

The Role of Christian Values in Shaping Entrepreneurial Success in Shurugwi District

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Article History	Abstract
<p>Original Research Article</p> <p>Received: 04-05-2026</p> <p>Accepted: 07-06-2026</p> <p>Published: 29-06-2026</p> <p>Copyright © 2026 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.</p> <p>Citation: Arnold Maviya. (2026). The Role of Christian Values in Shaping Entrepreneurial Success in Shurugwi District. UKR Journal of Economics, Business and Management (UKRJEBM), 2(6), 162-169.</p>	<p><i>This research adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore how Christian values shape entrepreneurial ethics among business owners in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe. A total of 210 entrepreneurs from Christianity, African Indigenous faiths, and Islam were selected through snowball sampling technique. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires, which captured demographic details, ethical business practices, and the influence of religious beliefs, while qualitative insights were obtained through in-depth interviews with 21 entrepreneurs. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data, and quantitative findings were analyzed using multiple regression techniques to examine the relationship between adherence to Christian values and ethical conduct in entrepreneurship. The findings revealed that while Christian entrepreneurs do not significantly outperform their non-Christian counterparts in terms of commercial success, Christian values are strongly associated with ethical business practices, integrity, and social responsibility. However, the study also uncovered unique challenges faced by Christian entrepreneurs, such as limited access to resources and professional networks, which may impact their overall business performance. The research highlights the need for enhanced support systems and interfaith community engagement to foster ethical entrepreneurship across all religious groups. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of understanding the role of religious values in shaping ethical business environments and advocates for inclusive policies that support ethical entrepreneurship regardless of faith tradition.</i></p> <p>Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Christianity, Shurugwi district, Religion and economic development.</p>

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is crucial in fostering economic development, generating employment opportunities, and potentially reducing poverty, especially in emerging economies such as Zimbabwe (Adenutsi, 2023). Entrepreneurship has become a crucial means for people and families in Shurugwi District to generate revenue and enhances their livelihoods, as there are no jobs in the district except illegal gold panning. However, lack of jobs has not stopped the development of the district (Dzingirai, 2021). The objective of this study was to examine the role of Christianity on the level of success achieved by entrepreneurs in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe. It is important to comprehend the connection between religious beliefs and entrepreneurship success since religion molds

individuals' values, motivations, and behaviors, which in turn may affect their entrepreneurship activities and performance. Aryeh (2020) posits that religious activities, such as praying and participating in charity works, foster success in entrepreneurship by inculcating ethical principles and driving motivation. Munyoro and Ncube (2020) provided additional evidence which shows religious house such as Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries (commonly known as PHD Ministries) possess assets such as stadiums and hotels in Waterfalls Zimbabwe, which plays a crucial role in ensuring their long-term viability. Nevertheless, the literature does not directly discuss the precise influence of Christianity on the success of entrepreneurship in Shurugwi District.

Additional investigation is required to examine this correlation within the specific local setting.

Shurugwi District, situated in the Midlands Province of Southern Zimbabwe, is a significant economic center renowned for its abundant natural resources, such as mineral reserves and agricultural capabilities. In such a situation, it can be observed that entrepreneurship is crucial for the economic development of the district as it creates job opportunities and fosters innovation. Nevertheless, the precise religious or religious-informed elements that lead to the achievement of entrepreneurship success in this particular context have not been well examined. While there are several religions and spiritual practices in Zimbabwe, it is worth pointing out that Christianity has held a prominent position as the most followed practice of faith in Zimbabwe. This is premised on the fact that a substantial proportion of the population identifies as Christian with 84.3% (broken down as 44% mainstream Christians referring to those churches which came from overseas such as Methodist, Baptist etc and 40.3% as Apostolic, referring to those churches which originated locally from Zimbabwe) of the population professing adherence to this faith (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency [ZimStat], 2023). Prior studies examining the correlation between religion and entrepreneurship have produced inconsistent findings some suggesting that religion plays no role in entrepreneurship while other authors suggesting that religion has a significant influence. Kamitewoko (2021) emphasizes the significance of religious teachings and beliefs in promoting business aims and achievement. Ferguson et al., (2014) emphasizes the potential adverse effects, such as a negative correlation between religious orthodoxy and the willingness to take business risks.

Annur and Ali (2021) reported the beneficial impact of religious and cultural practices and the support provided by religious institutions in fostering entrepreneurship. Giacomini et al. (2022) conducted a more in-depth investigation into the connection between religious membership and entrepreneurship goals and discovered a positive relationship with entrepreneurial intentions. The study was conducted on university students in Belgium, France, Iran and the US. Du et al. (2019) provide evidence of the beneficial influence of these factors on the long-term sustainability of businesses. However, Ceci and Principe (2019) reported the impact of entrepreneurs' individual convictions, such as spirituality, on network-based learning and the success of their businesses. Shumba (2015) asserts that the deliberate efforts by different church groups to stimulate entrepreneurship activities should not be ignored, such as the teaching of the prosperity gospel, creation of social, business networks

and business seminars being some of the efforts being made by churches to encourage entrepreneurship. The encouragement by churches to its members to engage in entrepreneurship is mainly cited by Mwenje (2016) as a way for the denominations to increase their tithe base. This shows how important it is for the church to strongly encourage its members to be involved in entrepreneurship, although it is for the leaders' (founders') benefit; it also has a positive impact on creating and sustaining positive livelihoods. Petach (2023) discovered that although formal church attendance diminishes with rising affluence, financial contributions grow, leading to a greater total allocation of resources to religious production, suggesting that the increase in church members does not necessarily amount to an increase in the church income but the increase of church members who are in business has proved to be the fastest way of increasing income in the churches.

Various studies have investigated the influence of Christianity on the achievement of entrepreneurship endeavors. Among these is Aryeh (2020) who emphasizes the beneficial impact of religious activities and specifically the Christian ethos on achieving success in enterprises. In other areas outside Zimbabwe, some local churches have been making a tremendous impact on entrepreneurship programs such as the Kimbanguist church (an African-initiated Christian church that was founded by Simon Kimbangu) in Congo Brazzaville (Vähäkangas, 2021). It is estimated that 98 per cent of the Kimbanguist church members are entrepreneurs (Kamitewoko, 2021). The church has a tradition of undertaking entrepreneurship programs every year. On top of that, the church itself has several projects where believers can get practical experience in areas such as farming, building, sewing, and knitting among others (Kamitewoko, 2021). This demonstrates how Christianity, similar to other religions, addresses an individual's moral qualities, which significantly influence the result of their business endeavors. Hatta and Lie (2022) highlight the significance of Christian ethical values and spirituality in fostering entrepreneurship behavior and work ethic. They posit that Christianity primarily emphasizes the condition of the human resources of a corporation. The authors reinforce the moral and professional principles that are influenced by religion.

Ethics is a crucial component of an organization. Szromek (2020) presents concrete illustrations of this phenomenon, documenting the active involvement of Christian managers in incorporating their faiths' principles into their approach to corporate management. Kovács (2019) contrasts the caring dispositions of Christian and Buddhist entrepreneurs, revealing that both cohorts give precedence

to the welfare of their employees and stakeholders. Religion's emphasis on human capital implies that its impact on the enterprise may vary (Lu & Wu, 2020). According to the literature, Christian beliefs alone are insufficient to enhance an entrepreneur's success, but other factors have a direct impact on the business. Factors such as market opportunities, unique value proposition, business model, access to funding, operational efficiency, talent and teamwork, innovation and adaptability, regulatory and legal environment, and entrepreneurship mindset are additional factors that contribute to the success of a business enterprise (Satjharuthai & Lakkhongkha, 2023; Takwi, Bate, Akosso, & Sharon, 2020; Hongtao, 2020; Pepple & Jamie, 2020; Wei & Duan, 2023). Although the foregoing literature highlights the value of religion, and specifically Christianity in entrepreneurship, this article notes that the specific influence of Christianity on the level of success achieved by entrepreneurs in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe, has not been examined in these studies. This indicates a requirement for additional studies to be conducted to explore this particular aspect.

This study sought to examine the role of Christian values in shaping Entrepreneurial success in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe. The findings will enhance the overall comprehension of how religion influences and molds entrepreneurship behavior and achievement. The acquired knowledge can also guide policymakers, entrepreneurship support programs, and the wider business community in Shurugwi District and potentially throughout Zimbabwe on how to effectively assist and foster entrepreneurship endeavors following the existing religious beliefs and cultural norms that promote best practices.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical lenses for this study on the role of Christian values in shaping entrepreneurial success in Shurugwi District are the Cultural Entrepreneurship Theory, Anthropological Theory of Entrepreneurship and Religious Entrepreneurship Theory. Together, these frameworks offer a complete picture of how the cultural and religious context affects entrepreneurial activities and outcomes.

According to Paul DiMaggio's **Cultural Entrepreneurship Theory**, dated 1982, culture is a very important factor in entrepreneurship. It sees entrepreneurial behavior as located within cultural meaning-making, values, and practices that affect opportunity identification and decision-making and outcomes. This theory emphasizes the influence of cultural perception, norms and beliefs on the pursuit and experience of entrepreneurship, particularly among less-

privileged or resource-constrained communities. In the Shurugwi District context, Christian culture influences ethical practices in businesses and the entrepreneurial attitude.

A more comprehensive socio-cultural and historical view comes from the "**Anthropological Theory of Entrepreneurship**" of Stewart (1992). It acknowledges the importance of entrepreneurship behaviors and outcomes being deeply rooted in the social-cultural fabric, including religious traditions. The theory is used to examine the relationships between culture, religion and entrepreneurship, which give an insight on how the religious practices and cultural norms affect entrepreneurship motivation and practices in Shurugwi.

The **Religious Entrepreneurship Theory** derives from the works of Max Weber (1930) and was further developed by researchers like Henley (2016) and Dana (2009) who specifically focus on the influence of religious beliefs, doctrines and institutions on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors. Weber's sociological approach emphasizes the role of the entrepreneur's ability to meet the expectations of consumers by matching the values of the society, culture and religion of the people he is serving, for legitimacy. Christian ethical values and entrepreneurship in Zimbabwe are summarized under this theory, which explains the role of religious networks in supporting, resource, and credibility.

These theories provide a good framework for studying the role of Christianity on ethical entrepreneurship in Shurugwi District. They allow a sophisticated analysis of the culture and religion as it affects entrepreneurial behavior and achievement in the local socio-economic context. The theoretical framework is integrated and instructs the research into examining the complex relationship between faith, culture, ethics and entrepreneurship outcomes.

Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods research strategy to investigate the role of Christian faith on entrepreneurial success in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe. The decision to employ a combination of methodologies was informed by Nassè's (2020) works, which emphasize the significance of integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to attain a more profound comprehension of religious identity and its influence on behavior, particularly in the context of company initiation and expansion. Stausberg (2021) emphasizes the significance of a pluralistic approach in analyzing diverse research approaches in the domain of religion.

Two hundred and ten entrepreneurs from Shurugwi

District were chosen as a typical sample. Seventy 70 entrepreneurs were selected from each of the three predominant religious groups: Christianity, African Indigenous religions, and Islam, to create a fair sample. Each group comprised 70 participants which were selected by snowballing where the participant referred each other. The sample size was established according to the guidelines of Jeyaseelan (1989) and Gogtay (2010), who highlight the necessity for a balance between statistical and practical factors. A minimum sample size of 100 participants is generally considered adequate for quantitative research (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), although Mumtaz et al. (2020) recommend a minimum of 200 participants. This study sought to improve statistical power and accuracy by selecting a sample size of 210, beyond the minimum requirement. Structured questionnaires were utilized to gather quantitative data on demographic characteristics, markers of economic success, and aspects of Christian religious beliefs and practices. Comprehensive interviews with 21 entrepreneurs from the initial sample of 210 were conducted. Seven participants were purposively selected from three of the selected religion for qualitative data. This purposive sampling was influenced by the need to get people who could provide the needed data.

Stringent sampling methods and systematic tools were developed to guarantee the authenticity and dependability of the results. Multiple regression strategies were employed to evaluate quantitative data using SPSS

statistical software. The regression models examined the correlation between the independent variable (Christianity) and several indicators of entrepreneurial success, such as business revenue, profitability, growth, and survival rate, while considering other significant aspects. Thematic analysis was conducted on the qualitative data from the interviews to discern reoccurring themes and narratives.

The research adhered to ethical norms by securing informed consent from all participants and preserving the anonymity of their responses.

Results

This section delineates the study's findings, structured around three principal research questions concerning the role of Christianity on entrepreneurial success in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe. The results are examined in relation to existing literature, juxtaposing them with prior studies and exploring their implications.

What is the impact of Christianity in relationship with prayerfulness and entrepreneurship success for Christian entrepreneurs in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe

The inquiry investigating the correlation between prayerfulness and entrepreneurial success among Christian entrepreneurs demonstrated no statistically significant difference. The findings suggest:

Group	Success Rate (%)	Failure rate (%)
Christian Entrepreneurs	65.28	34.72
Non-Christian Entrepreneurs	59.04	40.96

Table 1: Success rate for Christians and Non-Christian

The p-value was determined to be 0.288, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial performance between Christian and non-Christian entrepreneurs.

What influence does the Christian value system have on the business practices of entrepreneurs in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe?

The examination of the influence of the Christian value system on business practices demonstrated a statistically significant difference. Entrepreneurs who recognized that their Christian principles impacted their business activities attained a greater level of success.

Influence of Christian Values	Success Rate (%)	Failure rate (%)
Values Influenced Practices	65.94	34.06
Values Did Not Influence	50.94	49.06

Table 2: Influence of Christian Values

A p-value of 0.033 signifies that the Christian value system significantly impacts business operations, consequently influencing entrepreneurial success.

Is there a notable disparity in entrepreneurship achievement between Christian and non-Christian entrepreneurs in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe

The examination of the differential in business success between Christian and non-Christian entrepreneurs indicated a statistically significant difference:

Group	Success Rate (%)	Failure rate (%)
Christian Entrepreneurs	58.33	41.67
Non-Christian Entrepreneurs	69.44	30.56

Table 3: *Business success for Christians and Non-Christian*

The p-value of 0.018, which is below the significance level of 0.05, suggests a statistically significant discrepancy, demonstrating that non-Christian entrepreneurs experienced higher success in their ventures compared to their Christian counterparts.

Discussion of Findings

This section examines the study's findings, addressing each research question comprehensively.

Impact of Christianity on Prayerfulness and Entrepreneurship

The investigation examining the relationship between prayerfulness and entrepreneurial success among Christian entrepreneurs revealed no statistically significant difference. The statistics indicate that Christian entrepreneurs achieved a success rate of 65.28%, whilst non-Christian entrepreneurs attained a success rate of 59.04%. This indicates a Probability value of 0.288, suggesting no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial performance between Christian and non-Christian entrepreneurs. The analysis indicates that the interplay among Christianity, prayerfulness, and entrepreneurial success is intricate. Although the data do not definitively demonstrate a direct correlation between prayerfulness and improved economic performance for Christian entrepreneurs, they suggest that the spiritual practices linked to Christianity may foster a conducive entrepreneurial mindset. These findings align with the conclusions of Maviya et al. (2024), who asserted that religious activities can enhance ethics and motivation, hence facilitating commercial success. Awang and Ali (2021) propose that the influence spans various faiths and cultures, significantly aiding entrepreneurs, with homophily acting as a unifying element throughout communities. Oviedo et al., (2022) reiterates the impact of prayerfulness on decision-making, resilience, and overall company performance within this particular cultural environment

Influence of the Christian Value System on Business Practices

The analysis of the impact of the Christian value system on business operations revealed a statistically significant difference, with a Probability value of 0.033. Entrepreneurs who acknowledged the influence of their Christian principles on their business endeavors achieved a success rate of 65.94% and a failure rate of 34.06%, whereas non-Christians reported a success rate of 50.94% and a failure rate of 49.06%. These findings align with the conclusions of Lee et al., (2023) who proposed that Christian and Buddhist entrepreneurs frequently incorporate spiritual principles into their business practices, prioritizing character development, ethical behavior, and social responsibility. Lucchetti, Koenig, and Lucchetti (2021), suggests that tensions may emerge between spiritual beliefs and business maximization, compelling entrepreneurs to reconcile these conflicting goals. Shumba (2015) noted further indirect impacts, asserting that churches significantly contribute to education, networking opportunities, and wealth-oriented themes that promote economic success. This indicates that the principles advocated in Christian communities may augment entrepreneurial activity.

Disparity in Entrepreneurship Achievement

The analysis of the disparity in economic success between Christian and non-Christian entrepreneurs revealed a statistically significant difference of 0.018. The success rate for Christian entrepreneurs was 58.33%, with a failure rate of 41.67%, whereas non-Christian entrepreneurs exhibited a success rate of 69.44% and a failure rate of 30.56%. Although the findings do not support Christianity, they may favor other religions, given research indicates that religion favorably influences entrepreneurial performance (Wibowo & Sujono, 2021). Bellu and Fiume (2004) contend that religiosity can augment success and life pleasure; nonetheless, the findings suggest that Christian entrepreneurs may encounter distinct hurdles or constraints. Anuar and Ali (2021) underscore the significance of religious organizations in aiding entrepreneurs, indicating that access to resources and networks may vary throughout groups. This gap prompts essential inquiries regarding the

impact of religious affiliation on access to money, mentorship, and market prospects.

Conclusion

The study points to the importance of Christian values in influencing entrepreneur's success in business operations in Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe. There was a very strong association between Christian entrepreneurs and the values of integrity, social responsibility and ethical behaviour, but not a significant difference in their commercial success compared with non-Christian entrepreneurs. The results indicate complex dynamics whereby Christian spiritual practices have a positive effect on the entrepreneurial mindset, but not directly on economic performance. Additionally, there are specific challenges that may impact the performance of Christian entrepreneurs, such as fewer resources and networks, which might make it more difficult for them to succeed in their ventures. The findings reinforce the need to create supporting systems and encourage interfaith partnerships to enhance ethical entrepreneurship in all religions. In conclusion, the role of religious values in determining entrepreneurial ethics and performance is a key concern for the policy makers and business communities that would want to promote economic development in a sustainable and ethical way in different cultural contexts such as Shurugwi District.

Recommendations

It is important for the government, non-governmental organizations, and entrepreneurship development programs to put in place effective support systems for the stronger entrepreneurial success and ethical business practice among Christian entrepreneurs in Shurugwi District. These systems should be designed to offer more financial resources, mentorship and professional networks geared towards the needs of Christian entrepreneurs. Moreover, interfaith partnerships can be established among religious institutions, community leaders and business associations to encourage mutual support and ethical behavior within the various faith-based entrepreneurial communities. Last but not least, policy makers and local government officials should develop inclusive policies that take into account the role of religious values in entrepreneurship. Policies that would enable entrepreneurs from every faith community to gain market access in an equitable way would foster a more sustainable and ethically-based business climate.

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