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Enhancing it project success through entrepreneurial leadership: the mediating roles of team reflexivity, team innovation culture, and team entrepreneurial passion

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on the Resource Based View and Social Learning Theory, this study aims to explore the influence of Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) on Project Success (PS) via the mediating pathways of Team Reflexivity (TR), Team Innovation Culture (TIC), and Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP). Data were gathered from 422 senior-level employees in IT firms. The analysis employed SMART-PLS 4 structural equation modeling to assess the proposed relationships. The findings underscore the significant impact of EL on PS. EL was observed to exert a noteworthy influence on TR, TIC, and TEP. Moreover, the proposed mediators, TR and TIC, exhibited substantial effects on PS, while TEP demonstrated a partially significant impact. Through the mediating roles of TR, TEP, and TIC, EL indirectly influenced PS.

IMPACT STATEMENT

This research can help to understand how Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) affects Project Success (PS) through Team Reflexivity (TR), Team Innovation Culture (TIC), and Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP). Results highlight EL's substantial impact on PS, TR, TIC, and TEP. The study fills a research gap, providing crucial insights for leadership and project success. It offers valuable implications for theory and practice in these domains

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1. Introduction

Global business practices have introduced a multitude of leadership challenges for managers. Entrepreneurial leadership (EL) serves as a catalyst for business growth and prosperity (Goosen & Stevens, 2013). It fosters an environment of innovation, risk-taking, swift decision-making, and seizing new opportunities while maintaining a clear vision (Thornberry, 2006).

The investigation into entrepreneurial leadership (EL) and its influence on project success is crucial for comprehending how EL contributes to sustained competitive advantage and drives innovation in dynamic business contexts. EL, which merges elements of entrepreneurship and traditional leadership, is becoming increasingly acknowledged as essential for tackling the challenges faced by modern organizations (Mamun et al., 2018; Strobl et al., 2020). However, there is a notable deficiency in detailed knowledge about how the specific behaviors associated with EL effectively steer complex project initiatives and enhance employee engagement. This represents a significant research gap in the field of entrepreneurial leadership (Latif et al., 2020). In addition, the literature on entrepreneurial leadership highlights the significance of relational leadership behavior for nascent entrepreneurs, even during the initial phases of venturing, as it has the potential to inspire persistence and consequently enhance the likelihood of successfully launching a startup (Walsh & Martin, 2023).

EL integrates elements of commercial entrepreneurship and leadership, facilitating project completion within organizations (Latif et al., 2020). Various leadership styles have been linked to the successful execution of projects (Aga et al., 2016; Malik et al., 2022; Abbas & Ali, 2021; Cannatelli et al., 2017). Recent

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findings have highlighted the impact of EL on project success (PS). Latif et al. (2020) conducted the lone study establishing a correlation between entrepreneurial leadership and PS. Thus, further exploration of EL and PS is warranted. Latif et al. (2020) assessed the mediating influence of knowledge management processes and advocated for additional research on potential mediating variables. This will aid in discerning the mechanism through which EL affects PS. In this study, Team Reflexivity (TR), Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP), and Team Innovation Culture (TIC) are considered as mediators. Current research has revealed gaps in understanding the interplay between EL, TR, TEP, TIC, and PS.

Firstly, despite increasing interest in EL, it remains relatively less explored (Leitch & Harrison et al., 2018; Latif et al., 2020; Strobl et al., 2020). Leitch and Volery (2017) contend that the literature on leadership in business is still relatively limited. Secondly, there is a growing emphasis on examining mediating factors to understand how leadership impacts organizational performance (Chatterjee et al., 2023). While the study by Latif et al. (2020) sheds light on how EL affects PS through intervening variables, it is imperative to explore how other factors may also influence this relationship.

Thirdly, there exists a robust association between leadership approaches and the outcomes of teams (Team Building: Aga et al., 2016; Team Leadership: Miles & Watkins, 2007; Team Commitment: Pearce & Herbik, 2004; Team Leader Behaviors: Ammeter & Dukerich, 2002). While no prior investigations have directly addressed it, entrepreneurial leadership has the potential to exert a significant influence on team reflexivity, entrepreneurial zeal, and the culture of innovation.

Finally, although a number of team outcomes have been linked with project success (team building: Aga et al., 2016; team management: Scott-young & Samson, 2008; team perspective: Xu et al., 2010). TR, entrepreneurial passion, and innovation culture have little or no influence on project success. Team reflexivity is important to develop the team performance and to have better profits than the competence (Lee, 2008). Team entrepreneurial passion helps organizations get a better position than competence (Mwawasi, 2022). Team innovation culture improves the strategic position of a company (Khanagha et al., 2022). Leaders raise knowledge of the project obstacles and several uncertainties that demand change initiatives (Zaman et al., 2019; Yan et al., 2011). Therefore, leaders establish enticing targets for teams to achieve difficult project objectives (Munyeki & Were, 2017). Leaders must strongly integrate their vision with their teams so that their team members are inspired by moral and ethical ideals (Zaman et al., 2019).

RBV and SLT are used to explain the association between EL, TR, TIC, TEP, and PS in this study. According to the RBV, in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, a company must obtain and manage valuable, distinctive, difficult-to-copy, and irreplaceable resources and capabilities, and possess the organizational capacity to assimilate and leverage them (Barney et al., 2001; Barney & Clark, 2007). According to Bandura's (1969) Social-Learning Theory, an identificatory event takes place when a model's actions align with those of another individual in situations where the model's behavior serves as the stimulus for the matching response.

This study addresses recognized knowledge gaps and offers several noteworthy contributions. It builds upon prior research on Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and its influence on project achievement, as indicated by Latif et al. (2020). Notably, it stands as one of the pioneering studies examining EL's role as a significant predictor of Project Success (PS) within the IT industry. Additionally, it delves into an area with limited existing research, exploring whether EL serves as a substantial predictor of team outcomes, encompassing team reflexivity, team entrepreneurial passion, and team innovation culture.

Furthermore, this research investigates whether Team Reflexivity (TR), Team Innovation Culture (TIC), and Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP) act as mediators between entrepreneurial leadership and project success. This inquiry seeks to establish the mechanisms through which EL influences project viability, enriching our comprehension of this relationship. Additionally, it contributes to the body of knowledge on team outcomes, shedding light on the role of EL in fostering heightened project success.

This study not only augments the literature on leadership by examining a novel leadership style and its implications for project success, but also provides valuable insights to Resource-Based View (RBV) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) by illustrating how EL contributes to project success through entrepreneurial passion, innovation culture, and team reflexivity.

This study aims to investigate how Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) influences Project Success (PS) through the mediating factors of Team Reflexivity (TR), Team Innovation Culture (TIC), and Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP). To address these inquiries, the study poses the following research questions:

Does EL positively and significantly impact PS?
Does EL positively and significantly impact TR?
Does TR positively and significantly impact PS?
Does TR mediate the relationship between EL and PS?
Does EL positively and significantly impact TIC?
Does TIC positively and significantly impact PS?
Does TIC mediate the relationship between EL and PS?
Does EL positively and significantly impact TEP?
Does TEP positively and significantly impact PS?
Does TEP mediate the relationship between EL and PS?

This article contributes to the literature in the following ways: It advances the understanding of how internal drivers, drawing from the resource-based view theory and social learning theory, can enhance entrepreneurial management performance in SMEs (Baron & Ensley, 2006; Bandura et al., 2001); it expands empirical knowledge on the impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership on Project Success (Aga et al., 2016); it offers a comprehensive framework for governments and policies to grasp the direct influence of EL on PS, both directly and through the mediating factors of TR, TIC, and TEP, in the current global post-pandemic context (Mehmood et al., 2021; Su et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022); it contributes to the development of a model encompassing the studied variables, which holds practical utility for academia and the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Abdelwahed et al., 2022).

The study is organized as follows: an introduction, a literature review that sets the stage for the proposed hypotheses, a section detailing the research methodology, including research design, measures, participant characteristics, and data analysis results. The concluding section discusses the theoretical implications, managerial considerations, provides conclusions, outlines limitations, and suggests avenues for future research.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

2.1. Entrepreneurial leadership

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), as described by Cunningham and Lischeron (1991), encompasses objectives, opportunities, empowerment, institutional knowledge, and human resource frameworks. It aligns with contemporary research on leadership and entrepreneurship, focusing on behaviors and actions rather than inherent traits or personalities (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004). Renko et al. (2015) underscore that EL inspires and guides team members towards achieving organizational goals by recognizing and seizing entrepreneurial opportunities. According to Sarabi et al. (2020) and Bagheri and Lope Pihie (2018), entrepreneurial leaders possess qualities such as creativity, innovation, and a willingness to take risks, which in turn, inspire their team members to produce innovative outputs. Kodama (2005) and Hirst et al. (2004) Organizations heavily invested in scientific, technological, and R&D endeavors, which govern the innovation process, necessitate entrepreneurial leadership. Furthermore, although earlier studies have highlighted entrepreneurial leadership as an efficient leadership style that encourages innovative conduct, there is limited understanding regarding the ways in which CEOs' entrepreneurial leadership practices impact employees' innovative behavior (Bagheri et al., 2022; Chiu et al., 2016).

2.2. Entrepreneurial leadership and project success

The project is guided by a budget, schedule, and scope. Jugdev et al. (2013) distinguish project success into two components: essential factors, also known as independent variables, and criteria. These measures are utilized to assess whether a project has achieved success or experienced failure. Leadership within project-based organizations fosters a sense of loyalty by promoting a positive outlook and cultivating a collaborative atmosphere that ultimately contributes to project completion (Aga et al., 2016). The literature on project management emphasizes the vital role of leadership in attaining project excellence (Kerzner, 1987) and driving change (Patterson, 2010). Several studies have demonstrated that both

leadership style and individual traits are pivotal factors in determining project success or failure (Anantatmula, 2010; Geoghegan & Dulewicz, 2008; Mwesiumo et al., 2022).

RBV is commonly applied in management studies to analyze how the resources available to a firm can foster and sustain a competitive edge, ultimately enhancing the performance of urban education, as discussed by Flamini et al. (2021), Welsh and Swain (2020) and Muller and Turner (2010). The Resource-Based View (RBV) elucidates the connection between entrepreneurial leadership and project success. The central concept revolves around gaining a competitive edge through resources and capabilities possessing value, rarity, distinctiveness, and irreplaceability, while also establishing the necessary organizational framework to effectively integrate and utilize them (Barney et al., 2001). Leadership has been identified as a valuable resource for organizations seeking competitive advantage (Kelliher & Reinl, 2009; McKevitt et al., 2022). Given that entrepreneurial leadership embodies qualities such as passion, vision, willingness to take on challenges, proactive problem-solving, radical innovation, and a propensity for risk-taking (Renko et al., 2015), creativity, a fundamental trait of EL, is recognized as a critical organizational resource. Therefore, from a resource-based perspective, it can be argued that leadership, as a resource, contributes to the enhanced success of organizations (Rego et al., 2012). Hence, it can be proposed that:

H1. There is a significant and positive impact of entrepreneurial leadership on project success.

2.3. Mediating role of team reflexivity

Team Reflexivity (TR) is founded on the belief that a team's surroundings are in a constant state of flux, demanding ongoing reflection and discussion to assess recent developments and determine the optimal course of action (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2006). Various leadership styles, including learning leadership, humble leadership, spiritual leadership, and servant leadership, have been shown in existing leadership literature to positively influence team reflexivity (Lei et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Shoukat et al., 2022). While the relationship between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and TR remains unclear and hasn't been quantified thus far, research suggests that organizations characterized by robust team reflexivity and effective leadership are more likely to achieve success (Leblanc et al., 2022; Baerheim et al., 2022).

The influence of EL on TR can be elucidated through the lens of social learning theory. According to this theory, an identifying event occurs when a model's behavior aligns with that of another individual in a situation where the model's behavior serves as the cue for the matching response (Bandura, 1969). According to Social Learning Theory, individuals learn by observing the behaviors and results of others. In this context, entrepreneurial leadership that exhibits innovation, risk-taking and resilience can inspire similar behaviors in their followers. EL therefore involves constant team learning and TR. Therefore, social learning theory stresses the importance of managers' adaptability to work across a range of tasks and employ a variety of skills in diverse circumstances (Liu & Lin, 2019; Dayan & Basarir, 2010). Therefore, social learning theory posits that emulation and vicarious learning processes are mechanisms through which leaders can enhance reflexivity in their teams. Building on this theory, Zhang et al. (2022) propose that the temporal leadership of top-level managers should impact the reflexivity of middle-level team managers. It can be challenging for managers at lower ranks to acquire all the skills and experience required to lead and complete team projects (Castellano et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Hoegl and Parboteeah (2006) concluded that TR was a crucial determinant of Project Success (PS) and that TR and PS exhibit a significant positive correlation. TR plays a strategic role in evaluating the work environment, particularly in uncertain circumstances, and in making informed decisions after the team engages in meaningful discussions about the matter (Gupta et al., 2022). Based on the arguments, it is proposed that:

H2: EL has a significant and positive effect on TR.

H3: There is a significant and positive impact of TR and PS.

The aforementioned literature suggests that leadership can have an impact on team reflexivity (Harvey & Green, 2022) which can in turn influence project success (Connor et al., 2022). Based on the arguments, it is proposed that:

H4: TR mediates the relationship between EL and PS.

2.4. Mediating role of team innovation culture

Team innovation culture refers to the process of generating, adopting, implementing, and integrating new ideas within a team's dynamic (Hsu et al., 2022). Amabile (1988) contends that this culture is shaped by the combined contributions of domain-specific skills, creativity-related abilities, and task-driven motivation. While research on the relationship between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and organizational innovation culture is limited, some studies do acknowledge the link between leadership styles like humility leadership, temporal leadership, gratitude leadership, and team innovation culture (Leblanc et al., 2022; Lyu et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). Furthermore, EL can efficiently guide innovation efforts by encouraging their employees to create and put into practice new and innovative ideas (Malibari & Bajaba, 2022).

The influence of EL on Team Innovation Culture (TIC) can be explained through the lens of social learning theory. Entrepreneurial leaders with strategic acumen can convey their vision to their followers and guiding them through challenging tasks (Bagheri & Harrison, 2020). Consequently, leaders, through their distinctive traits, can aid in cognitive restructuring for individuals, allowing followers to acquire innovation skills from their leaders (Radaelli et al., 2014). Mehmood et al. (2021) propose that entrepreneurial leaders, known for their inventive and innovative attributes, play a pivotal role in driving the innovation process. As entrepreneurial leaders are consistently seeking new opportunities, they foster an environment where individuals can both share and learn from one another.

In diverse project-based organizations, team innovation is crucial for adapting swiftly to external changes and achieving corporate objectives in competitive settings (Emiliano de Souza et al., 2022). Existing literature on innovation recognizes its positive impact on Project Success (PS) and overall organizational management (Ahmad et al., 2022; Sæbø & Midtsundstad, 2022; Li et al., 2022). The Resource-Based View (RBV) can be employed to elucidate the connection between a team's innovation culture and project success. RBV explains the relationship between a team's innovation culture and the success of its projects. According to Caldeira and Ward (2003), variation in the success rate of projects can often be attributed to how teams use their unique resources and internal capabilities. RBV suggests that companies with unique, valuable and hard-to-imitate resources are more likely to achieve superior performance.

In the context of project management, this means that teams that effectively utilize their unique resources, both tangible and intangible are more likely to succeed (Ahmed et al., 2022). Therefore, RBV recognizes the importance of both tangible assets such as project management methodologies and practices and intangible assets such as project facilitation skills. When effectively leveraged, these assets can contribute significantly to the success of a project. In an environment of escalating competition and heightened reliance on external partnerships, factors like open innovation and team innovation have become vital and widespread strategies for attaining a sustainable competitive advantage (Zhang et al., 2023). Based on the arguments it is proposed that:

H5: EL has a significant and positive effect on TIC.

H6: TIC has a positive and significant impact on PS.

As per social learning theory, collaborating with leaders who engage in creative endeavors related to identifying and capitalizing on opportunities enhances the capabilities of team members (Bandura, 1969). Mehmood et al. (2021) contend that entrepreneurial leaders are renowned for their imaginative and inventive attributes, making them the driving force behind the innovation process. Multiple studies (Lyu et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022) suggest that leadership plays a role in shaping a team's culture of innovation, which in turn has implications for project success (Sæbø & Midtsundstad, 2022). The introduction of innovation is regarded as the most potent strategy for enhancing project success (Shaukat et al., 2022). Consequently, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H7: TIC mediates the relationship between EL and PS.

2.5. Mediating role of team entrepreneurial passion

Entrepreneurial passion refers to a consciously accessible, intensely positive emotion arising from an entrepreneur's involvement in activities that hold personal significance and relevance (Cardon et al., 2009). The passion exhibited by entrepreneurial leaders strongly influences how followers perceive project success (Sari & Ahmad, 2022). Previous studies have indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and passion (Norena-Chavez & Thalassinos, 2022). The impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP) can be understood through the lens of Social Learning Theory (SLT). According to the social learning viewpoint, the knowledge is developed through active engagement in tasks, feedback reception, and various forms of interpersonal interactions in communal and social settings. Learning and cognition are not viewed as solitary processes; instead, they are influenced by the nature of interactions team have with others and the specific contexts in which these interactions take place (Hill et al., 2009). To achieve better business outcomes, leaders need to share their passion with their followers (Renko et al., 2015). Leaders instill in their followers the belief that possessing passion is a vital component for successfully accomplishing organizational objectives (Raby et al., 2023; Sari & Ahmad, 2022). This underscores the pivotal role of entrepreneurial leadership in fostering entrepreneurial enthusiasm within the team.

Teams that operate with entrepreneurial passion are more likely to achieve superior performance and ensure project success, according to Finch et al. (2022). Project managers can leverage team entrepreneurial passion to instill a high level of integrity and expertise in the execution of various projects, thereby enhancing their success (Deng et al., 2022; Khattak et al., 2022).

The relationship between team entrepreneurial passion and project success can be elucidated through the Resource-Based View (RBV). This theory suggests that the positive emotions and sense of identity that stem from entrepreneurial passion are key indicators of a team's performance and potential opportunities. RBV particularly emphasizes examining organizations from an internal perspective to understand the factors that contribute to their project success (Ahsan et al., 2022). Team entrepreneurial passion is a resource that enables organizations to gain a superior competitive position (Mwawasi, 2022). Given the dynamic nature of the market and the innovative capabilities of competitors, firms face challenges in meeting their goals and sustaining competitive performance. In such scenarios, the team's entrepreneurial spirit can confer a competitive edge (Norena-Chavez & Guevara, 2020). TEP provides superior economic value compared to competitors or distinguishes itself from its rivals (Fabrizio et al., 2022). Based on the arguments it is proposed that:

H8: The impact of EL and TEP is significant and positive.

H9: TEP has a positive and significant impact on PS.

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) fosters employee involvement in identifying opportunities and developing new products, services, and business approaches (Bagheri, 2017; Renko et al., 2015). Social Learning Theory (SLT) posits that teams can gain valuable insights from their leaders; the actions and behaviors of entrepreneurial leaders also inspire staff to partake in creative endeavors (Mehmood et al., 2021). Existing literature indicates that leadership has the potential to influence Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP) (Abdelwahed et al., 2022), which, in turn, affects project success (Su et al., 2022). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H10: TEP mediates the relationship between EL and PS.

The proposed model is as follows (Figure 1).

3. Research methodology

3.1. Study areas and research design

The research team conducted data collection sessions in Peru involving experienced IT professionals at the senior level. The study exclusively focused on the technology and services sector in Peru. Prior to their participation, all individuals received comprehensive information regarding the research's objectives and scope. Their voluntary participation was confirmed through signed consent forms, ensuring their

informed consent. Participants were assured that the data collected would not be used for commercial purposes, and strict protocols were followed throughout the data collection process.

At the beginning of the questionnaire, participants were informed about data anonymity and confidentiality as an additional measure to safeguard their rights and privacy. They were also provided with a concise survey invitation that outlined the study's purpose, potential risks, if any, and the survey questions. Each subject was treated as an independent unit for the purposes of this study, which is reflected in our data analysis approach. This study adhered to ethical guidelines and underwent a rigorous review process conducted by an independent ethics review board to ensure the ethical treatment of human participants. Data collection took place between November and December 2022. Out of the 500 distributed questionnaires, 450 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 90%. Among these, 422 responses were deemed valid. This research employed a non-probability convenience sampling method, targeting 422 senior-level IT professionals in various regions of Peru, including Arequipa, Trujillo, Piura, Callao, and Lima. This research utilized a method of non-probability convenience sampling. The data were collected at the individual level within teams, not at the team level itself. Therefore, the measurements reflect individual rather than group variations, rendering the intra-class correlation (ICC) analysis inapplicable in this context. Table 1 provides an overview of the respondents' demographic details.

3.2. Participants characteristics

The population of this study was senior-level IT professionals in Peru, In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were male, constituting 91.23% of the sample, while females made up the remaining 8.77%. Regarding age distribution, individuals under 25 represented 24.88%, followed closely by those aged 25–29 at 23.22%. The 30–34 age group accounted for 11.37%, 35–39 comprised 13.74%, and individuals over 40 constituted 26.78% of the sample. Respect of education levels varied among respondents, with the highest proportion holding a Bachelor's degree, comprising 61.61%. Those with a high school education represented 17.77%, while individuals with a Master's or MBA made up 18.72%. A smaller percentage held advanced degrees, with Ph.D. or DBA holders comprising 1.9% of the sample. In terms of geographical distribution, Lima had the highest representation at 35.55%, followed by Arequipa at 23.22%. Callao and Trujillo each accounted for approximately 19% and 11.85%, respectively, while Piura constituted 10.43% of the respondents. Overall, the majority of respondents were male, with a significant proportion holding Bachelor's degrees. The sample also exhibited diversity in age and province of residence, providing a comprehensive demographic overview as seen in Table 1.

3.3. Measures

The items in the survey were drawn from trustworthy and previously validated tools. Initially, the items were created in English with the help of two professors. A direct and reverse translation process was

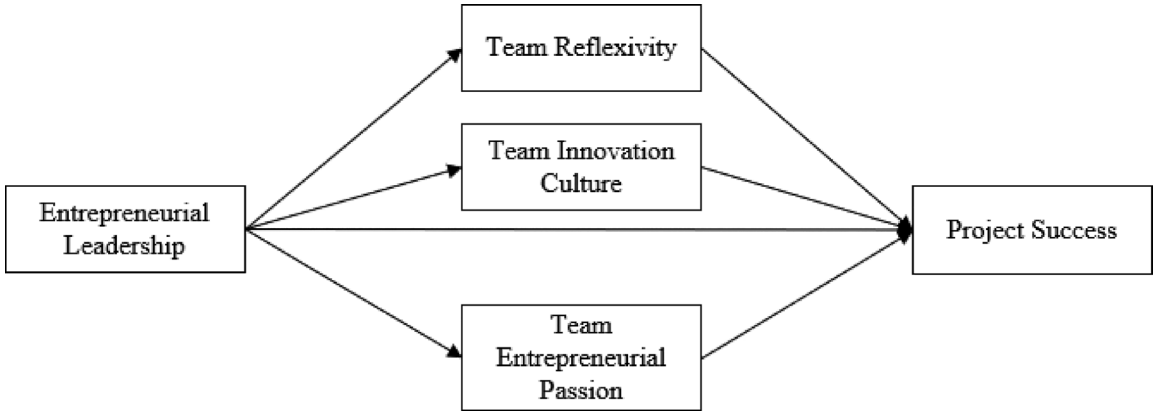

Figure 1. Research framework.

Table 1. Demographic information.

	Category	Atribute	Count	Percentage (%)
Individual demographics	Gender	Male	385	91.230%
		Female	37	8.770%
	Age	<25	105	24.880%
		25–29	98	23.220%
		30–34	48	11.370%
		35–39	58	13.740%
		>40	113	26.780%
	Education	High school	75	17.770%
		Bachelors	260	61.610%
		Master or MBA	79	18.720%
		Ph. D or DBA	8	1.900%
	Provinces	Lima	150	35.550%
		Callao	80	18.960%
		Arequipa	98	23.220%
		Trujillo	50	11.850%
		Piura	44	10.430%

used for each questionnaire item to maintain high-quality translation. Furthermore, to reduce any potential issues with language and understanding, a pilot test was conducted by inviting five IT CEOs to participate. Their feedback was utilized to revise the questionnaire, thus guaranteeing its validity and precision. Each item was assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating 'strongly disagree' and 5 signifying 'strongly agree'. EL with eight items was measured by a scale developed by Renko et al. (2015). TEP scale was measured using a nine-items scale by Cardon et al. (2013) with two dimensions: inventing and developing. TR scale with five items was adapted from Hoegl and Parboteeah (2006). TIC was measured with six items using a scale developed by Terziovski (2010). PS with eight items was measured using a scale by Zwikael and Smyrk (2011).

3.4. Data analysis

The choice of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as the analytical method for this study was influenced by the research's focus on intricate relationships among variables, aligning well with our objectives (Hair et al., 2019). PLS-SEM, with a copyright license obtained for this research, proves adaptable for analyzing complex models with multiple latent constructs, making it a suitable candidate to effectively address the challenges of our study (Hair et al., 2022).

For data analysis, Smart-PLS 4 was employed. The PLS-SEM analysis involves two key steps: the assessment of the measurement model and the structural model (Hair et al., 2019). The measurement model specifications entail the selection of constructs with high indicator load, convergence, compound reliability (CR), and discriminant validity. The bootstrap evaluation of the structural model is utilized to examine the magnitude and significance of path coefficients, a method recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008) and well-suited to PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2014).

Reliability of the constructs was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The study's findings indicate that all constructs exhibited satisfactory reliability above the 0.70 thresholds. Additionally, the assessment of convergent validity involved the use of Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which demonstrated acceptable results, with AVE values surpassing 0.500. The model's dependability and validity are detailed in Table 2.

Discriminant validity was established by comparing correlations among latent variables with the square root of AVE, following the approach proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

4. Results

4.1. Measurement model assessment

PLS-SEM analysis begins with the evaluation of the measurement model, which ensures construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Initially, the factor loadings were evaluated. Although

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	EL	TR	TEPI	TEPD	TIC	KS	PS
EL	0.741						
TR	0.709	0.780					
TEPI	0.604	0.578	0.700				
TEPD	0.577	0.574	0.471	0.807			
TIC	0.668	0.754	0.647	0.508	0.777		
KS	0.394	0.425	0.496	0.484	0.438	0.811	
PS	0.403	0.485	0.371	0.348	0.461	0.406	0.723

Table 3. Construct reliability and validity.

Construct	Item	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL)	EL1	0.668	0.882	0.906	0.549
	EL2	0.755			
	EL3	0.695			
	EL4	0.763			
	EL5	0.831			
	EL6	0.706			
	EL7	0.788			
	EL8	0.707			
Team Reflexivity (TR)	TR1	0.745	0.839	0.886	0.608
	TR2	0.767			
	TR3	0.801			
	TR4	0.784			
	TR5	0.800			
Team Entrepreneurial Passion/ innovation (TEPI)	TEPI1	0.652	0.745	0.827	0.491
	TEPI2	0.789			
	TEPI3	0.666			
	TEPI4	0.625			
	TEPI5	0.755			
Team Entrepreneurial Passion/ Development (TEPD)	TEPD1	0.916	0.794	0.875	0.651
	TEPD2	0.896			
	TEPD3	0.873			
	TEPD4	0.448			
Team Innovation Culture (TIC)	TIC2	0.809	0.836	0.884	0.603
	TIC3	0.748			
	TIC4	0.761			
	TIC5	0.774			
	TIC6	0.790			
Knowledge Sharing (KS)	KS1	0.708	0.824	0.884	0.657
	KS2	0.824			
	KS3	0.857			
	KS4	0.846			
Project Success (PS)	PS1	0.735	0.816	0.867	0.523
	PS2	0.709			
	PS3	0.739			
	PS5	0.769			
	PS6	0.76			
	PS7	0.614			

factor loadings greater than 0.70 are preferred, social science researchers typically obtain peripheral loadings of less than 0.70. Despite eliminating indicators immediately, it is necessary to analyze the effects of the item's removal on the composite reliability, content, and convergent validity. Items with outer loadings between 0.40 and 0.70 shall only be removed if deletion increases composite reliability or extracted average variance (AVE) above the designated range (Hair et al., 2019). The factor loading of the measurement model is shown in Table 3.

In addition to the investigation of outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used to assess the dependability of the construct. All of the study's constructs demonstrated acceptable reliability above the 0.70 thresholds, according to the investigation's findings. In addition to measuring concept reliability, AVE is used to assess convergent validity. The results demonstrate acceptable convergent validity because the AVE was greater than 0.500. Table 3 displays the dependability and validity of the model.

The discriminant validity was determined by comparing the correlations among the latent variables to the square root of AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The discriminant validity is therefore demonstrated. The discriminant validity results are shown in Table 2. HTMT in PLS-SEM ensured distinction between

Table 4. Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT).

	EL	TR	TEPI	TEPD	TIC	KS	PS
EL							
TR	0.814						
TEPI	0.709	0.674					
TEPD	0.689	0.707	0.599				
TIC	0.763	0.892	0.774	0.623			
KS	0.46	0.498	0.631	0.645	0.518		
PS	0.47	0.579	0.455	0.437	0.543	0.487	

Table 5. Higher order constructs.

	VIF	Outer Weights	T statistics	*p* values	Outer loadings	p values
TEPD -> TEP	1.284	0.536	9.475	.000	0.832	0.000
TEPI -> TEP	1.284	0.629	11.892	.000	0.881	0.000

constructs, which is essential for robust analyses, especially in complex environments, and helped to identify and rectify potential multicollinearity issues. The results are presented in Table 4. Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)-

4.2. Significance in the prediction of the constructs

Next, the structural model is assessed to substantiate the proposed relationships, The structural model reflects the paths hypothesized in the research framework.

4.3. Higher order construct validation (TEP)

Next, the structural model is assessed to substantiate the proposed relationships, The structural model reflects the paths hypothesized in the research framework. Higher order construct validation (TEP)

TEP is formed from development and invention. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used to check multicollinearity. VIF values <5 (Hair et al., 2021) imply no multicollinearity. Collinearity did not threaten this investigation because VIF values were less than 5 (Table 2). Next, outer weights' statistical significance and relevance were analyzed (Sarstedt et al., 2019). Outer weights mattered. Each team entrepreneurial passion indicator had strong outer loadings (Sarstedt et al., 2019). Team entrepreneurial passion was validated. Table 5 lists higher-order constructions.

4.4. Mediation analysis

H1 examines if EL boosts PS. EL did not affect PS ($\beta = 0.006$, $t = 0.118$, $p = .468$). H1 was rejected. H2 investigates if EL affects TR. EL affects TR ($\beta = 0.708$, $t = 25.701$, $p = .000$). H2 was supported. H3 investigates if EL affects TIC. EL affects team innovation culture ($\beta = 0.704$, $t = 25.884$, $p = .000$). H3 was supported. H4 investigates if EL influences TEP. EL affects TEP($\beta = 0.688$, $t = 23.07$, $p = .000$). H4 was supported. H5 investigates if team reflexivity affects project success. TR affects PS ($\beta = 0.211$, $t = 2.654$, $p = .004$). H5 was supported. H6 investigates if TIC affects PS. TIC affects PS ($\beta = 0.227$, $t = 3.215$, $p = .001$). H6 was supported. H7 investigates if TEP affects PS. TEP did not affect PS ($\beta = 0.116$, $t = 1.549$, $p = .061$). H7 was unsupported. Table 6 explained the mediation analysis.

5. Discussion

The study examines how EL affects PS through TR, TIC, and TEP. EL has an insignificant impact on PS (H1). This illustrates that entrepreneurial leadership affects project success indirectly through team reflexivity, innovative culture, and entrepreneurial passion. The cumulative effect was considerable. The findings supported previous studies indicating entrepreneurial leadership boosts project success (Latif et al., 2020). This implies that a project-based organization, led by individuals who embrace risk, challenge, and enthusiasm, has an increased likelihood of achieving success (Latif et al., 2020). The outcomes reinforce

Table 6. Mediation analysis.

Total Effect	β	T statistics	p values	Direct Effect	β	T statistics	p values	Hypotheses	β	SD	T statistics	p values
EL->PS	0.395	8.924	0.000	EL -> PS	0.006	0.081	.468	H4: EL -> TR -> PS	0.150	0.057	2.637	0.004
								H7: EL -> TIC -> PS	0.160	0.050	3.166	0.001
								H10: EL -> TEP -> PS	0.080	0.052	1.534	0.063

the RBV, reiterating the unique role leadership plays as a defining trait within an organization (Clulow et al., 2007), leading to improve organizational outcomes like project success. This shows that EL is critical for an organization to achieve PS.

The research revealed that EL significantly influences TR (H2), corroborating existing studies that identified a substantial impact of EL on TR (Hadi & Chaudhary, 2021; Lei et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021). This suggests that an organization marked by leadership that leans toward risk, challenge, and TR will exhibit enhanced performance (Prabhu et al., 2021). These findings endorse the Social Learning Theory (SLT) that emphasizes a leader's role in shaping the behavior of their subordinates and regulating TR. This underscores that EL is a pivotal competency for positively advancing a team's performance within an organization.

The research discovered a significant effect of TR on PS (H3), reinforcing previous studies that have also identified a substantial influence of TR on PS. The results validated this hypothesis. Hoegl and Parboteeah (2006) concluded that team reflexivity was a crucial variable for project success and that team reflexivity and PS have a positive and significant relationship. To ensure the project's success is necessary some skills, such as TR (Lee, 2008). The results support the RBV that iterates the role of leadership as a distinguishing characteristic of an organization (Clulow et al., 2007), leading to improve organizational outcomes like project success. This shows that EL is a critical result for an organization that can help the organization achieve improved project success.

This research has tangibly shown that EL has a significant effect on TIC (H5), corroborating previous studies that also reported a significant influence of EL on TIC (Bagheri & Akbari, 2018; Malibari & Bajaba, 2022). The findings align with the SLT, which emphasizes a leader's role in altering a TIC within various organizations. This suggests that EL is vital for transforming a team's culture and cultivating a TIC.

The study found that TIC has a significant impact on PS (H6). The results validated this hypothesis. Fey and Kock (2022) determined that innovation culture influence the project success and that these variables have a positive and significance relationship. There are some factors, such as execution and team innovation culture, that influence the success of a project (Greco et al., 2022). This positive nexus between team innovation culture and project success is consistent with the core proposition of a resource-based view and corroborates earlier empirical studies (eg Ahmed et al., 2022; Davcik & Sharma, 2016). If employees see an innovation culture, they will become more committed, resulting in improved project success. Several studies have demonstrated that team's involvement in innovation and an innovation-culture environment lead to improved organizational performance and project success (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

The research revealed that entrepreneurial leadership notably influences team entrepreneurial passion (H8). Norena-Chavez and Thalassinos (2022) proposed that various styles of leadership, including transformational leadership, exert a positive effect on team entrepreneurial passion. Leadership styles such as transformational leadership have a positive and significant impact on entrepreneurial passion (Norena-Chavez & Thalassinos, 2022). The findings provide support for the social-learning theory, emphasizing the significant role of leaders in fostering increased passion among their followers when working collaboratively towards achieving goals. This shows that entrepreneurial leadership is crucial for developing entrepreneurial passion among team members.

The study findings indicated that TEP does not have a significant impact on PS (H9). However, the overall influence of EL on PS was found to be significant. This suggests that the impact of EL on PS is indirect, mediated through variables such as TR, TEP, and TIC. These results align with previous research that demonstrated a significant influence of EL on PS (Finch et al., 2022; Deng et al., 2022; Hoang et al.,

Table 7. Hypotheses results.

	β	SD	T statistics	p values
H1:EL->PS	0.006	0.077	0.081	0.468
H2:EL->TR	0.708	0.028	25.706	0.000
H3:TR->PS	0.211	0.080	2.654	0.004
H5:EL->TIC	0.704	0.027	25.886	0.000
H6:TIC->PS	0.227	0.071	3.215	0.001
H8:EL->TEP	0.688	0.030	23.061	0.000
H9:TEP->PS	0.116	0.075	1.549	0.061
	Path Coefficient	Standard deviation	T statistics	p values
H1:EL -> PS	0.006	0.077	0.081	0.468
H2:EL -> TR	0.708	0.028	25.706	0.000
H3:EL -> TIC	0.704	0.027	25.886	0.000
H4:EL -> TEP	0.688	0.030	23.061	0.000
H5:TR -> PS	0.211	0.080	2.654	0.004
H6:TIC -> PS	0.227	0.071	3.215	0.001
H7:TEP -> PS	0.116	0.075	1.549	0.061

2022). In response to competitive circumstances, many project-based organizations assign project leaders to adapt swiftly to environmental changes and achieve organizational objectives. In addition, for teams where identities do not align, advancing as a venture becomes challenging. The absence of a shared understanding of TEP within certain teams is an interesting discovery, suggesting that there may be new venture teams that prioritize the practical aspects of their entrepreneurial PS, leaving limited room for the development of collective emotions or a shared identity (Santos & Cardon, 2019).

Next, the mediating analysis results are discussed. The results show a positive and significant indirect effect of EL on PS through TR (H4). This shows that leadership can have a significant influence on how reflective the team members are (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2006; Lei et al., 2022; Jasen et al., 2022, which can further result in improved project success (Liu et al., 2022). The results are also in line with social learning theory and RBV. Team members learn to be more reflective from their leadership (Wang et al., 2021), and exciting research has also identified that reflexivity is a critical resource/capability that can help an organization achieve its desired outcomes (Leblanc et al., 2022).

The research discovered a significant mediating effect of TIC in the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and project success (H7). The results validated this hypothesis and aligned with previous studies' findings (Ahmad et al., 2022; Fey & Kock, 2022; Sæbø & Midtsundstad, 2022). This is viewed through the lens of SLT, which advocates the idea that followers can adopt the innovation practices of their leaders (Li et al., 2022). Additionally, these findings are consistent with the Resource-Based View (RBV), as a team's innovative culture can enable the creation of a competitive edge through team innovation, differentiation, and knowledge, thus fostering unique capabilities (Mwawasi, 2022).

TEP can be seen as a somewhat significant mediator in the link between EL and PS (H10). The findings supported this hypothesis and corresponded with prior studies (Mwawasi, 2022; Ahmed et al., 2022). The results also concur with the tenets of both the SLT and RBV. Team members can learn to foster more passion from their leadership (Raby et al., 2023), and recent studies have recognized passion as a crucial resource or capability that can assist an organization in reaching its intended outcomes (Sari & Ahmad, 2022). Table 7 explained the hypothesis results.

6. Implication of the study

6.1. Theoretical implications

From a theoretical standpoint, the significance of this manuscript's contributions cannot be overstated. The validation of the proposed relationships between Entrepreneurial Leadership, Team Outcomes (TR, TIC, and TEP), and Project Success (PS) represents a substantial advancement in our understanding of leadership dynamics within the context of project management, particularly in the IT sector of Peru. Firstly, this study fills a conspicuous void in the existing literature by firmly establishing a linkage between entrepreneurial leadership, team outcomes, and project success. This connection not only adds depth to the field of leadership studies but also enhances our comprehension of how these intricate components interplay in a project-driven environment.

Moreover, the empirical demonstration of the positive influence of entrepreneurial leadership on project success serves as a groundbreaking revelation. It corroborates the pivotal role that visionary leadership plays in the achievement of project objectives. Furthermore, the illumination of the contributing elements that underpin project success offers practical advantages to IT businesses. These insights empower organizations to craft strategic initiatives centered around those elements, thereby bolstering their project success rates and, ultimately, their competitive standing.

Beyond these noteworthy contributions, this study adopts a distinctive theoretical framework grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Social Learning Theory (SLT). This framework not only situates entrepreneurial leadership within a broader theoretical context but also enriches our understanding of its functioning within the unique landscape of the IT sector in Peru. By examining the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and positive team outcomes (TR, TIC, and TEP), this research offers a comprehensive perspective on how leadership practices influence the multifaceted construct of project success. The theoretical contributions are profound and multifaceted. It expands our knowledge of the intricate interplay between entrepreneurial leadership, team outcomes, and project success, providing a valuable foundation for future research and practical applications in the dynamic field of IT project management.

6.2. Implications for practice

This study offers a plethora of practical implications that can significantly benefit businesses and organizations operating in the IT sector, especially in emerging economies like Peru. Firstly, it underscores the critical role of entrepreneurial leadership for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) within the technology sector. SME leaders should recognize that embracing entrepreneurial leadership can serve as a catalyst for enhancing team outcomes (TR, TIC, TEP) and ultimately ensuring project success. These leaders should not only champion innovation but also lead by example, motivating their teams to identify and capitalize on entrepreneurial opportunities within their projects. Therefore, when selecting top executives and leaders, organizations should prioritize qualities associated with entrepreneurial leadership, team reflexivity, a culture of team innovation, and team entrepreneurial passion.

Secondly, governmental organizations in emerging economies, including Peru, have a substantial role to play in fostering the growth of IT businesses. They should consider implementing comprehensive entrepreneurial training programs that highlight the significance of positive team outcomes. These programs can encourage employees at all levels to recognize and actively pursue entrepreneurial opportunities within their roles. By nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, such initiatives can contribute significantly to the development of a thriving IT sector.

Lastly, integrating project management methodologies with entrepreneurial leadership principles represents a pragmatic approach to elevating project outcomes and gaining a competitive edge. Organizations should explore the incorporation of entrepreneurial leadership practices into their project management frameworks. This fusion can facilitate a dynamic and forward-thinking approach to project execution, enhancing the likelihood of project success and ensuring that projects align with the organization's broader strategic goals.

In summary, this study's practical implications advocate for the adoption of entrepreneurial leadership, not only at the leadership level but also throughout the organizational hierarchy. By embracing these principles and nurturing a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, businesses in the IT sector can navigate the challenges of the dynamic industry and position themselves for sustainable growth and success in emerging economies like Peru.

7. Conclusions

This study delved into the impact of Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) on Project Success (PS) through the mediating factors of Team Reflexivity (TR), Team Innovative Culture (TIC), and Team Entrepreneurial Passion (TEP). The direct effect of EL on PS was found to be insignificant, highlighting the indirect influence through TR, TIC, and TEP. These findings align with previous research, emphasizing that a

project-based organization led by risk-taking and enthusiastic leaders is more likely to achieve success. The study also reaffirms the pivotal role of leadership in shaping organizational outcomes, in line with the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory.

Furthermore, the research demonstrated that EL significantly influences TR, supporting existing studies that highlight the substantial impact of EL on TR. This implies that organizations with leadership inclined towards risk-taking and challenge-seeking are poised for enhanced performance. The study also confirmed the significant effect of TR on PS, underlining its crucial role in project success. This validates previous research indicating the importance of team reflexivity in achieving successful project outcomes.

Moreover, the study revealed that EL significantly impacts TIC, indicating its vital role in shaping the innovative culture within an organization. This underscores the leader's influence in transforming team culture. The findings also confirmed the significant influence of TIC on PS, emphasizing the importance of an innovative culture in project success. This supports the core proposition of the Resource-Based View and aligns with earlier studies.

Lastly, the study identified that EL notably influences Team Entrepreneurial Passion, emphasizing the role of leadership in fostering passion among team members. However, TEP was found to have a less significant direct impact on PS. Overall, the study highlights the multifaceted influence of EL on-project success through its mediating factors, providing valuable insights for project-based organizations.

8. Limitations and future directions

Future research can overcome this study's limitations. This study used a cross-sectional design to collect data that could only reflect a single moment in time. Longitudinal data collecting research can reveal causality and dynamic effect mechanism. Second, this study examined Peru. Future research should include the examination of diverse cultures. Furthermore, there is a need to explore additional mediating variables, such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, knowledge management processes, and innovative team behavior. Additionally, future studies could assess additional moderating variables, like knowledge sharing and entrepreneurial intent.

Authors contributions

Diego Norena-Chavez (Corresponding author), was primarily responsible for the data collection and analysis, taking the lead in composing the initial draft.

Rocio Romani Torres (author) contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. She provided review of literature, critical insights the interpretation of the findings, contributing to significant revisions.

Both authors collaborated closely in drafting the manuscript. The final version of the paper was thoroughly reviewed and approved by both authors. Both authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work, ensuring its accuracy and integrity.

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Data availability statement

No original data were generated in the course of this study. All data sources and references to existing datasets used in this work are cited in the References section.

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