe, 2023). Entrepreneurial leadership in high-tech industries combines traits of entrepreneurs and leaders, emphasizing proactivity, risk-taking, and opportunity recognition (Addy et al., 2024). Key traits include strategic vision, adaptability, and emotional intelligence (Addy et al., 2024; Siddiqui, 2007). Success strategies involve fostering innovation, cross-functional collaboration, and flexible structures (Addy et al., 2024). Entrepreneurial leaders are characterized by performance orientation, ambition, visionary foresight, and the ability to inspire and motivate teams (Ranjan, 2018). Antecedents of entrepreneurial leadership include human capital, social capital, and entrepreneurial mindset, while outcomes encompass wealth creation, innovation performance, and creativity (Ranjan, 2018). In the Romanian context, entrepreneurs exhibit positive mindsets and attitudes, contributing to an optimistic outlook for the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Șerban & Negrutiu, 2021). Education plays a crucial role in developing entrepreneurial leadership traits (Siddiqui, 2007), highlighting the importance of nurturing these skills for success in dynamic, high-tech environments.

Entrepreneurial leaders play a pivotal role in driving innovation and steering organizations towards success. The distinct traits that define these leaders set them apart in an environment characterized by constant change, technological disruptions, and intense competition (Farjoun and Fiss, 2022). Entrepreneurial leaders in high-tech industries possess a remarkable ability to anticipate and capitalize on emerging industry trends (Siegel and Krishnan, 2020). They go beyond reacting to current market dynamics and instead adopt a proactive stance, foreseeing shifts in technology and consumer preferences. By staying attuned to the pulse of the industry, these leaders position their organizations strategically, often ahead of the curve. High-tech industries are characterized by rapid technological advancements.

Entrepreneurial leaders demonstrate a high degree of flexibility in adapting to these changes (Anning-Dorson, 2021). They embrace new technologies, methodologies, and business models, ensuring that their organizations remain at the forefront of innovation.In conclusion, the key traits of entrepreneurial leaders in high-tech industries encompass visionary thinking, risk-taking propensity, adaptability, and resilience. These traits collectively enable leaders to navigate the complexities of the hightech landscape, driving innovation and ensuring the long-term success of their organizations (Benkirane and Benazzi, 2023). As the digital age continues to unfold, these traits remain essential for leaders aspiring to make a lasting impact in the dynamic and ever-changing world of high-tech. as a result of these concepts hypothesis is formulated for this study;

$H_0$3; There is no significant positive relationship between Entrepreneurial technological leadership trait and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state.

2.5 Entrepreneurial Psychological leadership trait

Entrepreneurial psychological leadership focuses on the mental and emotional qualities that enable entrepreneurs to lead effectively. These traits are essential for navigating the complexities and uncertainties of entrepreneurial ventures. By developing and leveraging these psychological traits, entrepreneurial leaders can effectively guide their ventures through the complexities of the business world, foster strong team dynamics, and achieve long-term success. Entrepreneurial psychological leadership traits as stated by Siddiqui (2007) identifies seven key trait groups for entrepreneurial leaders, emphasizing the importance of education in developing these traits.

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Pease and Cunningham (2016) propose a model of entrepreneurial psychological capital, focusing on state-like characteristics that can be developed, such as domain-specific efficacy and resilience. Durst et al. (2021) examine how individual psychological characteristics influence sustainable leadership behavior in firms with high and low entrepreneurial orientation, highlighting the importance of integrity across both types of firms. Begley and Boyd (1987) investigate five psychological attributes in entrepreneurs, finding that founders score higher in need for achievement, risk-taking propensity, and tolerance of ambiguity compared to non-founders. They also observe a "threshold effect" where certain psychological attributes become dysfunctional beyond an optimal level, affecting financial performance. These studies collectively contribute to understanding the psychological traits and characteristics associated with entrepreneurial leadership. This concept lead to develop hypothesis for the study;

$H_0$4;There is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial psychological leadership trait and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state.

2.6 Entrepreneurial ethical leadership trait

Entrepreneurial ethical leadership focuses on the principles and values that guide the behavior of entrepreneurs, ensuring they lead their ventures with integrity and social responsibility. Embodying these traits, entrepreneurial ethical leaders can create a positive organizational culture, build trust with stakeholders, and ensure the long-term sustainability and success of their ventures. Entrepreneurial ethical leadership comprises of two basic elements. Ethical leaders must act and make ethical decisions and then it must be visible in the way leaders they interact with people on a daily basis, in their approaches and in the manner in which they lead their organizations. Where there is entrepreneurial ethical leadership in place, growth and development of their enterprise can be discerned due to their good governance practices (Jacquart & Antonakis, 2014).According to Thoms (2008). Leaders who demonstrate integrity by consistently adhering to moral and ethical standards foster a culture of trust and loyalty among employees and stakeholders. This trust is crucial for entrepreneurial ventures, which often operate in environments of high uncertainty and risk (Welter & Smallbone, 2006). This study will be guided by this hypothesis.

$H_0$5; there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial ethical leadership threat and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state.

2.7 MSMEs Growth

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are defined based on certain criteria, such as the number of employees and the annual turnover or asset base of the business. The definitions can vary slightly based on the specific regulatory or institutional context, but they generally align with the following classifications. Micro Enterprises with number of employee fewer than 10 employees, with annual turnover of not more than N5 million and asset base of not more than N5 million, excluding land and buildings. Small Enterprises with numbers of employees between 10 and 49, annual turnover of between N5 million and N100 million and asset base between N5 million and N50 million, excluding land and buildings. Medium Enterprises with the number of employee between 50 and 199.With annual turn over between N100 million and N1 billion and asset base of N50 million and N500 million, excluding land and buildings(Mohammed, Hashim, Sulaiman, Adam, & Usman, (2022).

According to this definition, in the instance of a conflict on classification between employment and asset criteria, the employment-based will take priority. CBN in its 2005 guideline on small and medium enterprise investment scheme (SMEIS) describes MSMEs using asset criterion as any business that has a maximum capital base of 200 million Naira excluding loan and working capital with no upper or lower limit of staff. In Nigeria, the definition of MSMEs is more of an asset based than employee level based. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises are businesses that operate on a relatively smaller scale compared to large corporations. These enterprises encompass a wide array of sectors, from manufacturing and agriculture to technology and services. Their distinguishing features include limited manpower, lower capital investment, and localized operations. MSME's often function as the catalysts for economic inclusivity, as they provide jobs to a significant portion of the population. MSME's constitute 95-98% of all businesses, generate 50% of GDP and create between 60-70% of all jobs (Dasaraju, Somalaraju, & Kota, 2020).

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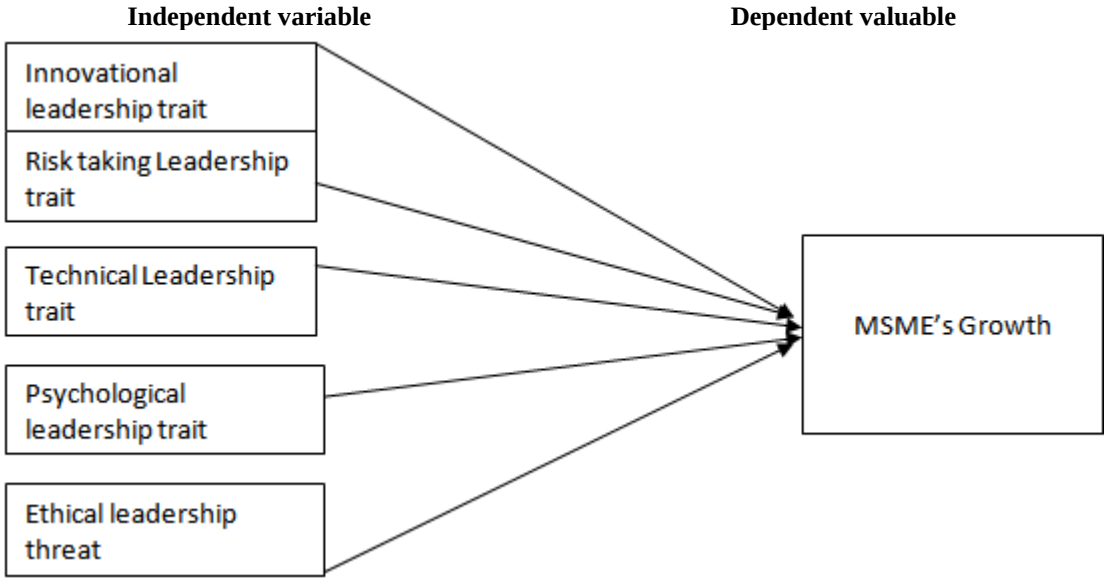
2.8 Conceptual framework



Author, (2024). Conceptual model.

2.9 Theoretical review

This research work is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory, this theory offers a comprehensive framework that can be applied to various aspects of entrepreneurial activities, including innovation, risk-taking, leadership, psychology, and ethical traits. The concept of Transformational Leadership was first introduced by James MacGregor Burns in his 1978 book Leadership. Burns described transformational leaders as those who engage with followers in such a way that both leaders and followers elevate each other to higher levels of motivation and morality. The theory was later expanded and refined by Bernard Bass in the 1980s. Bass introduced the term "transformational leadership" and further developed the concept by identifying the specific behaviors and components of transformational leaders, such as innovation, risk-taking, leadership, psychology, and ethical traits.The following explains how each element of transformational leadership corresponds with these ideas of entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurial Innovation: Transformational leaders inspire and energize their team with a compelling vision, encouraging innovative thinking and the pursuit of new opportunities. This motivational drive is crucial for fostering a culture of creativity and innovation within entrepreneurial ventures. However, these leaders task conventional thinking and encourage experimentation and out-of-the-box solutions. By fostering an environment where new ideas are welcomed and explored, transformational leaders facilitate continuous innovation.

Entrepreneurial Risk-Taking: Transformational leaders create a sense of purpose and confidence in their vision, which helps team members embrace risk-taking as a necessary step towards achieving breakthrough results. Moreover, they promote a culture where calculated risks are seen as opportunities for growth. By encouraging their team to experiment and learn from failures, transformational leaders help mitigate the fear of taking risks.

Entrepreneurial Leadership: Transformational leaders serve as role models, demonstrating the values, resilience, and commitment needed for successful entrepreneurship. Their behavior sets a standard for the team to follow. They equally articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future, which helps align the efforts of the team and motivates them to work towards common goals with enthusiasm and dedication. By recognizing and nurturing the unique strengths and aspirations of each team member, transformational leaders build a strong, cohesive, and motivated team that is crucial for entrepreneurial success.

Entrepreneurial Psychology: Transformational leaders provide personalized support and mentorship, helping team members develop a growth mindset and resilience. This individualized attention boosts morale and fosters a positive psychological environment. They also create a sense of purpose and meaning, which can

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significantly enhance psychological well-being and job satisfaction. This motivational aspect is key to maintaining high levels of engagement and commitment.

Entrepreneurial Ethical Traits: Transformational leaders exemplify high ethical standards and integrity, which helps build trust and credibility. Their ethical behavior sets a strong example for others to follow, promoting a culture of honesty and responsibility. They also respect and value each team member, fostering an environment of fairness and ethical treatment. This approach helps ensure that the venture operates with a strong ethical foundation.

By integrating these elements of Transformational Leadership, entrepreneurial leaders can effectively drive innovation, embrace risk-taking, lead their ventures with integrity, support their team's psychological well-being, and uphold strong ethical standards.

2.10 Empirical review

The following previous studies were reviewed for the empirical study.

In the study of Obey, Olawale, Olabanji (2017) Title Impact of Leadership Styles on the Entrepreneurial Orientation of Small and Medium Enterprises in South Africa. The paper aimed at investigating the impact of leadership styles on the entrepreneurial orientation of SMEs in Polokwane Municipality**.** A quantitative research method was used and 103 SMEs participated in the survey. The random sampling technique was used. Self-administered questionnaires were utilized to collect data in a survey. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and regression analysis. Reliability of the data collection instruments was measured using the Cronbach's alpha. The results indicated that the SMEs display average levels of entrepreneurial orientation. In addition, the results showed that SMEs display average levels of leadership styles inclined towards transformational leadership style.

Albanus, Betty, Philiph& Daniel (2022) in their study titled Entrepreneurial skills influence the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Kenya. The objective of this study is to determine how entrepreneurial skills influence the level of performance of SMEs in Kenya. Data was collected from a sample of 20 small and medium sized enterprises. This study used correlational survey design to collect data from a sample of 20 respondents in order to establish the effect of entrepreneurial skills on organizational performance of Small and Medium Enterprises.The findings of the study show that entrepreneurial skills have a statistically significant positive relationship with SMEs performance. The positive relationship between entrepreneurial skills and performance of SMEs means that, as entrepreneurial skills increase among the SMEs in Nakuru city, their performance increases. It can also be concluded that majority of the firms in Nakuru city acknowledge the need for entrepreneurial skills in execution of their daily activities.

Hassan, Noor and Ramayah, (2020) in their study titled Entrepreneurial Leadership and Sustainable Performance of Manufacturing SMEs in Malaysia. The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of entrepreneurial leadership on the economic, environmental, and social aspects of sustainable performance; the research also focuses on the contingency role of entrepreneurial bricolage. A total of 146 responses from a cross-sectional survey from Malaysian manufacturing SMEs were investigated using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that entrepreneurial leadership has significant effects on Entrepreneurial Sustainable Performance and social sustainable performance, but has an insignificant effect on ECSPF. This research highlights the importance of Entrepreneurial Leadership and shows that SME owners or leaders should embrace and develop their skills as a crucial step towards achieving sustainable performance for their companies.

In the study of Juan, Patricio & Jose, (2018) titled Entrepreneurial Leadership as a Determining Factor in the Internationalization of Technology Driven Knowledge Intensive Services within Spanish SMEs. The aim of this research is to generate a general framework to evaluate entrepreneurial leadership as a driving influence in the internationalization process of a Knowledge Intensive SME and to understand behavioral patterns of entrepreneurial leadership which might influence its internationalization.The study uses a sample of 892 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the technology based knowledge intensive sectors from the Spanish Technological and Innovation Panel (PITEC). The research uses linear and logistic regressions to examine the links of the different components of entrepreneurial leadership and shows the extent of a positive relationship between the proposed constructs of entrepreneurial leadership with the internationalizations of knowledge intensive SME in Spain.

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Tresphory & Parameswar (2015) conducted a study titled Impacts of Entrepreneurial Leadership Style on Business Performance of Female owned SMEs in Dar es salaam. The study attempts to determine the relationship between Entrepreneurial Leadership style and businessperformance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) owned or led by female CEOs in Dar es salaam, Tanzania. The research is based on secondary data from One World Action and Financial Sector Development Trust (FSDT) baseline survey databases, covering Kinondoni, Ilala and Temeke municipalities. Data cleaning was conducted using Roy (2010)'s seven step methodology and analyzed quantitatively using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and simple regression by SPSS. The findings show that there isa significantly strong positive correlation betweenEntrepreneurial Leadership style and business performance of SMEs in Dar es salaam, Tanzania.

In the study conducted by Tresphory (2015) titled Impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership Style on Business Performance of SMEs in Tanzania. The study attempts to explore the extent to which entrepreneurial leadership style is used by CEOs in TanzanianSMEs and consequential impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership Style on business performance of SMEs in Tanzania. The research is based on primary data collected by mailed questionnaires and analyzed quantitatively using Pearson product moment correlation and simple regression by SPSS. The findings show that 68.88% of all CEOs in Tanzania use entrepreneurial leadership style. More over the findings showed that there is a significant strong positive correlation between entrepreneurial leadership style and business performance of SMEs in Tanzania

Fahad and Khairul, (2020) in their study on the impact of entrepreneurial leadership and learning orientation on organizational performance of SMEs in Kuwait.The paper examined the relationship between the determinants of organizational performance such as entrepreneurial leadership (EL), learning orientation (LO), and innovation capacity (IC) of Kuwaiti's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The study used a quantitative method. A survey questionnaire was administered on 384 SME owners and CEOs in Kuwait. The findings of this study indicated that entrepreneurial leadership and learning orientation had positive and significant effect on organizational performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of selected registered MSMEs from the SMEDAN office in Gusau, Zamfara State. These MSMEs are located across various local government areas in the state. The study comprised seven local governments, representing 50% of the local governments in the state. The total population comprised 1,202 registered MSMEs. Using the Taro Yamane formula, a sample size of 300 was determined, and the sampling technique employed was simple random sampling.

The data collection was carried out through the use of questionnaire, these questionnaires were adopted from various studies, measuring five constructs. A total numbers of 298 questionnaires were returned represent 99%. However, structural equation modeland partial least square technique (SEM-PLS) were used to analyze the data and test the stated hypothesis.

3.1 Model specification

SG=
(IL+RL+TL+PL+EL……
……..μ

MG=$\beta 0+\beta_1 IL+ \beta_2 RL+ \beta_3 TL+ \beta_4 PL+ \beta_5 EL+$…… μ

Where
SG= MSME Growth
IL= innovative Leadership
RL= risk taken leadership
TL= technological leadership
PL=psychological leadership
EL= ethical leadership

IV. ANALYSIS

Quality Criteria

Table 1
Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Ethical Leadership	0.908	0.917	0.929	0.686
Innovative Leadership	0.926	0.929	0.944	0.772

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MSME Growth	0.917	0.925	0.941	0.801
Psychological Leadership	0.895	0.902	0.920	0.657
Risk taking Leadership	0.873	0.882	0.908	0.664
Technical Leadership	0.874	0.943	0.901	0.602

Source; SEM output, 2024.

The table 1above presents reliability and validity metrics for different constructs of leadership. These metrics are essential in evaluating the quality of measurement models in research, particularly in the context of structural equation modeling (SEM). To discuss the metrics;

Cronbach's Alpha: This metric assesses the internal consistency of the items within a construct. All values are well above the acceptable threshold of 0.7, indicating good reliability for all constructs. The highest value is for Innovative Leadership (0.926), suggesting a high degree of consistency among its items.

rho_A: Also known as Dillon-Goldstein's rho, this metric is considered a more accurate estimate of reliability than Cronbach's Alpha. All constructs have values above 0.7, confirming good reliability. The highest value here is for Technological Leadership (0.943), indicating very high internal consistency.

Composite Reliability (CR): This metric evaluates the reliability of the constructs by considering the loadings of the items. All constructs have Composite Reliability values above 0.9, indicating excellent reliability. The highest Composite Reliability is for Innovative Leadership (0.944), reflecting that this construct's items are highly consistent and reliable.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE): AVE measures the amount of variance captured by the construct relative to the variance due to measurement error. An AVE above 0.5 is considered acceptable, meaning the construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators. All constructs meet this criterion, with MSME Growth having the highest AVE (0.801), indicating that this construct explains a significant amount of variance.

Moreover, the data suggests that all constructs—Ethical Leadership, Innovative Leadership, Psychological Leadership, Risk-taking Leadership, Technological Leadership and MSME Growth,—are measured reliably and validly. Each construct has high internal consistency, and the items effectively capture the variance of the intended constructs. The high values for Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, and Composite Reliability indicate strong reliability, while the AVE values confirm that the constructs are well-defined and adequately measured.

Table 2
R Square

	R Square	**R Square Adjusted**
MSME Growth	**0.884**	**0.878**

Source; SEM output, 2024.

The table two above present data that show two important metrics for assessing the explanatory power of a model:

R Square: measures the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that is predictable from the independent variables. R Square values range from 0 to 1. A higher value indicates that a larger proportion of variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. An R Square of 0.884 means that 88.4% of the variance in MSME Growth is explained by the independent variables included in the model.

Adjusted R Square value for the number of predictors in the model, providing a more accurate measure in the context of multiple regression models. R Square Adjusted is typically slightly lower than R Square because it penalizes the addition of non-significant predictors. An adjusted R Square of 0.878 means that, after accounting for the number of predictors, 87.8% of the variance in MSME Growth is explained by the model. This adjustment helps prevent over fitting and provides a more reliable measure of the model's explanatory power.

The data on R Square and Adjusted R Square for MSME Growth demonstrates that the model used to predict MSME Growth is highly effective. With an R Square of 0.884 and an

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Adjusted R Square of 0.878, the model explains a significant portion of the variance in MSME Growth, suggesting that the chosen predictors are both relevant and significant. The minimal difference between R Square and Adjusted R Square further confirms the model's robustness and lack of over fitting. Overall, these metrics indicate a strong and reliable model for understanding and predicting MSME Growth.

Path Coefficients

Table3
Path Coefficients and Statistical Significance

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Ethical Leadership -> MSME Growth	-0.387	-0.365	0.135	2.856	0.004
Innovative Leadership -> MSME Growth	0.752	0.726	0.090	8.368	0.000
Psychological Leadership -> MSME Growth	-0.076	-0.090	0.329	0.230	0.819
Risk taking Leadership -> MSME Growth	-0.012	0.029	0.313	0.037	0.970
Technical Leadership -> MSME Growth	0.629	0.610	0.184	3.413	0.001

Source;SEM output, 2024.

Table 3 above provide data for path coefficients from various leadership constructs to MSME Growth, along with their corresponding sample means, standard deviations, T statistics, and P values. These metrics are crucial in assessing the significance and strength of the relationships between the constructs.

Innovative Leadership -> MSME Growth: Original Sample: 0.752, Sample Mean: 0.726, Standard Deviation: 0.090, T-Statistics: 8.368 and P-Values: 0.000. Innovative Leadership has a strong positive effect on MSME Growth. The high T-statistic and significant p-value indicate a robust and highly significant positive relationship. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant statistical relationship between the entrepreneurial innovation trait and MSME growth in Zamfara State. However, the results indicate otherwise and it failed to accept the null hypothesis. Innovative leadership has a strong positive effect on MSME growth. The high T statistic and significant p-value indicate a robust and highly significant positive relationship.

Risk-taking Leadership -> MSME Growth: Original Sample: -0.012, Sample Mean: 0.029, Standard Deviation: 0.313, T- Statistics: 0.037 and P-Values: 0.970. Risk-taking Leadership has an almost negligible and non-significant effect on MSME Growth. The extremely high p-value indicates that this relationship is not statistically significant. There is a no positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial risks taking MSMSE Growth in Zamfara state. Risk-taking leadership has an almost negligible and non-significant effect on MSME growth. The extremely high p-value indicates that this relationship is not statistically significant. This results confirm the null hypothesis which stated that there is no positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial risk-taking and MSME growth in Zamfara state.

Technical Leadership -> MSME Growth: Original Sample: 0.629, Sample Mean: 0.610, Standard Deviation: 0.184, T Statistics: 3.413 and P Values: 0.001. Technical Leadership has a significant positive effect on MSME Growth. The positive coefficient and significant p-value indicate a robust positive relationship. This negate the null hypothesis that said there is no significant positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Technical leadership trait and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state. Technical Leadership demonstrates a significant positive effect on MSME Growth. The positive coefficient and significant p-value indicate a strong positive relationship. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Psychological Leadership -> MSME Growth: Original Sample: -0.076, Sample Mean: -0.090, Standard Deviation: 0.329, T-Statistics: 0.230 and P-Values: 0.819. Psychological Leadership has a negligible and non-significant effect on MSME Growth. The high p-value indicates that the relationship is not statistically significant. This statement affirmed the null

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hypothesis which stated that there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial psychological leadership trait and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state. Psychological Leadership has a negligible and non-significant effect on MSME Growth. The high p-value indicates that this relationship is not statistically significant. This affirm the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial psychological leadership trait and MSMEs growth in Zamfara state.

Ethical Leadership -> MSME Growth: Original Sample: -0.387 Sample Mean: -0.365 Standard Deviation: 0.135, T-Statistics: 2.856 and P-Values: 0.004. Ethical Leadership has a significant negative effect on MSME Growth. The negative coefficient suggests that higher ethical leadership is associated with lower MSME Growth. Therefore, the study recorded a Negative effect, significant ($p = 0.004$). The relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Ethical leadership has been found to have a significant negative relationship with MSMEs growth since the coefficient is negative (-0.387) and it p-value (0.004) is less than 0.05 significance levels. Hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial ethical leadership and MSME growth in Zamfara state and this study concludes that ethical leadership has not contributed positively to MSMEs growth in Zamfara State.

4.2 Discussion of findings

The null hypothesis posited that there is no significant statistical relationship between the entrepreneurial innovation trait and MSME growth in Zamfara State. However, the results provide strong evidence to the contrary. It equally indicates that the observed relationship is not due to random chance and is statistically significant. The result indicated thatthere is significant statistical relationship between the entrepreneurial innovation trait and MSME growth in Zamfara State. This study aligned with findings in the study of Subagyo & Ernestivita (2020) Oly & Iftikhar, (2012) and Lisa, (2021) which testify and posited that entrepreneurial innovation enhance MSME growth.

Entrepreneurial risk-taking and MSME growth in Zamfara State. This result aligns with the null hypothesis, confirming that there is no positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial risk-taking and MSME growth in the state. It suggests that taking significant risks does not necessarily contribute positively to MSME growth. This study is in conformity with the study of Kitigin, (2017), Egele, Kibuuka, & Mutenyo, (2018) and Okoli, Nwosu & Okechukwu, (2021) that equally support and positioned that risk-taking leadership does not enhanced MSME growth.

The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial technical leadership traits and MSME growth in Zamfara State. it is evident that technical leadership has a significant positive effect on MSME growth in Zamfara State. This result negates the null hypothesis and supports that there isa significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial technical leadership traits and MSME growth in Zamfara State, indicating that there is indeed a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial technical leadership traits and MSME growth. This is supported by the study of Singh, Khamba & Nanda, (2017) and Campos, (2021).

Therefore, efforts to promote MSME growth in Zamfara State may be better focused on fostering innovative practices rather than encouraging risk-taking behaviors. This underscores the importance of distinguishing between different leadership traits and their varying impacts on MSME success.

It is clear that psychological leadership has a negligible and non-significant effect on MSME growth in Zamfara State. This result aligns with the null hypothesis, confirming that there is no significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial psychological leadership traits and MSME growth in the state. This result was supported by Genty, & Awe (2017) and Sahu, Padhy & Dhir (2022) who underscores the limited impact of psychological leadership on the success and expansion of MSMEs.

It is evident that ethical leadership has a significant negative effect on MSME growth in Zamfara State. This result fails to reject the null hypothesis and instead supports the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant negative relationship between entrepreneurial ethical leadership traits and MSME growth. This is supported by the study of Aftab, Sarwar, Amin & Kiran, (2022) and Fatoki, (2020).

V. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the path coefficients reveals that innovative and technical leadership traits significantly contribute to MSME growth in Zamfara State. These leadership traits are crucial drivers of business success, emphasizing the need for policies and programs that promote innovation and technical skills among MSME leaders. On the

other hand, ethical leadership, while generally valued, may have unintended negative consequences on growth, highlighting the need for a balanced approach to ethical practices. Psychological and risk-taking leadership do not appear to have a direct impact on MSME growth. These insights underscore the importance of targeted leadership development initiatives to effectively drive MSME success in Zamfara State.

5.1 Recommendations

Going by various finding, stakeholders can foster more on the following actionable recommendations**;**

1. Establishment of innovation hubs or centers of excellence where MSME leaders can collaborate, experiment with new ideas, and accessing resources for innovation should be prioritized in the state.
2. Develop a specialized training programs and workshops focused on enhancing technical skills relevant to MSME operations, such as digital transformation, process optimization, and quality management should be encourage in the state.
3. Integrating ethical leadership training into management development programs and emphasizing the importance of ethical decision-making while balancing business growth objectives.
4. Facilitate forums or roundtable discussions where successful entrepreneurs share their experiences with calculated risk-taking, highlighting strategies for identifying and mitigating risks.
5. Engaged organizational psychologiststooffer resilience-building workshops and coaching sessions to support MSME leaders in managing stress, fostering a positive workplace culture, and enhancing team motivation.

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