Lack of Churches on Community Wellbeing of Lopa County, Eastern Equatoria State, Torit-South Sudan

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REGISTRATION NUMBER: UKL2204001

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY IN

PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD

OF A MASTER'S DEGREE OF DIVINITY OF UNIVERSITY

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*Abstract: The study examined lack of churches on community wellbeing of Lopa county, Eastern Equatorial state, Torit-South Sudan. Lack of churches in Lopa County has been a burning issue on the scene. Given the situation of South Sudan, church planting has been halted for two decades. **Methodology:** inclusive study was used because it helped the researcher to collect data from different respondents at a single point in time, and variables w e r e observed without being influenced by the researcher. During the study, a justified dialogue/conversation was made based on views and opinions got from various authors and interviews about the effects of lack of churches on community wellbeing. Facts, statement and theories revealed in the study were subjected to critical analysis. The study relied on information from various texts and journals, personal interviews with selected members as well as research made from books, which aimed at seeking information from 110 people population on the effect of lack of churches on community wellbeing. The result of the findings: This was to investigate lack of churches in Lopa County, According to the result of the findings, cultural rigidity came at 38% then inadequate financial support at 30%, lack of hermeneutically trained personnel at 20%, and lastly, African Spiritualism came in at 12%.This was to investigate the effects of lack of churches in Lopa County, Basing on the result of the findings, lack of spiritual morals came at 52%, followed by missing development opportunities at 19%, High Illiteracy and acute Poverty came in with 15%, and community and individuals Backwardness at 14%. This was to investigate the measure to be taken to reduce the causes of lack of churches in Lopa County, According to the result of the findings, Training evangelists and church planters came at 52%, followed by church planter should be prayerful at 19%, Changing people's mindset to spiritual life came in with 15%, and lastly church should have strategic partnership at 14%*

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BY

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DECLARATION

I, Okwera Richard, do here by declare that this Research report entitled Lack of churches on community wellbeing is my own original work and no part of it has been presented for any award of a Master's Degree, except for the sections for which references have been properly made.

Sign………………………..   **Date………/……..2023**

Okwera Richard

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report entitled Lack of churches on community wellbeing, Lopa county-South Sudan, has been done under our supervision and is now ready for submission to the Faculty of Theology.

1. Sign……………………   Date………/……..2023

Dr. Elizabeth Kuteesa Balirwa, (PhD)

University Supervisor

2. Sign……………………   Date………/……2023

Dr.Dckochen Sam, (PhD)

University Supervisor

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my lovely wife for her firm financial stand during my studies and caring for children in my absence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To God alone is the Glory for the Great things He has done. I acknowledge my lovely wife, for her support to the end of this academic journey. To my beloved, your passion greatly encouraged me to go through this endeavor successfully. Secondly, I salute my supervisors **Dr. Elizabeth Kuteesa Balirwa, (PhD)** and **Dr.Dckochen Sam, (PhD)** and all my respondents and interviewees for having willingly exerted their tireless efforts during interview.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

x

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBO.   Community Based Organization.

CHD.   County Health Department

ECSS.   Episcopal Church of South Sudan,

EDoT.   Episcopal Diocese of Torit

EDT.   Evangelism and Discipleship Training,

EES.   Eastern Equatoria State

 FBO.   Faith Based Organization

LC.   Lopa County,

LCA   Lopit Community Association

LWYDA   Lopit Women and Youth Development Association

PEP   Participatory Evaluation Process

RRC   Relief and Rehabilitation Commission

UNMISS   United Nation Mission in South Sudan

 SPRC   State Peace and Reconciliation Commission
 STECSS   St. Stephen Episcopal Church of South Sudan

 CPA   Comprehensive peace agreement

 SPLA   South People's Liberation Army

 UWMF   University of World Mission Frontier

ABSTRACT

xi

The study examined lack of churches on community wellbeing of Lopa county, Eastern Equatorial state, Torit-South Sudan. Lack of churches in Lopa County has been a burning issue on the scene. Given the situation of South Sudan, church planting has been halted for two decades.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, conceptual frame work, definitions of the terms and concepts and conclusion

1.2 Background of the Study

1.2.1 Global Perspective:

Lack of churches across the world today has closed thousands of unreached people in bondage, wars of greed, diseases, natural disasters, famines and drought which resulted to acute shortages of water and global warming, threatens lives in those unreached countries. Jason Mandryk, the co-author with Patrick Johnston of the well‑ known handbook for Global prayer entitled (Operation World, 1995), focusing on global trends in religious faith and mission, specified that huge populations of people have not been reached by both previous western and current missionaries with gospel. People in these countries are suffering with all sorts of challenges and problems with no gospel which could have been the source of hope, resilience and confidence in their lives. These all happens because of lack of churches which supposed to address both spiritual and the physical needs of the people. This is how Jason describes world's populations not reached with the gospel.

Many parts of the world including Africa continent has not fully receive the gospel though they convinced themselves that Christianity has rapidly shifted from the west and grown across Africa that is a fallacy. There is still a dire need for the missionaries to fully execute the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) in unreached communities so as to liberate God's people from

perishing due to the prevailing ungodly things in the world, especially young countries like South Sudan where the church is still cripple.

1.2.2 African Continent Perspective

Africa is a vast continent comprised of various indigenous tribes with different languages, cultures, traditions and religious adherence. But though many scholars, authors and many of us, belief that Christianity is rapidly spreading and growing across Africa, but in contrast, there are yet many people in Africa who have never heard the gospel of Jesus in history. They are still worshiping and adhering to their ancestral spirits, shrines, offering sacrifices in the streams and ungodly believes. According to https://joshuaproject.net, other parts of Africa have not been penetrated with gospel, countries like Algeria with the population of 44,544,000, with unreached population that counts to 89.7%, Angola's population is 33,866,000, and 1.6% never heard the gospel, Benin has a total population of 12,417,000, but unreached people amounted to 20.6% . These huge populations earnestly need the word of God in order to prepare themselves for salvation, but because of lack of churches in rural Africa, we continue encountering terroristic wars and conflict and demonic activities throughout since those terrorist organizations are taking advantages over the situation and use unreached people with gospel as breeding grounds. To make matters worse, Church planters also tend to confines themselves in urban centers, seeking luxurious life, while leaving a huge population in up countries unattended to, by doing this, we are not following the mandate of great commission (Matt.28:19-20).

1.2.3 National Perspective

South Sudan is the youngest Africa nation that has just emerged from decades of war self-determination from its colonial masters Sudan. The country is still struggling with lots of challenges of how to reorganized and establish itself, thus the church is still wavering. Secondly, most of the Protestants churches which always emphasize church planting, have

just come into the country, only to be face with the current political wrangling in the country. However, protestant church was in Sudan in the late 1976, Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan, Africa in-land Church, and Catholic were the first independent churches in Sudan. But they did little in terms of church planting South Sudan because the influence of Islamic government in Khartoum by then which restricted their movement. There were no active churches in the region due to political interferences. Currently, lack of train personnel also retarded church planting in South Sudan, in other hand, lack visionary and mission minded leaders in church to go for evangelism with the purposes of church planting, but they also confined themselves in urban areas, abandoning the entire rural community unreached.

The mother churches or denominations in South Sudan concentrating in urban areas with little outreach even to the outskirt of the towns. So far the entire country is suffering because the gospel is not being preached across the country couple with lack of developmental programs to attract people to get the church. The population of South Sudan stands at 11,285,000 according to 2008 Sudan's fifth household Census, and the percentage of unreached people is 5.2%.

1.2.4 Eastern Equatoria State

Eastern Equatoria State is the fifth largest state in the country after Jonglei state, and in regards to church planting, it is one of the most lagged behind state. The few churches in the state currently, are also confined/concentrated in the state capital Torit, leaving the huge population in rural areas unreached. Almost the entire population of Torit state live atheistic life characterized by inter-village conflicts, cattle raiding, thievery, road ambushes and robbery and killing throughout the state, because the civil population is heavily armed with all types of automatic machines guns. This created chaos and disturbing insecurity, youth joined organized gangs and rebellious groups that destabilize communities, defeating even the government organized forces. This is because the church becomes stagnant and silent but

pretending to be there moreover it has ignored the saving gospel of Christ's, which is the source of human transformation and remedy to challenges in life. During the South–North war, Torit state particularly, was an intensive battle field where both the Sudan government and SPLA forces could reorganize to launch counter attacks against each other, up to now, there is high a possession of both machines and small fire arms in the hands of civilians, which become very difficult to control insecurity in the state, and it is because the church is absent, how can we transform communities without the transforming church. Given a random physical observation, the entire eastern bank of Torit state, is outside the gospel reach. And in my case study area, Lopa County, Eastern Equatoria State-Torit, it has an estimated population of 176,000 according to 2008, the then 5th Sudan household census, which make up (17.6% of the nation's eleven million two hundred and eighty five thousands (11,285,000). Geographically, Lopa County is situated in the eastern bank of Eastern Equatoria State; living along the foot of both Eastern and Western parts of Lopit Hills, comprised of fifty four (54) lager and small villages. The county or Lopit community badly lacks living churches, thus it lagged behind right from the inception of this community in the area for decades now. Unfortunately, there was no any attempt taken by any denominations or church planters to plant churches in Lopa County. This research was therefore based upon the assumption that there are identifiable Factors contributing to lack of churches or viability of new church planting practices in Lopa County. Some of these factors are general to lack of church planting in the context of South Sudan; others are the rigidity of communities in Eastern Equatoria, while some are unique to or derived from the deeply rooted cultural norms or ungodly spiritualism of the inhabitants in the county. In the researcher's own experience, a failure to plant churches has been observed in the entire area. Back in early 20th and 21st centuries, the area has been an economically challenged corridor with high unemployment rates and job instability which have persisted long, making denominations or church planters sacred and shy

off going to go to this land, because some of the denominations nowadays become business oriented organizations. There is no any kind of mineral discovered here, that is why even other secular organizations are not common here.

Theologically, Lopa County is a fertile ground for missions, evangelism and discipleship where church-planting can be successful. It has very slow societal change from traditional ways of life which resulted into a serious lack of churches or church-planting across the community. Illiteracy is generational and Poverty appears hereditary among the inhabitants. The challenge of deep rooting in traditional values and norms, created unique challenges for church planting in the community. So the pattern resulting to lack of churches, has been the subject of this research exercise, which the opposite is that church planting generally based in the Matthew 28:18-20, "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age". Other related passages associated with Great Commission include Luke 24:45-47; John 20:2123 and Acts1; 8. In all these passages, the truth is placed on making disciple of all nations. J.D. Payne noted.

Conclusion:

The background of the study covered all about the problem of lack of churches in global dimension, Africa continent, nationally-at South Sudan, State level-Eastern Equatorial and the area of study-Lopa county/Lopit community.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Lack of churches in Lopa County/Lopit community has been a burning issue on the scene, which is in reference with or complied with Dr. Myles' statement, that "It is impossible to imagine a transformed community without a transforming church in its midst." (Myles 2011,

P.177). And following the disputes between two communities of Lopit and Pari rifling over the name of the county and its headquarters, it also post problem to church planting program. Secondly, most of the Protestants churches which always emphasize church planting, have just come into South Sudan, and only to be face with the current political wrangling in the country. However, protestant church was in Sudan in the late 1976, Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan, Africa in-land Church, and Catholic were the first independent churches in Sudan. But they did little in terms of church planting South Sudan because the influence of Islamic government in Khartoum by then which restricted their movement. There were no active churches in the region due to political interferences. Currently, lack of train personnel also retarded church planting in South Sudan, in other hand, lack visionary and mission minded leaders in church to go for evangelism with the purposes of church planting, but they also confined themselves in urban areas, abandoning the entire rural community unreached. The county or Lopit community is badly lacking living churches, thus it lagged behind Lopa right from the inception of this community in the area, and for decades now. Unfortunately, there was no any attempt taken by any denominations or church planters to plant churches in Lopa County. This research is therefore based upon the assumption that there are identifiable factors contributing to lack of churches or viability of new church planting practices in Lopa County. Some of these factors are general to lack of church planting in the context of South Sudan, and others are the rigidity of communities in Eastern Equatoria, while some are unique to or derived from the deeply rooted cultural norms or ungodly spiritualism of the inhabitants in the county. In the researcher's own experience, a failure to plant churches has been observed in the entire area hence this study.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

To investigate Lack of churches on the community well-being of Lopa County/Lopit community

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

i.   To identify the causes of lack of churches in Lopa county

ii.   To examine the effects of lack of churches on community well-being in Lopa county

iii.   To established possible ways of solving the causes of lack of churches in Lopa County.

1.5 Research Questions

In this study, three research questions were used as a guideline to obtain information pertaining to churches in Lopa County, the specific research questions are as follows.

i.   What are the causes of lack of churches in Lopa County?

ii.   What are the effects of lack of churches on community well-being of Lopa County?

iii.   What can be done to address the causes of lack of churches in Lopa County**?**

1.6 Scope of the study

The study focused on publication of negative effects of lack of churches on community wellbeing in Lopa County, and particularly on social life and the well-being of the communities in Lopa County, Eastern Equatoria State- South Sudan within the periods of the year 2023.

1.6.1 Content Scope

This study investigated the causes of lack of churches on community wellbeing in Lopa County, Eastern Equatorial State, Torit- South Sudan, which in facts covered the causes, effects

and the church response to address the effects of lack of churches on the social life of Lopit people and the entire inhabitants of the county.

1.6.2 Time Scope

The study considered a period of 2 years 2022 to 2023 and data was collected from May, 2023 to June, 2023. This period was selected to enable the researcher come up with articulate information from the respondents as it would enable them to give responses that are typical of their opinion from the observations made over this period in assessing the causes, effects and the measures to towards the problem (lack of churches in Lopa county).

1.6.3 Geographical Scope

This research was carried out in Lopa County, Lopit community, Eastern Equatorial State Torit -South Sudan, With Lopa County as its case area, which is approximately eighty-nine (89 kilometers from State Capital Torit, and 150 miles away from South Sudan capital Juba. It is located at the eastern bank of Equatoria State, bordering Torit County to the South west, Kapoeta North County to the East, Budi County to South East, and Jonglei Sate to the North, with almost 0.1 percent of churches.

1.7 Significance of the Study

i.   To enable South Sudan Council of Churches (SSC) addresses the issue of lack of churches in the entire country.

ii.   To help international missions and church planters identify unreached communities in the State.

iii. To help the Government, CBOs and NGOs in equitable distribution of development programs in the state,

iv.   To enable the researcher acquire hands on skills about processing of research work and data analysis.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

In the figure 1 below spelt out the causes of lack of churches, independent variables, and the their effects on community's wellbeing are dependent variables and intervening variables affects both dependent and independent variables with arrow pointing in the middle of the two, Where these arrows shows the direction of influence.

(Independent Variants)   **(Dependent Variants)**

| Lack of Churches in Lopa County, Lopit Community | | The effects of lack of churches on community well being |

(The causes)   **(The Effects)**

(The causes)	**(The Effects)**
• Illiteracy • Effects of war/ insecurity in South Sudan • Lack of evangelism & discipleship • Lack of theologians from the community • Atheism, rigid culture • poverty	• Prevalence of false teachers (fortune tellers and divine healers) • Witchcrafts, witchdoctors, sorcery and demonic forces • Inter- village conflicts, divorce, cattle raiding, road robbery and killing. • Ghost marriages and wife inheritances, fornications and adultery • Girl – child compensations practices

Interventions Measures

- Ministry of Religious Affairs should make clear policies governing church planting.
- Denominations should conduct mass evangelism in Lopa County (Matt. 28:19-20)
- South Sudan Council of churches should reconcile worrying Villages of Lopit.
- State Ministry of Education and churches should buildings schools in Lopa County
- Religious institutions should offer scholarship to indigenous to go for theological studies.
- Inter- church committee should resolve rifling over domination of areas by denominations

1.9 Definitions of Key terms

The Church: The church is the fellowship of the Saints, body of Christ.

Lack of churches: is a complete absence of faithful congregations in particular set up or community

Church planting: it is a purposeful and deliberate establishment of Christ's congregations across communities where the gospel never reached

Evangelism: To evangelize is to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior, and serve Him as their King.

Community Well-being:-. Is the state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous? Wellbeing is strongly linked to happiness and life satisfaction. In short, **wellbeing** could be described as how you feel about yourself and your life. Community wellbeing is the healthiness and freedom from the forces of darkness which includes; poverty, Illiteracy, wars, corruption, witchcrafts, sorcery, anti-Christ, false teachers and tribalism which always tear people a part, eroding love and togetherness, peace and community cohesion. One writer stated that "God's way of relating to his troubled world is to seek out a community of people who will dedicate themselves to fulfilling his compassionate and liberating will for all, on behalf of all.

1.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter highlights the general over view of the this research where the general introduction of the entire research paper was given, the background involving statistics of the problem globally and up to national level. Why I chose this topic and area of the study, the research questions were derived from objectives for relevant information and its purpose to the different organizations plus all the key term used are explained based on internet.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the related literature on what other researchers found out on the same problem on what cause lack of churches in other communities in the world. It presents the rate and causes of lack of churches, the effect on community wellbeing (Dr. Myles 2011, P.177).

2.2 The causes of lack of churches in Lopa County

There are numbers of theories on the causes of lack of churches in different the societies which some are theological theories and others are inter religious conflict and some are cultural setup factors. Some can be cumbersome decision-making processes; getting approval to implement new ministries or change outdated and unfruitful ones is often a long and laborious process that can be rife with political and historical motivations. Motivated people who are eager to serve become discouraged when their plans for improving or implementing ministries are deferred because of slow approval procedures overseen by authoritarian leaders. The lack of churches in many communities came as a result of lack evangelism and discipleship this approach to evangelism and nurture has the potential to answer current issues. Church leaders from every denomination and fellowship want to know how to take the widespread expressive individualism of the current turn toward spirituality and transform it into a constructive direction. How can we take the longing that so many people have for spiritual fulfillment and connect it with the Christian tradition of faith and spirituality? How do we form Christians? How do we generate Christian commitment? How do we communicate a sense of belonging to the community that is spread around the world today? This model of evangelism is designed to answer these questions.

2.2.1 Cultural rigidity

Rigid cultures have been the most stumbling blocks to lack of churches, especially on African

Continent, where there are divers" tribes and each tribe is unique from the other. This has been witnessed when a Baptist missionary reached in Africa Tanzania with his family at Mwanza, and as they were staying there, his children picked a young owl with broken wing and they requested him to nurse its broken wing, as he was doing it, they requested, the sukuma in Mwanza doubted his belief because he was taking care of owl which according to them is an owl that acts as sorcerer's assistant that summon witches to their meeting. R.D Hadaway (2020) P.133-134. And this has been and is still a hindrance to church planting.

2.2.2 Lack of theologians from particular community

According to Bruce j Nicholls said, contextualizing is the translation of the unchanging content of the gospel of the kingdom, into verbal form meaningful to different cultures and in their current situation (1979). This has led to lack of churches in some communities because some churches are not training or raising manpower and ministers on how to contextualize scripture, which is very important in church planting because it handles cross cultural settings but, due to improper hermeneutical training by ministers, it has lead people to reject the gospel in the new sported areas for church planting, calling it as western culture of colonization.

2.2.3 Africa Traditional Religion/ spiritualism

The African spirit world is an important and indispensable dimension of the African religious reality. According to Khathide it "offers a serious challenge to Christian theology if the church hopes to present the whole counsel of God in Africa in a meaningful and impactful way" (2003a:289). This belief in God and in the spirits of their ancestors is such an integral part of the African belief system, that Buhrmann indicates that "Anyone denying this would not be considered normal in Africa" (1977:152). For Khathide, the understanding of the spirit world has, however, been complicated by Christianity and Islam which have the most influence on the continent, although other oriental religious beliefs are increasingly making inroads on the continent as well. What these imposing religions, and especially Christianity, need to realize is

that "In all of this, the African cultural and religious heritage is the foundation upon which all invading religious traditions are superimposed" (Khathide 2003a:290). These religions are not introduced into a vacuum.

2.2.4 Inter-religious competition/conflict

This phenomenon heavily contributes towards keeping millions of Africans in dilemma, and over a thousand people groups, largely un-evangelized or unreached communities. The aggressive relationship between Islam and Christianity has been a major challenge for the continent, and the potential for widened fire and confrontation between these two groups is high. However, we watch eagerly as God continues His extraordinary work through the African Church, (Jason Mandryk, global prayer entitled Operation World, 1995).

2.2.5 Ungodly worldviews plagued African church planting programs

Though the new generation (often third generation African believers), now has taken a clear stand against these false teachings, but the nostalgia of many churches remains seriously compromised. There is therefore a critical need for theological institutions, for curriculum appropriate to the African context and for African theologians who can immerse their own people in Scripture in a fitting manner, (Jason Mandryk, the co-author with Patrick Johnston of the well-known handbook for global prayer entitled Operation World, 1995).

2.2.6 Lack of vision by most churches

Thousands of mushrooming churches today lack visions and missions which are the foundational strategies of church; many people falsely claims to be working for the growth and expansion of God's Kingdom, moreover they are dangerously making business with the Scripture. So the primary reason churches decline and lose their sense of hope and passion is the lack of visionary leadership. Pastors and significant lay leaders without vision, purpose and an effective strategy create a leadership vacuum that results in a misalignment of resources that rob

churches of fruitful outcomes for effort and resources invested. And such, many churches have forgotten the Great Commission and, thereby, become disobedient to the Master's marching orders. This deficiency is deepened by a lack of concern for people's spiritual status as well as complacency regarding their own growth as disciples.

2.2.7 The interdenominational struggle for recognition

Africans in the Mission or Western churches as well as the African Indigenous Churches always had to struggle for recognition. Maluleke 18 points out that in the later part of the twentieth century, "… the churches of Africa would not even have been called „churches"… they were seen as and simply called „missions"" (2002a:327). Those in the Mission or Western churches were, in general, not treated on merit, but merely according to their skin color. For the African Indigenous Churches the struggle for recognition was fought on various levels. The history of the African Indigenous Churches can be characterized by this struggle.

According to Mofokeng, "The histories of the African Independent or Indigenous Churches have been a history of struggle for independence, recognition and for unity," (2001:16). One of the levels of this struggle is to be recognized as a Christian church. There can be various reasons for not recognizing African Indigenous Churches as Christian churches, but the fact for Mofokeng is that "To this day, there are some who believe that we are not Christians at all, but pagans who practice African traditional religion mixed with some elements of Christianity…" (2001:16).

2.2.8 Lack of financial support

According to Warren Bird - Most church planters and ministers lack training and experience in budgeting. While many have been involved in preparing a budget for an individual ministry in a previous job (e.g. student ministry, worship ministry, etc.), few have been responsible for an entire church budget including the process of turning vision into a financial plan. Some planters become paralyzed and have trouble moving forward while others blindly move forward without a budget. For bi-vocational planters, the budgeting process is often simply

allocating salary to their part-time planting work since there are little to no additional funds to be budgeted. And most church planters face this challenge the financial strains of planting represent one of the most significant challenges for planters. Many planters come from a relatively safe and stable job (including pay) into an entrepreneurial, risk-taking endeavor with an uncertain future. Often planters are thrust into fund-raising for the first time in their lives with little or no training. Many plants take years to become financially self- sufficient, relying on other churches and donors. The journey to financial self-sufficiency often places a heavy burden on the church planting family. The lack of experience causes another issue. Planters who raise considerable funds for a large launch face a common trap-- misunderstanding the difference between cash flow forecast (i.e., having the right funds at the right time) versus total cash commitments, which are not limited to a specific schedule. The result is that some planters over commit funds at specific times even though they've raised enough total funds. Warren bird said

2.2.9 Lack of self-esteem

Self-Image, Many bi vocational ministers, especially pastors, often suffer from a low self- image of their ministry. Considering the historic role and current importance that bi vocational ministry has in God's Kingdom, it's hard to imagine why any bi vocational ministers, especially pastors, could have even occasional feelings of low self-image. There are those who feel that "fully-funded" ministers look down on them. Whether it is true or not, the perception is very real to those who feel they have been slighted by their colleagues in the ministry. Following are a few of the reasons for low self-image stated by bi vocational pastors. That is why it is imperative that those in the various categories of leadership should know their roles and responsibilities. Undefined roles and responsibilities lead to power struggles, unmet needs and disunity. Defining the responsibilities of key leaders (Elders, Deacons, Staff, and Lead Pastor) contributes to shared responsibility and defines accountability systems. This can also be associated with Fear of change, a church's ability and

eagerness to implement needed changes to maximize its ministries and resources is at the core of congregational transformation. Growth requires change. Change requires risk. Risk quite often invokes fear. Resistance to change is too often historical, emotional and personal, rather than spiritual and practical.

2.2.10 Limited formal theological training on church planting

Although many bi-vocational pastors have seminary level training, it's not an exaggeration to say most do not. There may be many reasons for not getting a full formal education: the call of God came late in life; there was not the financial means to go to seminary; family responsibilities; etc. The ministry of Amos shows that one does not have to have formal theological and church administration training to answer God's call. Consider the answer Amos gave to a critic, "I *was* no prophet, neither *was* I a prophet's son; but I *was* a herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. And the Lord took me as I followed the flock and the Lord said unto me, „Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." (Amos 7:14-15) With that said, one must also remember that if God can use an uneducated, untrained man, how much more can He use one who is formally prepared. Paul prepared for three years for his Christian ministry (Galatians 1:18) and Jesus prepared for 18 years for a three year public ministry (Luke 2:42, 3:23). If our Lord and Paul saw the need to prepare for their ministries, surely every one called of God should prepare also. All bi vocational pastors should feel the challenge to seek every opportunity to increase their Biblical and theological knowledge, as well as, church administration training. But the final word must be, "The God who called him will equip him for where He puts him."

2.2.11 Biblical Leadership

Most churches leaders have failed to plant churches in other areas because most of their congregation lacked biblical leadership that may go and start up a church and that is applying literally the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9, we had no qualified elders. All the some Africans societies are new to the faith, and some still lacked clear signs of regeneration.

The nearest scriptural elders were too distant to exercise meaningful leadership. We sought the advice of experienced church leaders on extra-Biblical options and finally followed the recommendation of making all the founding men provisional leaders and having them act by unanimous accord until God would raise up two Biblically qualified elders. However, some of the men simply could not maintain the moral example necessary of anyone leading a church even as a "provisional leader," and in the first year three had to be removed. The scriptures say with good reason that new converts cannot be made leaders, "lest they become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil." For two of the three who had to be removed because of scandalous sin, the loss of face was too much to bear, and they left the church and the faith altogether. All along, the founders were reminded that we were all only provisional leaders who would one day relinquish authority to true elders. No one was allowed to call himself an elder or a pastor. The man who eventually became our persecutor found that a chaffing restriction. He complained against the policy in his secret meetings, and as soon as he got rid of the other leaders assumed the title of pastor. The paucity of elder-qualified nationals is a great difficulty for the African church. For reasons given later in the section on nominalism, rising up a group of Africans who will clump together as a church is not hard. Gaining genuine conversions is, however, more difficult. The incidence of spiritually qualified leaders in churches is also low, due in part to the large percentage of nominal adherents overall. To find one elder leading 20 or more congregations is not unusual. Yet the same church planters, knowing they are unable to tend the congregations already established, work industriously to rise up even more. Their concern is to reach the lost with the gospel; but when one evaluates the fruit of shallow evangelism and the reputation gained for Christ by carnal, leaderless churches, there is reason to doubt the usefulness and the validity of this approach.

2.3 The Effects of lack of churches on the community wellbeing

2.3.1 Missing Development opportunities

Churches as faith based organization are playing an important role in connecting its communities and individuals to the outside world, to tap development opportunities in for that community, for example education where churches have started up the child development center's for the purpose of helping the needy children to attain basic needs. Medical Intuitions, churches have taken a lead to establish powerful health centers in many countries and communities with the global prayer entitled Operation World. Such have indeed improved the lives and health status of people greatly; therefore, when the community does not have churches, it always misses such opportunities, thus prone to dangers of illusive life (Robin Mansell, publish year 2001). The church is so instrumental in fighting poverty through development activities that cannot be overlooked; Churches have come of age and collaborate with different organizations to improve the well-being of communities around their vicinity through social and economic community development programs. The purpose of this thesis project was to investigate the effects of lack of churches on community people's wellbeing, and so the church can play a major role in building community and uplifting the standard of living for the community within its vicinity. The results show that the church recognizes poverty as a problem that needs attention and has taken various social and should take economic actions to improve the well-being of the community around its vicinity. The church helps in establishing health centers, education institutions, spiritual well-being, social, family life, community empowerment and livelihood. I therefore recommend further research of the church's role in community development and assessment of how sustainable the church development activities are. I also recommend the church to seek more collaboration with other faith based organizations in community development activities.

2.3.2 Lacks of spiritual and morals foundation throughout the community

Those communities without churches are always characterized by alcoholism, substance abuse, domestic violence, greediness, sexual immorality and promiscuity, which results to rampant cases of suicides, loss of lives, and wide spread of deadly diseases like HIV/AID and STDs (Ryan McKay, Harvey Whitehouse, 2015). The role of the modern church in the life of the 21st-century believer is critical because it fills a void only the church can, Church is where people should go if they are in need of a "spiritual fix." The church is really a hospital for sinners and not an exclusive club for saints. Regardless of what is said about churches, people expect that their life problems can be addressed in some fashion or form. With all the weight and pressures of their world weighing down on their minds, people expect the church to provide Bible-based answers that no other institution can provide.

2.3.3 Acute poverty

Belshaw et al., (2000) stress that the Church should broaden and share research information with governments and institutions like World Bank of the voices of the poor based on the Church understanding of poverty that's include religious, family, ethical and cultural aspects. Fighting poverty demands care and respect for fellow human beings even though the whole dimension of fighting poverty has its own practical aspects (Marshall & Keough, 2004). The Bible governs how Christian faith conduct itself irrespective of affiliation and therefore the church has a responsibility based on the bible to be included in poverty alleviation (Sakwa, 2007). People who are experiencing extreme poverty need to be reached and be treated as equals with considerations of human rights they have been denied (Marshall & Van, 2007).

The church is important because it serve the poor by availing financial resources to them in times of crisis. The church can provides relief efforts, but life happens, and, occasionally, people need financial assistance. Rent money is short, babies need coats, utilities get shut off, and food is in short supply. This can easily happen when take-home pay barely meets expenses or

survival depends on a welfare or Social Security supplement check. The Bible is replete with passages on this topic regarding the poor (Deuteronomy 15:7-11, 26:12; Isaiah 58:7, 10; Matthew 5:42, 19:21; Luke 3:11). This doesn't mean we just hand out benevolence, though in some circumstances that's okay. Instead, the church can serve the poor in times of financial crisis by becoming their temporary employer. The church can provide opportunities for them to earn what they need by working around the church as the worker is worthy of his/her wages and, in many cases, the work provides them with a sense of dignity because an economic exchange is taking place as two people meet each other's needs. In my book, that's not charity. Overall, the work of our church is about providing development opportunities as opposed to relief and rehabilitation. Relief and rehabilitation efforts are important in a crisis; they're just not what we do given the prevailing conditions among the poor in my community.

2.3.4 Religious View on culture

Undoubtedly, African people are deeply religious with religious insight shaping much of African culture (Fonlon, 2010). African traditional Religion has neither particular founder, nor is written in any holy books, and in fact, they have no theology connection (Omenya & Alum, 2014). African traditional faith is culturally, socially and politically pure African in which they exist and pass on and it is one of the most ancient forms of religious exhibition in the African continent (Omenya & Alum, 2014).There is misinformation and misunderstanding between religion and culture; and indeed, if religion and culture are correctly understood they walk hand in hand and can be used to enforce community development and community mobilization (Murphy, 2012). Cultural customs develop slowly with time and form a compounding relationship both with religion and those involved in it (Marshall & Van 2007). Fonlon (2010) points out that religion enforces rights and wrongs through believes.

2.3.5 Individual and community Backwardness

The church has been a bridge between the community and the outside world for centuries,

therefore, a community without church in most cases, are outside modernization, backward and underdeveloped due to not being exposed to the new approaches to life, or technological things that dominates the world today, for instant, comparing their culture, tradition of doing things and others so that they can emulate or copy good things from others and leave others which are not important for their community and individual talents development.

The church brings development in various ways such as; education to poor and our youth in preparation for the current and future job market. The church advocates for better education, including vocational skills training in step with the market. This means people need vocational high schools that link students to sponsors who will provide on-the-job training so students can graduate from high schools with life skills, trades, and, hopefully, jobs. Not everyone is going to college, and this means an increase in education funding. The church should be working in the public square to make this happen.

2.3.6 Poor training on church leadership

Since training personnel has been a hindrance, churches Planters have faced incredible pressure to find quality leaders quickly. Yet the limitation of money is another blow, critical mass, and spiritual maturity in new churches creates an under-stocked leadership fishing pond. Many church planters lack a strong leadership teams, leader/staff/elder' teams or other early structure in the church's life. Thus, they also lack an accountability team in the church. This result in an increased burden of responsibility, no one to "watch their back," a lack of advice on key decisions, and a lack of peer fellowship, and this can be solved by the mother church to first train its people before sending them to the field or business of church planting.

As most church planters face the challenge of financial mobilization, church planters should have in mind strategies on how they can rely on themselves financially, without an outside support and also to train pastors on livelihood business.

According to Aubrey Malphurs, strategic planning is the fourfold process that appoint leader,

such a pastor, works through regularly with a team of leaders to envision or re-envision and revitalize his church by developing a biblical mission and a compelling vision, discovering its core values, and crafting a strategy that implements a unique, authentic church model. in other words, and the church leaders and pastors should develop a unique decision making and implement strategies to influence the cause and effects for the most desirable consequences and a outcomes of their church model. This biblical mission, vision and core values should be adopted in a coordinated process within a time –box.

2.3.7 Strategic partnership

We cannot do it alone, church planters should have a well-organized strategy of partnership because it is a key factor in church planting movement with a living example of pastor peter kasirivu of Uganda Ggaba community church. In his article on the necessity of church planting in Africa, he said that "if the iron is blunt and one does not sharpen its edge, he or she uses more energy and strength to do things, but wisdom helps one to succeed" as he quoted Ecclesiastes10:10. Therefore, churches to be plant in Lopit community, connection and partnership, is essential and it should be practiced by church planters in South Sudan (kasirivu said), 2019 Annual Africa University Annual Theological Conference on the necessity of Church planting.

According to Dr. Mugambi eloquent statement, he said that church planters and their home church, should be more prayerful and discernment as he was quoting Apostle Paul saying that "he got a dream about the people of Macedonia so that this can motivate" (church planters).

Church planters should never forget the influence of technology on church growth; therefore church planters should invest also in technology for the transformation of many societies. As Isaiah 43:18 says "God is doing new thing" Pr. Peter kasirivu. With the issue of self-reliance, church planters should provide plans and programs like vocational training to church planters so that the leaders are well equipped with skills like proper budgeting and planning for the

churches they are planning to plant Local churches should always be creative by utilizing each and every property and opportunity to make it useful through coming up with transformational plans that may help in attracting people to the body of Christ. As Dr. Myers said, "it is impossible to imagine transforming communities without a transforming church" (Myers 2011, p.177) and therefore, we need God supernatural help through the church…).

Strategic planning is a continuous alignment of organizational decisions, objectives and priorities to move from point A to B in a coordinated and collaborative manner it is the organizational decisions, objectives that influence the cause and effects in order to lead towards the most desirable consequences" and outcomes. It is the process by which an organization including the church environs its future from the present and develops plans, policies and approaches to achieve it at future in collaboration with all stakeholders.

Therefore, for the church to determine where it is going it needs to know faithfully where it is at present, where it wants to go and how it will get there, it needs to evaluate its strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats rationally, so that they become community oriented. (Dr. Nguzo Uche- leadership training10/28/2015).

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the causes and the effects of lack of churches on community wellbeing of the people of Lopa County, Eastern Equatorial State-Torit-South Sudan.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains how the study was conducted and how the information was gathered by describing the research design, study area, populations, study procedures, sampling techniques, the instruments used to collect data, data collection procedures and data analysis.

3.2 Research design

A cross-sectional study was used because it helped the researcher to collect data from many different individuals or respondents at a single point in time, and variables will be observed without being influenced by the researcher. During the study, a justified dialogue/conversation will also be made based on views and opinions got from various authors and interviews about effect of lack of churches on community wellbeing. The facts, statement and theories revealed in the study will be subjected to critical analysis. The study relied on information from various texts and journals, personal interviews with selected members as well as research made from books. The study aimed at seeking information on lack of churches on community wellbeing. Secondly, the study will target 110 people as total population.

Thirdly, library research was done and books were examined for details on how to achieve information to examine the effects of lack of churches on community wellbeing of Lopa county, Lopit community. Deep study of the methodology was taken at the UWMF Library; internet and articles were also used to provide more information about the topic of the study.

Fourthly, primary source of data will be collected from the population of case study area, using questionnaires, interview guide,) in order to compare the findings with the secondary source of data collected from library research and internet. Lastly, after the analysis of the two sources of data, similarities and differences helped the researcher to draw conclusions and recommendations of the study.

3.3 Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Eastern Equatoria State Torit-South Sudan, in which the sampling used here was to select Lopa County, Lopit community as the study site to identify causes of lack of churches in the county. The study covered the three Payam of, Imehejek, Obunge, Lohutuk).

3.4 Population of the Study

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2011), refers to population as the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate, and Mugenda (2003), a population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic. In other words, population is the aggregate of all that conforms to a given specifications (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). And for this reason, Lopa County has a population of over 176,000 people both young and old; the majority is children and youth totaling 4,500, who are qualified as respondents. The targeted population was 86 people citing Male and Females (women and men), Sunday school children, religious leaders, organized forces, health workers, county local government administration and community members.

3.5 Sampling techniques

The researcher used purposive sampling to select key informants for in-depth interview. Therefore, religious leaders and community members will be selected for interviews because they are the ones who have in-depth knowledge of effects of lack of churches on their community wellbeing. Church leaders will be selected for an in depth interview because they do a lot of things in partnership with other organizations to reinforce church programs in the county. The police officers in charge of the police posts located in the sub county were selected because they form part of the law enforcement agents. Medical or health workers from each and every health center located in sub county and county headquarters were also selected because they treat patients and immunize children in the sub county.

3.6 Sample Size and Calculation

The sampling used was Slovene's formula to get the sample size and according to this formula, the population size of 110 people was selected. Therefore, my sample size was 86 people as calculated below. The research used a total number of 86 people including the church leaders, police, local government officers, health workers, save the children staff, prison wardens, youth, parents and caretakers were sampled out for interview for data gathering.

Quantitative data:

$$\textbf{From,} \quad n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{110}{1 + 110(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{110}{1 + 110(0.0025\ )}$$

$$n = \frac{110}{1 + 0.275}$$

$$n = \frac{110}{1.275}$$

$$n = 86$$

Table 1: Showing the sample size of the respondents

Category	Population	sample size	sample technique
Project directors of children development centers	10	8	Purposive sampling
Medical or health works	10	8	Expert sampling
Children and youth	30	23	Expert sampling
Law enforcement agencies	10	8	Expert sampling
Parents and care givers	50	39	Random sampling
Total	**110**	**86**	

Therefore, the sample size was 86 respondents out of 110 people

3.7 Data collection methods and instruments

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used in this study which

incorporated the collection of both primary and secondary data. The methods included questionnaire, and interview. And the instruments to collect information included semi structure, structured questionnaire, open ended questions and interview guide. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information from the sampled respondents.

Questionnaires

This was the most tool used preferred by the researcher, because it enabled him to interact with people of different background which would in turn help him to get the right information from the field. Semi-structured Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents and the research assistant also helped to administer questionnaires for those respondents who had difficulty to read and write. In depth Interview guides, these was used to collect data from the some respondents who had an in depth knowledge of the topic of study. Library research, the researcher used this tool for data collection method to obtain his literature review which enabled him to find opinions and responses of the other researchers about the same problem under investigation and to make comparisons

3.8 Validity and reliability of Data

This methodology was used to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in gathering the required data for purposes of the study, a pilot test was conducted. A pilot test is and evaluation of the specific questions, format, question sequence and instructions prior to the main survey. Questions answered by a pilot test include; questions‟ measuring what is intended to measure? These are questions interpreted in a similar way by all respondents? Do close ended questions have a response which implies to all respondents? Are the questions clear and understandable? Is the questionnaire too long? How long does the questionnaire take to complete? Are the questions obtaining responses for all the Responses for all response categories or dose every one respond the same? This study will use content validity because it measures

the degree to which the sample of the items represents the content that the test is designed to measure. A pilot study was conducted by the researcher taking some questionnaires to the church leaders, police and parents and caregiver, and some which were filled by some respondents at random. From the pilot study, the researcher was able to detect questions that needed editing and those that are unclear. The final ones were printed for data collection for better analysis.

3.9 Data Analysis

The researcher used qualitative and quantitative techniques in analyzing the data. After receiving questionnaires from the respondents, the responses were edited, classified, coded and tabulated to analyze quantitative data. Tables and charts were used for further representation for easy understanding and analysis.

3.10 Ethical considerations

The study was approved by the review committee of the University, and the researcher got permission from Lopa county executive Director before carrying out any activities pertaining to the study on the effects of lack of churches within Lopa County. The respondents had to consent either by verbal or written, He also followed the university procedures and used the university guidelines while making research in the field. The researcher collected only data needed for the purpose of the study without encroaching into the respondents' other information for his personal benefits, and yet it is not relevant to his/her study. The potential respondents were informed about the nature and purpose of the study and the intended use of the data, without manipulating the respondents. After the researcher had sought the informed consent of the respondent, the researcher will protected the confidentiality of the information collected from the respondents; and ensure that processing and use of data conforms to the pledges made.

3.11 Limitation of the study

There was information bias where by some respondents were not willing to give out accurate information in regards to lack of churches, thinking the researcher will assume that they are the most spiritually affected victims, but however, friendly approach to applied conducted the study in one Lopa county (Lopit East). Another limitation was a relatively long distances from one Payam to another, but I was able to borrow someone's Motorcycle to reach far places, there was also insecurity along the paths leading to other locations, but I was able to use the appropriate time the inhabitants use and utilize the hours people use for movement in the area. The specific areas chosen from within the county were; Imehejek, Lohutuk, Mura-Lopit and Obunge Payam to represent the entire Lopa county and South Sudan, as a whole. The study was limited or shrunken by time where the information/data was for only 2 months that is from May –June 2023.

3.12 Conclusion

Therefore, the methodology that the researcher used in this study was appropriate in consideration to a rural setting of a third world country. The sample size was sufficient for inclusion of all resourceful persons, while the population of the study includes all target groups of people.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents research findings, interpretation of data and discussion of the results that were obtained during research on effects of lack of churches in Lopa County and it consists of tables and charts numerically representing the population of study in relation to their responses during research. The data collected on each study objective was analyzed using statistical tables and descriptive statistics. The chapter furthermore gives a discussion of findings and comparison with similar studies done. The results and discussions presented based on total of 100 respondents

4.2 Bio data

Table 2: Showing the age group

Age group	Frequency	Percentage %
15-25	7	8.1
26-35	45	52.3
36-45	21	24.4
46 and above	13	15.1
Total	86	100

Source: Field data 2023

From the above table, most of the respondents were people from age 26-35 with the frequency of 45 an equivalent of 52.3%, followed by 25 respondents who were age 36-45, with the frequency of 24 which equivalent to 24%. So the majority of respondents were people of age 26-35, and the reason is that they know about the history of the area in relations to church history in Lopit community.

Figure 1: Showing the Age Group of Participants
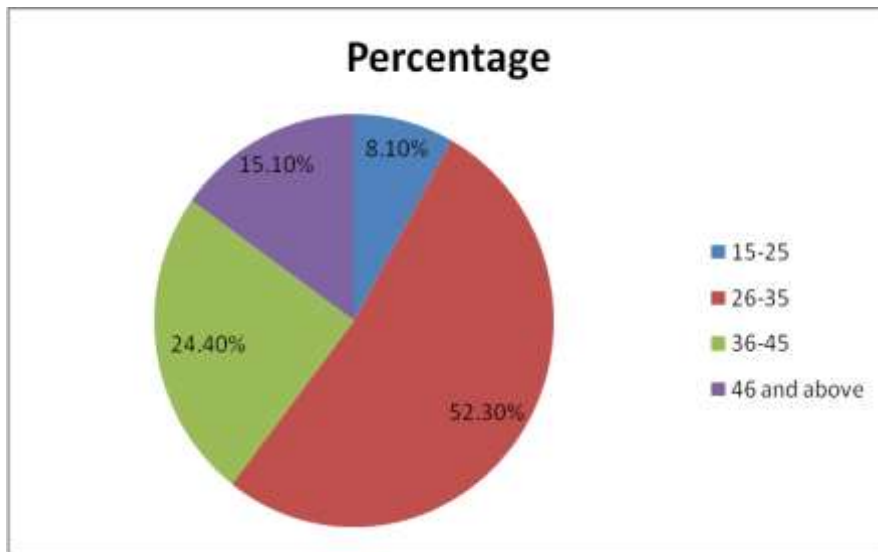
In the above chat, most of the respondents were in age group of 26-35 years with percentage of 52.3%, followed by   36-45 with percentage of 24.4%, followed by 15.1% of the respondents who are in the age group of 46 and above, and the least where from age group of 8.1%. Therefore, most of the people approached where ranging in 26-35 years of age.

Table 3: Showing gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	28	32.6
Male	58	67.4
Total	86	100

Source: Field data 2023

From the table above, most of the respondents were male with a total frequency of 58 people which is equivalent to 67.4% of the total respondents, the reason why Males were the majority is that they have courageous senses or braveness to communicate compared to Females who shy off, and then followed by 28 respondents who were Female. And this is because my study had high number of males than females.

Table 4: Showing marital status of the respondents

Status	Numbers	Percentage%
Married	48	55.8%
Single	12	14
Widow	12	14
Divorced	14	16.2
Total	**86**	**100**

Source Field Data 2023

From the research, table 4 illustrates 55.8% of the respondents were married and they are the majority because they were my major target since they are responsible married people who can explain the points in view of the experience from their life background. Followed by divorced people at 16.2% and lastly the Singles and the widows both came in with 14%, each of the total respondents people making up the summation of 86 respondents which is 100%

Figure 2: Shows the Age Group
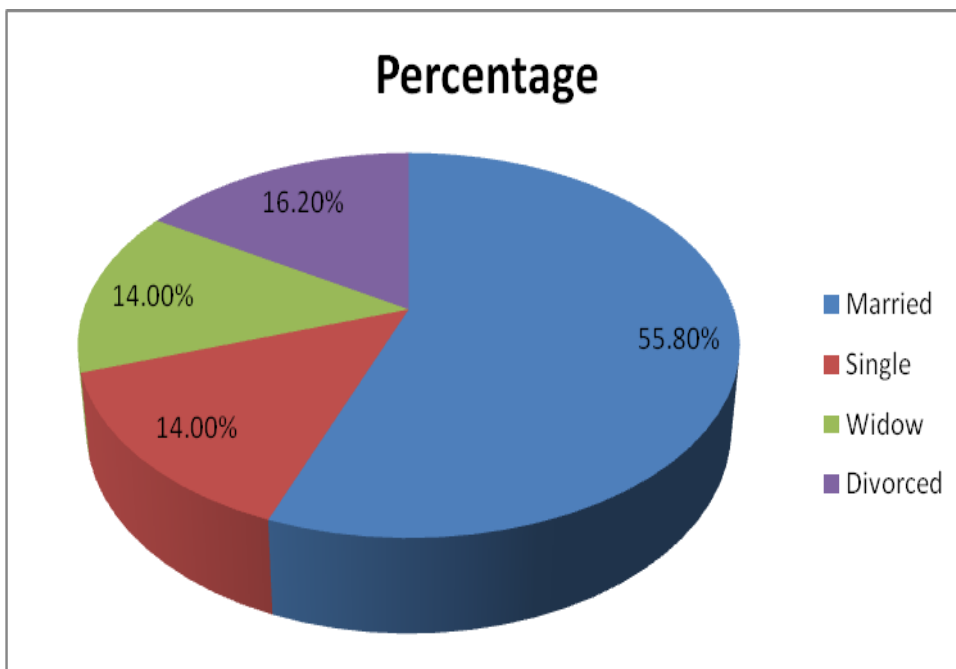
From the research, table 4 illustrates 55.8% of the respondents were married and they are majority   because they were my major target since they understand effects of lack of churches which affects their individual marital status or family life. Followed by the divorce at 17%. And lastly Singles and the widows both came in with 14% each of the total population summing up to 86 respondents which is 100%

Table 5: Showing the religions of the respondents

                                                                                             n=86

Religion	Frequency	Percentage%
Catholic	30	35
Anglican/Episcopal	29	34
African In-land church	10	12
Pentecostals	9	10
Muslims	8	9
Total	86	100

Source Field data 2023

The above table and graph presents the religion of the respondents whereby there the Catholics came as the highest number with 35% of the total respondents, followed by the Anglicans/Episcopal church at 34%, and came in the African In-Land church with 12% of the respondents, Pentecostal came in with 10% of the total respondents, and lastly came Muslims with 10% of the total numbers of the respondents.

Figure 3: Shows the religious differences of the respondents
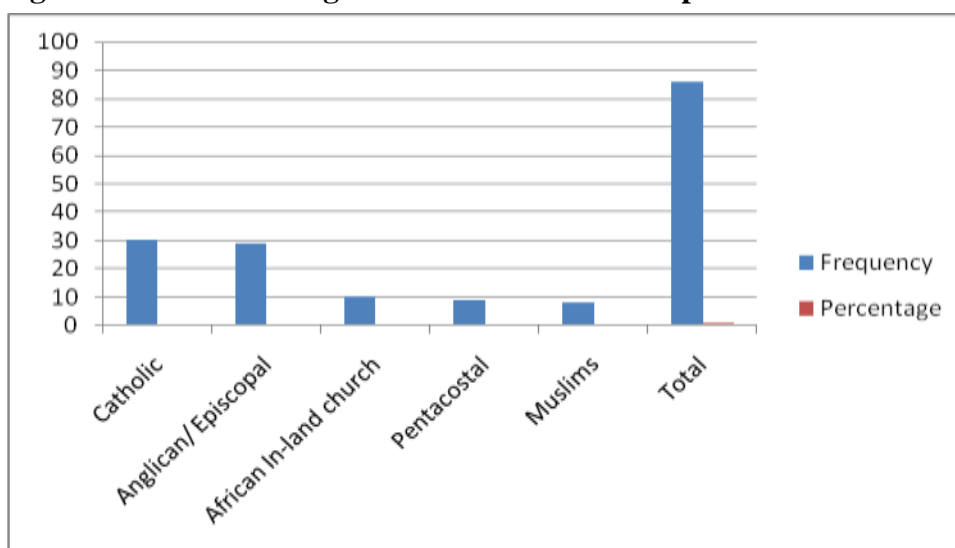
The above chart shows the religious and denominational of the different respondents where the highest percentage of the respondents are Catholic with 35%, followed by Anglican/Episcopal church with 34%, followed by 10% African In-Land church, then, are Pentecostals and 9% were And lastly the Muslims came at 8%,

Table 6: Showing the education level of the respondents

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage %
Not Educated	30	35
Primary 5	29	34
Secondary	14	16
University	8	9
Technical	5	6
Total	**86**	**100**

Source Field data 2023

The above chart shows that 35% of the total respondents were uneducated people and 34% of them were respondents were primary levers, 16% completed secondary level, 9% were University graduates and 6% of them were technical students. The highest percentages of the respondents were uneducated people with 35%

Figure 4: Shows education level of the respondents
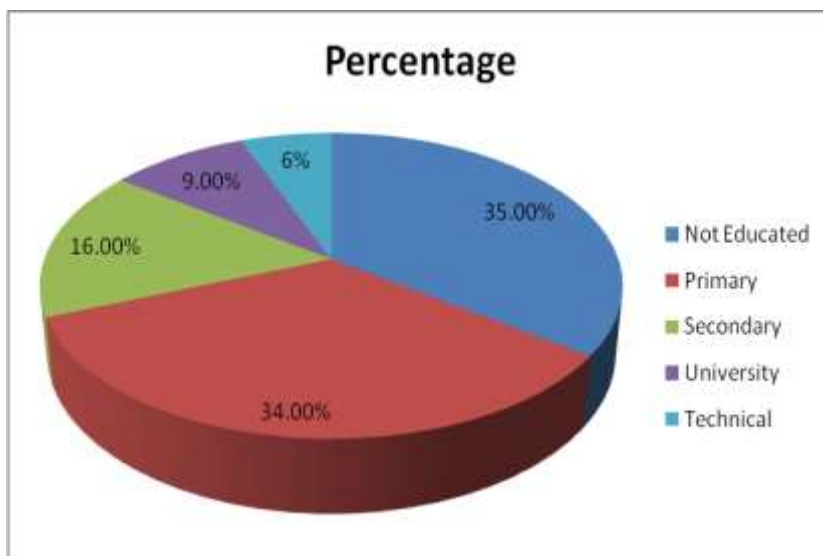
Source: Field data 2023

According to the chart above, it presents the Education level of the respondents where by most of the respondents were uneducated people with 35% ,34% were primary levers, 16% completed secondary level and 9% finished University, while 6% were technical students. Therefore, most of the respondents were uneducated people.

4.3 Objective One: To identify the Cause of lack of church in the community of Lopa

Table 7: Showing the causes of lack of churches in Lopa county/Lopit community

n= 86

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural rigidity	33	38
Lack Hermeneutical knowledge/training	17	20
African Spiritualism	10	12
Lack of financial support	26	30
Total	86	100

Source Field data 2023

According to the above table, it presents that cultural rigidity has highly affected the

church planting negatively as shown by 33 respondents out of 86 which is equivalent to 38% came as the highest problem affecting church planting in Lopa county, leading to lack of churches in the county, and inadequate financial support as the second major cause of the problem which was recommended by 26 respondents equivalents to 30% of the total respondents, 20% of the total respondents cited lack of Hermeneutically trained personnel to be other another cause of lack of churches in Lopa county12% of the total respondents suggested African Spiritualism is also the major cause of the problem s which contributed to lack of churches in Lopa county. This is in confirmation with RD Hadaway (2020).

Figure 5: Shows the causes of lack of churches in Lopa County
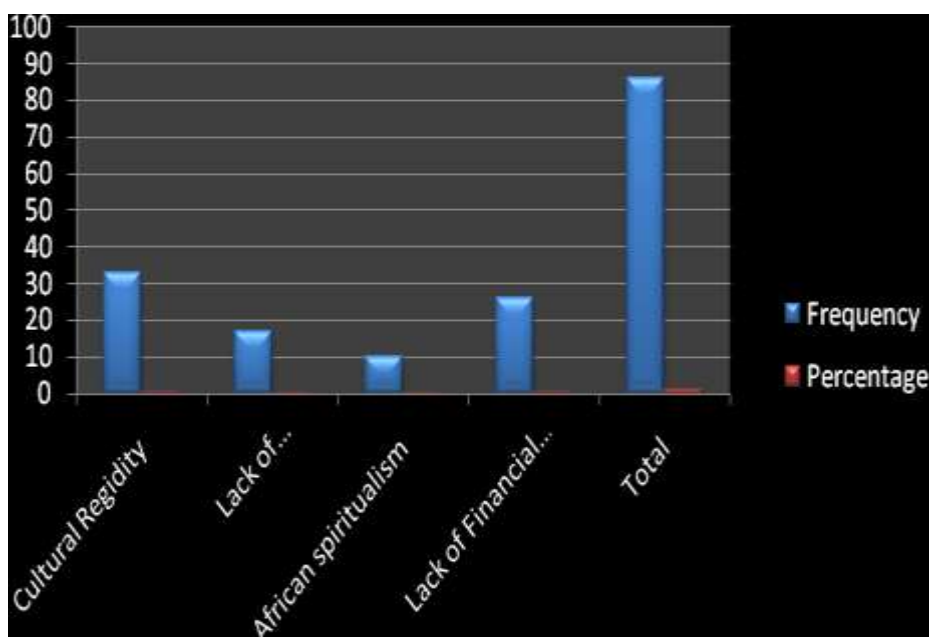
Source: Filed data 2023

According to the figure above, it presents that cultural rigidity has highly affected the church planting negatively as shown by 33 respondents out of 86 which is equivalent to 38% came as the highest problem affecting church planting in Lopa county, and inadequate financial support as the second major cause of the problem which was recommended by 26 respondents equivalents to 30% of the total respondents, 20% of the total respondents

cited lack of Hermeneutically trained personnel to be other another cause of lack of churches in Lopa county12% of the total respondents suggested African Spiritualism is also the major cause of the problem s which contributed to lack of churches in Lopa county. This one is also in reference with Bruce j Nicolls (1979).

Table 8: Showing if cultures have hindered church planting

Response	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	58	67
No	28	33
Total	86	100

Source: Field data 2023

From the above table, 67% of the total respondents had agree that lack of churches is true in the area because of culture where some cultural practices contradicts with the church of Christ values thus making it major difficult for the church to be planted in such area whereas 33% of the respondents disagreed with the suggestion of cultures are hindrances to church growth, which is also in reality with RD Hadaway (2020).

Table 9: Showing whether there are effects of the culture on church panting in Lopa County

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	51
No	42	49
Total	**86**	**100**

Source: Field data 2023.

From the above table, 51% of the total population sampled, agreed with the researchers point of lack of hermeneutical training has hindered the church planting in the area which is in reference with Bruce j Nicholls said contextualizing is the translation of the unchanging content of the gospel of the kingdom into verbal form meaningful to different cultures and in their current situation/community (1979). This implies that due to lack of knowledge on how they can contextualize the Bible into their community setup.

Table 10: Presenting if African Spiritualism within people in Lopa has hindered church planting

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	61	71
No	25	29
Total	86	100

From the table above, illustrated that African Spiritualism has also played a vital in contributing towards the issue of lack of churches in Lopa County, 61 respondents agreed with 7%, while25 respondents with 29% affirmed that it is not.

Table 11: Shows if Struggle for recognition among church denominations has hindered Church planting and growth in Lopa

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	3	4
No	83	96
Total	86	100

Field data 2023

From the above table, it illustrated with 3 respondents who have asserted that there is indeed some struggle for recognition among denominations has hindered church planting in Lopa County.

4.4 Objective two : The effects of lack of churches on the community wellbeing of Lopa County

Table 12: The effects of lack of churches on its community wellbeing

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Missing development opportunities	16	19
Lack of spiritual morals in the community	45	52
High Illiteracy and acute Poverty	13	15
community and individuals Backwardness	12	14
Total	86	100

Field data 2023

Basing on the findings, lack of spiritual morals in the community as the highest effects of

lack of churches in the community and this was agreed upon by 52% of the respondents as seen on the table above, followed by the loss of many development opportunities due to lack of churches at 19%, High Illiteracy and acute Poverty came in with 15% of the total number respondents, and lastly came community and individuals Backwardness at 14% of the total number of the respondents. And this one is in reference with Robin Mansell, published tear (2001).

Table 13: Has the continuing African spiritualism hindered church planting programs in Lopa County?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	60	70
No	26	30
Total	86	100

Field Data 2023

And derived from the findings, continuing or growing African spirituality has highly hindered church planting in the county, which has been affirmed by 70% of the total respondents" as seen on the table above; this is mostly what contributed to lack of churches in Lopa county/ Lopit community, which concurrently goes with Khathide (2003a:289, 1977, Khathide 200:290) statement.

Table 14: Has lack of churches in Lopa County hindered county and community development at large?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	56
No	38	44
Total	86	100

Field data 2023

Base on field findings, 56% of the total respondents agreed that lack of churches in the county has badly deprived or denied development opportunities in the entire county and the community in general, which is a concern of everyone in the county now. This is

affirmed by Robin Mansell, Published year 2001) statement.

4.5 Objective three :Possible ways of solving the issue of lack of churches in Lopa County

Table 15: Does the church in Lopa County have church planting programs like; strategic partnership and evangelism training?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	80	93
No	06	07
Total	86	100

Field data 2023

Again base on the field findings, 93% of the respondents have unanimously agreed that the few churches in Lopa county have no strategic church programs like partnership, missions and evangelism that could boost church planting in the county, which is always impossible to have a transformed community if there are no transforming church (Dr. Myles 2007),

Table 16: Objective three The possible measures to the causes and the effect of lack of churches on its community wellbeing

Possible measures	Frequency	Percentage
Training evangelists and church planters	45	52
Church and church planter should be prayerful	16	19
Changing people's mindset to spiritual life	13	15
Should have strategic partnership	12	14
Total	86	100

Field data 2023

Basing on the findings, Training evangelists and church planters came as the highest possible measure to the cause and the effects of lack of churches in the community and this was agreed upon by 52% of the respondents as seen on the table above, followed by the Church and church planter should be prayerful at 19%, Changing people's mindset to spiritual life came in with 15% of the total number respondents, and lastly came Should have strategic partnership at 14% of the total number of the respondents.

40

4.6 Conclusion

Therefore this chapter discussed the percentages of response of the respondents, possible

solutions to lack of churches on community wellbeing

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains summary, conclusions and recommendations from the findings of the research. The conclusions are totally dependent on the results of the research because this research was aimed at identifying the effects of lack of churches on community wellbeing of Lopa County, and they should address them from now and in the future.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Objective one: The causes of lack of churches

According to the result of the findings, cultural rigidity has highly affected the church planting negatively as shown by 33 respondents out of 86 which is equivalent to 38% came as the highest causes of lack of churches in Lopa county, and inadequate financial support as the second major cause of the problem which was recommended by 26 respondents equivalents to 30% of the total respondents, 20% of the total respondents cited lack of Hermeneutically trained personnel to be other another cause of lack of churches in Lopa county12% of the total respondents suggested African Spiritualism is also the major cause of the problem which contributed to lack of churches in Lopa county.

5.2.2 objective two: The effects of lack of churches on community's wellbeing

Basing on the result of the findings, lack of spiritual morals in the community as the highest effects of lack of churches in the community and this was agreed upon by 52% of the respondents as seen on the table above, followed by the loss of many development opportunities due to lack of churches at 19%, High Illiteracy and acute Poverty came in with 15% of the total number respondents, and lastly came community and individuals

Backwardness at 14% of the total number of the respondents.

5.2.3 Objective three: The Measures to lack of churches in Lopa County

According to the result of the findings, Training evangelists and church planters came as the highest possible measure to the cause and the effects of lack of churches in the community and this was agreed upon by 52% of the respondents as seen on the table above, followed by the Church and church planter should be prayerful at 19%, Changing people's mindset to spiritual life came in with 15% of the total number respondents, and lastly came Should have strategic partnership at 14% of the total number of the respondents.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Objective one

This was to investigate the Causes of lack of churches in Lopa County, According to the results of the findings, cultural rigidity came at 38% then inadequate financial support at 30%, lack of hermeneutically trained personnel at 20%, and lastly, African Spiritualism came in at 12%.

5.3.2 Objective two

This was to investigate the effects of lack of churches in Lopa County, Basing on the result of the findings, lack of spiritual morals came at 52%, followed by, the loss of many development opportunities at 19%, High Illiteracy and acute Poverty came in with 15%, and community and individuals Backwardness at 14% .

5.3.2 Objective three

This was to investigate the measure to be taken to address the causes and the effects of lack of churches in Lopa County, According to the result of the findings, Training evangelists and church planters came at 52%, followed by Church and church planter should be prayerful at 19%, Changing people's mindset to spiritual life came in with 15%, and lastly came Should

have strategic partnership at 14%.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Objective one

Basing on the results of the findings, the researcher therefore, recommends that the churches should consider training of the evangelists and church planters should be adopted so to improve the growth of churches in Lopa county. And in case it is adopted and implemented, then we shall see a growing number of churches in the community, whereas, if it is not taken and implemented, then we shall see the highest increase in the cause of no churches in the community.

5.4.2. Objective two

This was to investigate the effects of lack of churches in Lopa County**;** Basing on the result of the findings, the researcher therefore, recommends that, all the suggested that Faith based organizations should a lead in sending the indigenous people to theological colleges so that they come to embark on church planting in Lopit community. In case it is not taken and implemented, then, we should prepare to see the worse effects of the lack of churches in the community. Whereas, if it is taken and implemented, then, we shall see the high decline in the effect of lack of churches in the community

5.4.3. Objective three

This was to investigate the measure to be taken to carve the causes and the effects of lack of churches in Lopa County**,** Basing on the result of the findings, the researcher therefore, recommends that, all the suggested that the Ministry of education should consider building schools in Lopa county in order to reduce illiteracy among community members. In case it is not taken and implemented, then, we should prepare to see the worse effects of the lack of churches in the community, whereas, if it is taken and implemented, then, we shall see the high decline in the effect of lack of churches in the community.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

Basing on the research findings, I suggest other researchers to investigate on the following areas:

i.   How can cultural rigidity, inadequate financial support to the church planting and the effects of Africa Spiritualism be address especially in among unreached communities?

ii. The effects of High rate of Illiteracy, and acute Poverty in communities without churches?

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Dear sir /madam,

I am **Okwera Richard,** a student at University of World Mission Frontier (UMWF), pursuing a Masters' Degree in Divinity. I am carrying out a research on ***Lack of*** ***Churches on Community Wellbeing*** in Lopa County, Eastern Equatoria State- Torit-South Sudan.

This questionnaire has been designed to collect data from the respondents of Lopa County, the information you provide may be used by government line ministries, Faith Based Organizations, and Community Based Organizations, Humanitarian agencies and church planters to address or deal with the burning issue of lack of churches in your community.

You are therefore humbly requested to participate in this exercise by generating responses to the questionnaire. Your responses will be treated high confidentiality and will strictly be used for academic purposes only.

Section A: Bio Data. A) Age

A) Below 15 ☐   B) 15-25 ☐   C) 25-35 ☐   D) 35-45 ☐

E) 45-55 ☐   F) Above 60 ☐

2) Marital status

A) Single   B) married   C) Divorced   D) widow   E) Others

3) Religion

A) Anglican   B) Pentecostal   C) Catholic   D) Muslim   E) others

4) Educational level

A) Primary   B) Secondary   C) University   D) unlearned

5) Employment

48

A) Teacher   B) Peasant C) Doctor   D) Business

E) Church Leader

Section B: To Investigate the Causes of Lack of Churches in Lopa County

1. What are causes of lack of churches in Lopa County?

    A) Cultural rigidity

    B) Lack of theologians/pastors   C) African Traditional Religion

    D) Lack of financial support

1. Has the culture of the inhabitants of Lopa County contributed to lack churches?

    Yes   *No*

2. Lack of theologians/ pastors from Lopa County contributed to lack of churches in the county.

    Yes   No

    3.   Has African Traditional Religion within people in Lopa hindered church planting? Yes
    No

4. Is it true that Struggle for by different denominations hindered church planting and growth in Lopa?

    Yes   No

5. Has the Lack of financial support undermined church planting programs in Lopa County? Yes
No

 Explain your answer? ....

Section C: To identify the effects of lack of churches on the community wellbeing of Lopa County.

6. What are the effects of lack of churches on its community wellbeing?

A) Missing opportunities   B) Inter-villages conflict

B) Acute Poverty   D) Atheism

7. Has African Traditional Religion hindered church planting programs in Lopa County?

Yes   **No**

Explain

………………………………………………………………………………………………

8. Has lack of churches in Lopa County hindered county and community development at large?

Yes   **No**

Explain

…………………………………………………………………………….........................

SECTION D: To Establish Possible Ways of Solving Lack of Churches in Lopa

County

9. Does the church have church planting programs like; strategic partnership and evangelism training?

Yes   No

Based on the knowledge about the possible solutions on lack of churches in your community, answer by ticking on the solution as to what extent can it help in addressing lack of churches in your community?

Instructions: use the scale of highly, moderate, least and not sure (**Tick in the box provided**).

Possible measures	Highly	Moderate	Least	Not sure
Many denominations are planning to plant churches in				
The churches in Lopa county have strategic				
Training evangelists /church planters				
Changing people's cultural mindset to religious life				
Church and church planters should be more prayerful				

Thank you so much for your time and participation.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

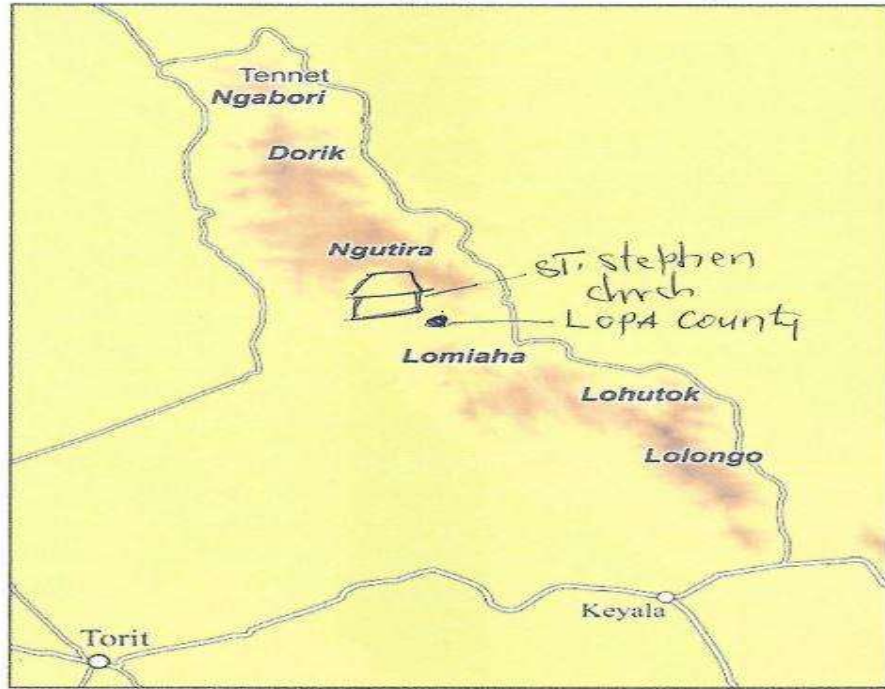1. What are the causes of lack of churches in Lopa County?

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2. How has the lack of churches affected individuals and community development in Lopa County?

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3. What can be done to address the challenge of lack of churches in Lopa County**?**

Appendix B: Introductory Letter.

Appendix D: Sketch Map of Lopa County/Lopit Community

Below is Lopa county, Imehejek headquarters

Above are other Payam within the county covered by the researcher.