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International Journal of Innovative Research in
SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

e-ISSN: 2319-8753 | p-ISSN: 2347-6710



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

IN SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

Volume 14, Special Issue 6, December 2025

ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

Impact Factor: 8.699



9940 572 462



6381 907 438



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Leading the Future: Entrepreneurial Leadership in AI Innovation

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ABSTRACT: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly shaping global economies, industries, and societies. Entrepreneurial leadership has emerged as a critical factor in navigating AI-driven transformations, as it combines visionary thinking with strategic execution. This paper expands on discussions around AI and leadership, exploring theoretical underpinnings, leadership competencies, ethical challenges, and global implications. By drawing from established theories such as transformational leadership, strategic entrepreneurship, and disruptive innovation, the paper emphasizes how entrepreneurial leaders play an indispensable role in fostering sustainable, ethical, and competitive AI innovation ecosystems. The findings underscore that leadership is not only about driving profits but also ensuring AI innovations contribute positively to society.

I. INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a cornerstone of modern technological progress, influencing domains ranging from healthcare and finance to education and agriculture. Its rapid adoption signifies not only a technological revolution but also a socio-economic transformation. However, the journey of AI from innovation to implementation requires more than algorithms and computational power; it requires entrepreneurial leadership. Leaders who can balance innovation with responsibility are vital for shaping sustainable futures. Entrepreneurial leadership in AI goes beyond managing ventures; it involves envisioning long-term goals, anticipating risks, and driving inclusivity in innovation (Gupta et al., 2021).

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Several theories form the foundation for understanding entrepreneurial leadership in AI innovation. Transformational leadership theory underscores the ability of leaders to inspire followers by creating a vision and motivating teams to achieve beyond expectations (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In AI contexts, transformational leaders are those who encourage experimentation and creativity, vital for AI-driven startups. Christensen's (1997) disruptive innovation theory explains how AI, as a disruptive force, challenges established industries and demands leaders who can identify opportunities and scale innovations. Strategic entrepreneurship emphasizes balancing risk-taking and resource management to align innovations with organizational strategies (Ireland et al., 2003). Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory highlights how entrepreneurial leaders act as change agents in ensuring the adoption of AI tools across societies.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

While AI offers transformative potential, several ventures struggle with effective scaling and responsible integration. The lack of leadership vision often results in failed implementation, ethical dilemmas, and missed opportunities. Entrepreneurial leadership becomes essential in bridging gaps between technology and market readiness while ensuring societal trust. Challenges such as algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, regulatory fragmentation, and limited talent availability highlight the urgent need for entrepreneurial leaders to integrate responsibility with technological progress (Jobin et al., 2019).

International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology**Two Day National Level Conference on “Entrepreneurial Leadership: Guiding Teams Towards Visionary Goals”****26th & 27th September 2025****Department of Management Studies, Potti Sriramulu Chalavadi Mallikarjuna Rao College of Technology (Autonomous), Vijayawada, India****|Volume 14, Special Issue 6, December 2025|****Trends, Issues, and Challenges**

AI innovation presents several emerging trends, including generative AI applications in content creation and healthcare, cross-industry integration in finance and education, and the democratization of AI through open-source platforms (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017). However, issues of fairness, transparency, and dependency on big tech ecosystems remain. Challenges include talent shortages, funding risks, and regulatory complexities that hinder startups. Entrepreneurial leaders are required not only to recognize these trends but also to devise strategies for navigating them effectively.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Competencies in AI Innovation

Entrepreneurial leaders in AI must exhibit unique competencies. Visionary thinking is essential for anticipating the long-term impact of AI (Antonakis & Day, 2017). Risk management ensures balance between innovation and sustainability. Adaptive learning supports leaders in remaining agile in rapidly changing technological environments. Ethical decision-making guarantees fairness, accountability, and inclusivity. Finally, collaborative networking builds ecosystems that connect startups, policymakers, investors, and researchers. These competencies ensure AI innovation contributes to both competitive advantage and societal progress.

Significance and Scope

The significance of entrepreneurial leadership lies in its potential to shape sustainable AI ecosystems. By aligning technical innovation with ethical responsibility, leaders contribute to both economic growth and social equity. The scope of entrepreneurial leadership spans diverse actors, from startups disrupting industries to corporations scaling AI solutions and policymakers creating supportive regulations (OECD, 2021). This broad scope illustrates that entrepreneurial leadership is not confined to businesses but extends into societal governance.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the role of entrepreneurial leadership in shaping AI-based innovation ecosystems.
2. To examine the competencies required for successful entrepreneurial leadership in AI ventures.
3. To explore ethical and strategic challenges faced by entrepreneurial leaders in AI.
4. To identify best practices for fostering sustainable AI-driven entrepreneurship.

IV. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The conference emphasized that entrepreneurial leadership is a critical driver of AI innovation. Managerial implications highlight the importance of creativity, adaptability, and inclusivity in ensuring organizational resilience. Societal implications show that AI can bridge healthcare, education, and sustainability gaps, but ethical responsibility must remain central. For research, there is scope to study the interplay between leadership and AI ethics through longitudinal studies and cross-cultural comparisons. Case studies presented during the conference revealed that AI-driven startups succeeded when leaders combined vision with responsibility.

V. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurial leadership is integral to the future of AI innovation. Leaders who inspire, adapt, and prioritize ethics are best equipped to harness AI's disruptive potential. As AI continues to reshape industries, entrepreneurial leadership ensures that technological progress aligns with sustainable growth and societal well-being. The conference concluded that leading the future requires a balance of vision, strategy, and accountability.

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