

Values and gender shape young adults' entrepreneurial and leadership

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Young adults who are driven by extrinsic rewards and money and less by a sense of security are more likely to want to become entrepreneurs and leaders, according to a recent study. The more young people value money and rewards at age 21, the more likely they are to have higher entrepreneurial and leadership aspirations at age 27.

The study was part of a research project funded under the Academy of Finland's Academy Programme BioFuture2025. The study showed that a lower [importance](#) placed by [young adults](#) on security in their future work predicted higher entrepreneurial and leadership aspirations later in life. These results hold after factors such as personality and socio-economic background was controlled.

This topic has not been previously investigated in Finland. Work-related values nevertheless do seem to have a considerable impact on young adults' motivations and intentions to become entrepreneurs or business leaders. The longitudinal study FinEdu involved analyses in a sample of 1,138 young Finnish adults at age 21 and 27.

The results also revealed that a higher importance placed on social or interpersonal rewards at age 21 predicted lower entrepreneurial but higher leadership aspirations. Young adults who had high entrepreneurial aspirations placed high importance on autonomy.

The findings also reveal gender gaps. Compared to women, men place more importance on rewards and less importance on security. These

factors are critical in shaping men's aspirations to business leadership and contribute to the gender gap therein.

More information: Clemens M. Lechner et al, What drives future business leaders? How work values and gender shape young adults' entrepreneurial and leadership aspirations, *Journal of Vocational Behavior* (2018). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jvb.2018.03.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.03.004)

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