Exploring Faith and Entrepreneurship among the African-Caribbean Ethnic Minority Group in London

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1. Introduction

Despite the abundance of research on religion and entrepreneurship, considerable lacunae still exist in relation to the African-Caribbean ethnic group and its predominant religion – Pentecostalism - which emphasizes on the work of the Holy Spirit both on phenomenological and on theological grounds (Anderson 2004). Those who have studied the subject matter (e.g. Nwankwo, 2005; and Nwankwo and Gbadamosi, 2009) have encountered extensive use of faith-based metaphors to unpack entrepreneurial identities and, the characterization of African-Caribbean entrepreneurialism. The core postulation in these perspectives is that entrepreneurial quests of these people can be linked to their faith. Hence using interpretive research paradigm, this empirical study explores deeply how members of Pentecostal movements in London use this platform to explain their entrepreneurial boundaries and idiosyncrasies.

2. Research Aims and Objectives

• To identify the link between religion and entrepreneurship among African-Caribbean Christians in London as it relates to their Pentecostal faith
• To explore how their spirituality and membership of their faith-based organizations aid innovation, creativity, wealth creation, decision-making, and effectiveness in business management.
• To expose how cultural resources of faith-based communities are being explored to respond to day-to-day issues about entrepreneurship.

3. Method

Research Paradigm: Interpretivism
Data Collection Method: In-depth, semi-structured interview (tape recorded)
Sampling Method Used: Snowballing (Networking)
Sample:
A total of twenty-five respondents were interviewed as shown below:

4. Findings

Pentecostalism & Entrepreneurship: The Connection

5. Conclusion

This research robustly confirms the interdependent relationship between religion and entrepreneurship among the African-Caribbean ethnic group especially in the context of Pentecostalism. It suggests that believers’ entrepreneurial decisions, activities, management, and even contact networks are influenced primarily by their faith in God. Moreover, their religious communities benefit significantly from the transfer of skills and experiences. The research also suggests that seeking God’s direction has been considerably relevant in aiding innovation, creativity, wealth creation, decision-making, as well as the sustainability in respect of their entrepreneurial engagements. It was also revealed that the encouragement, sound advice, and spiritual and prayer support from their faith-based communities have contributed immensely to how they cope with the associated day-to-day challenges.

6. Future Plans

It is expected that this research project will lead to three interrelated outputs described below:
1. A conference paper - presenting the preliminary findings.
2. A fully developed paper – to be submitted for publication as a journal article
3. Research Funding application – to aid further related studies

7. My Research Internship Story

Career Aspirations
My goal is to pursue a career in academia. I am driven to this pursuit as it contributes robustly to the success of others.

Why I Applied for the Research Internship
A vital aspect in academia involves actively undertaking research projects. Therefore, my purpose for applying for the internship position was to acquire the necessary skills and experience in research.

My Role as a Research Intern
My role on this project was as follows:
• Conducting literature and database searches
• Conducting primary research – interviewing respondents
• Transcribing data collected from interviewees

Working with my Supervisor
My supervisor for the research project was Dr. Ayantunjji Gbadamosi and it was an honor to work with him. Our average meeting time was once a week during which we discussed plans, updates, procedures and techniques which were very useful not only for the project but also my dissertation and any future research which I would undertake. The time spent with my supervisor is priceless as no value can be placed on the wealth of information which he has imparted during that project.

My Experience and What I have Learnt
What I have acquired and developed throughout this research program include:
• How to effectively conduct literature and database searches
• How to improve on my writing skills
• How to effectively conduct primary research
• Personal skills – Flexibility and adaptability to change, open-mindedness
• Researching paradigms and skills
• Networking skills

I believe that this experience has contributed immensely to my career development as I gained hands-on experience and in-depth knowledge of research which form a vital aspect of my career pursuit.

8. References