

**THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS MITIGATING POVERTY AMONG
CHRISTIANS LIVING IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARIDI**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this work constitutes a personal research paper, other than the sources that have been acknowledged. The research paper has neither been submitted in whole nor in part for any degree at this University or elsewhere.

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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated first to Almighty God, who is the ultimate source of all wisdom and strength, and in loving memory of my late father, Frazer Kariambia, and my late mother, Joice Adam, who instilled in me the values of patience and hard work. This work is also dedicated to my beloved children, Milima Kariambia, Ibine Kariambia, Azibo Kariambia, and Aziri Kariambia. May the joy of this work fill your lives with hope and purpose. Lastly, this work is also dedicated to all my sisters, who have supported me throughout my bittersweet academic journey. All your support will not go unnoticed and may the Good Lord Jesus Christ bless you all.

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ACRONYMS

CD: Community Development

CDI: Community Driven Initiatives

CMS: Church Missionary Society

EDM: Episcopal Diocese of Maridi

ESV: English Standard Version

FBO: Faith-Based Organization

GA: Governmental Agencies

PAI: Poverty Alleviation Initiative

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

SSA: South Sudan Assessment

UN: United Nations

WCC: World Council of Churches

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Diocese: The term "diocese" refers to a geographical area under the pastoral care of a bishop in the context of the Church.

Episcopal: This term is often used to refer to the tradition of governance in the Anglican Church.

Non-Governmental Organization: This refers to any organization working outside the government institutions, mainly to handle social issues affecting people in the community.

Poverty refers to the state in which some individuals in a community lack the financial resources to meet their basic standard of living, including access to essential services such as healthcare, shelter, education, and food.

Mitigation: The action taken to reduce the high level of a problem, in this context, efforts invested to alleviate the high-level impacts of poverty through various initiatives led by the church.

Church: This refers to the group of followers of Christ in Christianity, often organized under a specific denomination such as the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, which may provide community support and spiritual guidance to its members.

Community Development: This term typically refers to the process where people from the community come together and collectively take action to address and bring solutions to the problems facing their community, often intended to foster the improvement of social and economic conditions of the lives of people.

Social Services: These refer to services provided by the government or non-profit organizations aimed at enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities, often addressing key issues such as education, health, and poverty.

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigated the role of the Church in mitigating poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi, South Sudan. Recognizing the Church as a critical social institution in post-conflict communities, the research examined how Church Programs and Initiatives, Experiences and Perceptions of Poverty, and Faith-Based Beliefs and Recommendations interact in shaping poverty alleviation efforts.

A descriptive cross-sectional design was employed in this research, with a quantitative approach being used. Structured questionnaires were given to 451 respondents selected from church congregations across the diocese. IBM SPSS version 27 was used for data analysis, with both descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation used to assess relationships between key variables.

The results revealed statistically significant positive correlations among all three core variables. A reasonable affirmative correlation was found between Experiences and Perceptions of Poverty and Church Programs and Initiatives ($r = .437, p < .01$), suggesting that persons experiencing advanced intensities of poverty remained more likely to report awareness of or engagement with church-based interventions such as food aid, vocational training, or cooperative support. A weaker but still significant correlation was observed between Experiences of Poverty and Faith-Based Beliefs and Recommendations ($r = .269, p < .01$), indicating that those facing economic hardship were somewhat more inclined to support expanded church involvement in poverty alleviation. The strongest correlation emerged between Church Programs and Initiatives and Faith-Based Beliefs and Recommendations ($r = .480, p < .01$), demonstrating that respondents who positively viewed church interventions were also more likely to advocate for increased church engagement in economic empowerment and social support.

The study concludes that while the Church in Maridi Diocese plays a pivotal role in supporting the poor through practical programs, its impact is reinforced by the faith-driven expectations of its members. Strengthening church-community partnerships, expanding program coverage, and integrating spiritual guidance with economic initiatives could significantly enhance poverty alleviation efforts. Future research is recommended to explore causality, longitudinal outcomes, and the integration of church-led interventions into broader national development strategies.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

South Sudan, a nation with too many natural resources such as gold, oil, and others, is now facing socio-economic challenges, leaving many South Sudanese in dire poverty. For most projects, the country depends highly on external loans. Due to the substantial external and internal debts, the country's economy has been weakened. As such, the country has failed to resist external tremors, including fluctuations in the price of oil and a decline in trade prices on the worldwide market. Not only that, but the country also relies heavily on imports for necessities, such as food and other essential goods and services, from neighboring countries like Uganda and Sudan. Hence, the country's economy remains at a developmental stage.

As mentioned above, although the church has a good number of Christians attending the service and is vibrant in worship, their physical lives are often marked by poverty. On the same note, more evidence indicates that the church falls in the community level of poverty, where the majority of its members are poor and their lives look the same. It is heartbreaking to see that the Christians are crippled in the serious trap of poverty with limited access to basic needs of life, which include shelter, food, health care, and water. The severity of this poverty level is that it compromises the quality of education and life expectancy for the people.

For many people in South Sudan, the day-to-day fight for existence is a real and provoking experience because of the numerous challenges they face in earning a living.

It is in the face of these frustrating situations that many people face that some individuals have achieved great success, which is not necessarily a consequence of too much work but rather the imbalanced sharing of resources. The 2020 UN report revealed the “embezzlement of substantial sums of money through the inaction and actions of confident public sector leaders”, which negatively impacted the state's economy. The sad part of this act is that individuals who commit such acts are often not punished because of their affiliation in politics with a governing party or the absence of robust bodies to address these issues.

Thus, it is these unjust and frustrating challenges that the church struggles to call people into the salvation of God Almighty through his Son Jesus Christ. In this regard, Christian organisations and

members of the church, in light of the truth that God created humanity in his image, must find ways to intervene to support people who are dying at the hands of poverty. These are people who are struggling to meet basic necessities amid an unjust economic situation that has created overwhelming hopelessness for them. Considering this sad truth, Poverty remains a persistent challenge for many communities in South Sudan, particularly in the Diocese of Maridi. As such, the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi (EDM) seeks to address the root causes of poverty through its various programs, empowering Christians to achieve sustainable livelihoods. This work examined the contribution of the church in Maridi in alleviating poverty and strengthening community resilience.

1.2 Background of the Study

Poverty in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi, as well as in many parts of South Sudan, remains a challenge. For example, the World Bank's 2021 report states that South Sudan is among the “poorest countries in the world, with over 80% of its population living below the poverty line” (World Bank’s 2021). The Church in other parts of the world has historically contributed significantly to supporting the community and providing humanitarian support through education and social services (Tutu, 2004, p. N). Considering that, this work intends to examine the specific role the Church has contributed to poverty alleviation among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

The effects of poverty in South Sudan have increased the level of poor education system and reduced access to healthcare facilities, which has remained an issue of worry in the lives of the people living in South Sudan. This is a serious issue because, in a real sense, poverty affects every aspect of human life. Although it is evident that many Christian organisations, private sectors, governments, and United Nations agencies have invested considerable efforts in fighting poverty, many South Sudanese continue to face challenges in accessing the necessities of life.

Today, many children are seen on the streets because they lack access to education, and they often engage in small activities to support themselves and their families. It is very challenging that even some children who manages to go to school have no enough classrooms. Besides that, some children walk for a very long distance, about two or more miles, before reaching school because the roads are not good and schools are not available in their areas. The low income and drastically rising cost of living conditions of the South Sudanese families have ultimately contributed to increasing levels of poverty. In

the face of these challenging financial contexts, many churches were established in various parts of the country.

However, people who struggle to find meaning in life often ask questions like, “Is the world created by God a good place?” If the world is genuinely a good place, then why are the majority finding it hard to genuinely have a decent meal in a day? Poor people continue to ask questions regarding the contribution of the church in fighting poverty. At the heart of this question is the hunger of the people to understand the Biblical relevance with regard to the alarming fire of the economic crisis experienced by the people in South Sudan. Picking up on this, the need to understand the voice of the Bible in this dire situation is the heart of this study. It is, therefore, this background that sets the stage for Christians wanting to understand the church's efforts in mitigating poverty.

1.3 Problem Statement

Young South Sudan, which became a nation after its independence in July 2011, is blessed with abundant minerals and natural resources. Amid these resources, however, the country is still struggling with the dark reality of poverty. The government is still struggling to take good care of its people. As such, the World Bank overview on poverty shows that a “household survey measuring poverty in South Sudan was conducted in 2009” (World Bank, 2021). Consequently, the World Bank also added that “little was known about welfare and livelihoods in South Sudan during the early years of its independence in 2011” (South Sudan Assessment 2009-2017).

However, the more recent report released by the World Bank in South Sudan indicated that the country remains in a severe economic crisis. For example, the report stated that “some 9.4 million people, 76% of the population, are estimated to need humanitarian assistance in 2023, an increase of half a million people compared to 2022” (Asia-Pacific Governance). Upon reviewing this report, it is evident that poverty is a pervasive reality in South Sudan. Now, the question one would ask is, what will South Sudan do in the absence of humanitarian assistance? This research seeks to find answers to such questions.

Besides that, it has also been found that “South Sudan is among the poorest countries in the world”, with many people living below the international poverty line (South Sudan Assessment 2009-2017). The document further added that “South Sudan currently ranks 181 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index, with a life expectancy of only 56 years” (South Sudan Assessment 2009-2017). It

is, therefore, in this dark world of poverty that the church finds itself. As such, since the Church Missionary Society (CMS) brought the Gospel to the people of Maridi in 1922 and later established the Diocese of Maridi, Christians have continued to grow rapidly in an environment marked by extreme poverty. The extensiveness of poverty among the Christians living in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi remains a serious concern that ought to be addressed. The church needs to develop a biblical approach that teaches God's heart and will for the people of Maridi, where poverty is pervasive. It is in the face of these frustrations that many South Sudanese face that several churches use radios and visit communities to promise blessings to people. Given this, some people have viewed the church as different from the church founded by Jesus Himself. For such individuals, the church appears to have lost its voice and contributed to the current state of the country. The truth here is that if the church does not come out to participate in the fight against poverty, Christians will continue to suffer and die in the hands of this enemy called poverty.

Given that the church has made significant efforts to mitigate poverty, there is limited evidence of the effectiveness of the interventions carried out by the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi. It is this knowledge gap that hinders the assessment of the impact of poverty reduction implemented by many Christian organisations. This study seeks to investigate how the Church can better serve its community in mitigating poverty and to identify the factors that enhance these efforts.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to establish the role of the church in mitigating poverty among Christians living in the episcopal diocese of Maridi.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

- a) To determine the current socio-economic status of Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi
- b) To assess the church's existing programs aimed at poverty alleviation
- c) To propose recommendations for enhancing the church's role in poverty mitigation

1.5 Research Questions

- a) What is the current socio-economic status of Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi?
- b) What programs has the Church implemented to alleviate poverty within the Diocese?
- c) What strategies can be recommended to enhance the Church's role in mitigating poverty?

1.6 Hypothesis

H₁ : There is a significant relationship between the socio-economic status of Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi and their perception of poverty.

H₂ : Church programs aimed at poverty alleviation have a significant effect on the socio-economic well-being of Christians in the Diocese.

H₃ : There is a significant relationship between exposure to church-led poverty alleviation initiatives and support for increased church involvement in poverty mitigation.

1.7 Justification of Research

This research is necessary for understanding the church's role in mitigating poverty of all kinds. It makes a significant contribution to the existing knowledge on poverty mitigation approaches and highlights the unique contributions offered by the church.

This study aims to contribute to the existing contributions offered on poverty mitigation by providing a comprehensive analysis of the biblical approach suitable for alleviating poverty. It also seeks to examine the contribution made by the church in mitigating poverty and the effectiveness of this contribution in addressing church-related issues and matters.

The study will offer a helpful contribution to the study of literature on how the church can adopt a multilateral approach to poverty mitigation. The study also aims to determine the extent and optimal application of the biblical approach in mitigating poverty. The research also seeks to analyse the challenges facing the church in addressing the causes of poverty and how the church can partner with religious organisations that have the potential to contribute to poverty mitigation.

1.8 Significance of Research

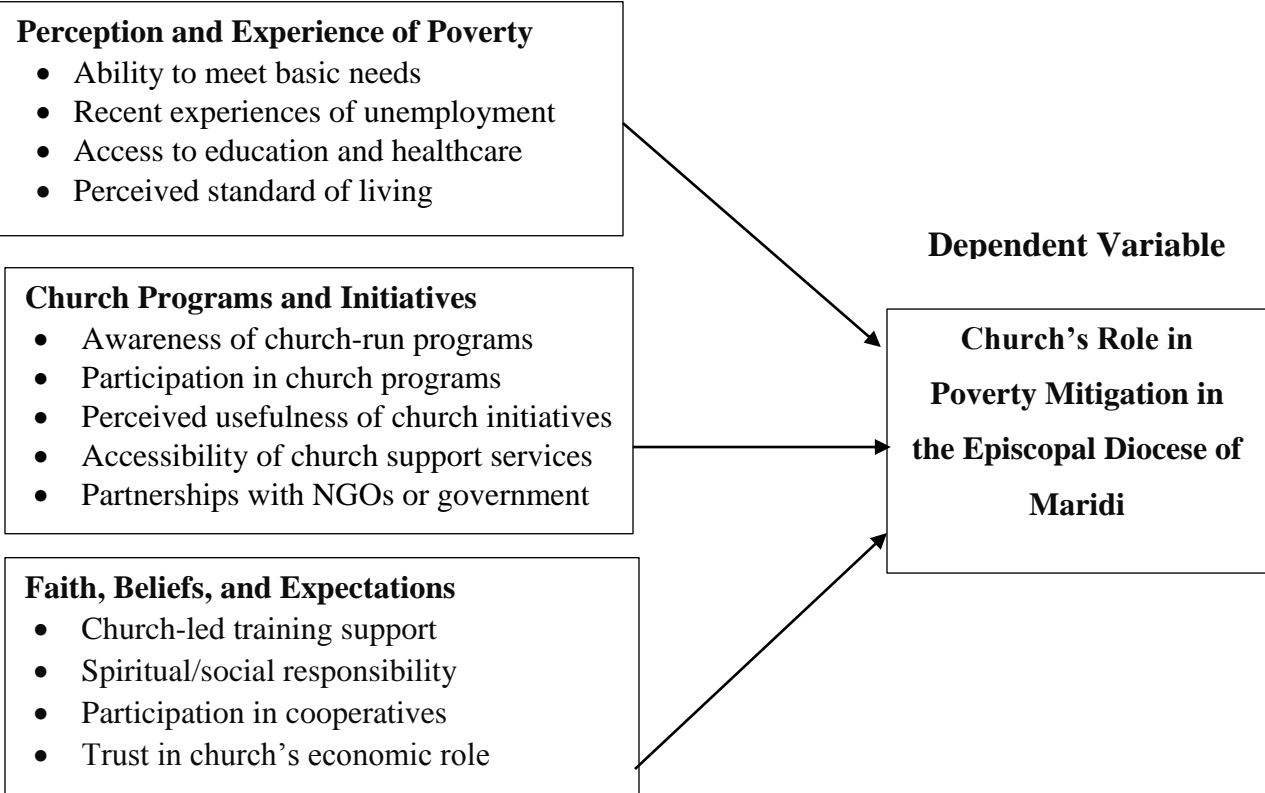
This research will have both an academic and practical benefit. Academically, the research will contribute to the knowledge around poverty mitigation, particularly for those interested in learning how to get involved in combating poverty. It will also serve as a resource for those who want to facilitate or teach poverty mitigation issues. Practically, many church leaders are unsure of how to address it. This work will serve as a valuable resource for such leaders. The data that will be analyzed and presented in

this work will provide development practitioners, especially those on the ground, with the most appropriate theological and biblical approach to use in responding to poverty.

The research will further strengthen and empower the church to understand the depth of poverty in the Diocese of Maridi and the immediate call for action to launch a meaningful fight against poverty of all kind. The research will also enable community members to recognize the effort of the church in fighting poverty and the significance challenges that the church encounters. The research will also help the church acquire advanced knowledge and make a sense of what people expected when talking about poverty reduction and some programs that the church has put in place to support underprivileged individuals living in the communities of South Sudan, particularly in the Maridi Diocese. The findings will inform policymakers, community leaders, and religious organisations about effective poverty alleviation strategies and enhance collaboration between faith-based organisations (FBO) and governmental agencies (GA).

1.9 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables



Source: Adopted from Myers (2000).

Now this study, the key independent variables include the socio-economic status of Christians—reflecting their lived experience of poverty; church programs and initiatives—referring to ongoing efforts such as food aid, vocational training, and economic empowerment activities; and faith, beliefs, and recommendations—capturing individuals’ trust in the Church’s capacity, belief in its moral responsibility, and willingness to support or participate in church-led poverty alleviation efforts. These variables are expected to influence the dependent variable: the role of the Church in mitigating poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi. This role is assessed through indicators such as agreement with the expansion of church interventions, support for training programs, belief in the Church’s spiritual and social mandate, and willingness to participate in church-led economic initiatives. The framework thus highlights the Church not only as a spiritual institution but also as an active agent of socio-economic transformation.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter Two provides a review of the literature, examines, and compares the most recent views presented, which relate to the contribution that the church has offered in poverty mitigation. The chapter also focuses on the initiatives that the church has undertaken to contribute to the existing program, such as education, health care, community development, and economic empowerment in the fight against poverty. The review of the literature will place additional emphasis on the main subjects, which may include but are not limited to the biblical bases for understanding poverty, theological perspectives on poverty, and the church's role in mitigating poverty.

The church's role in poverty alleviation has been widely discussed in academic literature, although it is limited in some specific contexts, such as the one at hand. According to Smith's (2013, pp. 1-20) perspective, the church is often regarded as a crucial provider of social services in countries like South Sudan, filling the significant gaps left by the government. In that case, the work of scholars such as Moyo (2010, p. n) emphasizes the importance of community-driven initiatives (CDIs) in mitigating poverty, which aligns with the church's mission.

Similarly, in a fantastic study conducted by Murove (2015, PP. 1-15), it was found that the church has incredible potential to effectively mobilize resources and create sustainable programs that aim at reducing poverty. Additionally, "the spiritual leadership can encourage developmental changes that lead to improved economic conditions for poor people: (World Council of Churches, 2016).

However, the specific context of the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi has limited research focus. This proposal addresses the need for a localized study that evaluates the Church's role in poverty alleviation in this unique socio-political landscape.

Myers (2000, pp. 64-67) holds the view that poverty is "a relationship that does not work for human well-being" (Myers, 2000, pp. 64-67). He added that all manifestations of poverty have their roots in relationships that do not work for human well-being. In his perspective, "poverty as a holistic idea describes the breakdown of patterns of relationships. Humanity, from the beginning of creation, was intended to live in just and peaceful relationships with one another, with their environment, and with God" (Myers, 2000, pp. 64-67). It is this broken relationship which has put the future of the youth

miserable due to the lack of job opportunities. As such, due to the rising cost of living, access to secondary school education becomes a privilege rather than a right.

The most unfortunate part is the situation where parents and local communities spend high sums of money on their children for studies only to see these young people find themselves in urban unemployment. At the same time, the country on the other side continues to struggle for well-qualified and skilled personnel from outside the country who are employed in the name of helping in the development of the country South Sudan. In the face of this, Myers therefore calls for “a careful examination of youth unemployment and asks whether it is not an attempt to create a state of economic dependency and gradual marginalization” (Myers, 2000, pp. 64-67).

Poverty, according to Myers, necessitates an “examination of the entire educational system” (Myers, 2000, pp. 64-67), as learning institutions are being used as means for social and ethnic influence and the acceptance of new way of life. A situation where a country depends on external economics and investment for nationwide growth leads to the loss of its indigenous prosperity. These circumstances have generated a culture where farmers become most of the people who are confronted with starvation, absence of safe water for drinking, and dark world of poverty. This has been significantly contributed to by head of the nation neglecting reinvesting a considerable income resulting from minerals and other natural resources in the economy of the country, leading into poor vision aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of the people living in all villages of the country. The church, as the morality and integrity of society, is therefore being called to declare a fight against those who use power to misuse the resources of the country by being corrupt.

Due to the helplessness of South Sudan amid globalization, the country is continuously sinking deeper into poverty due to the self-indulgence of the leaders. Thus, the challenge is on the church to shoulder the responsibility and actively play a role in reducing these terrible situation of people dying in poverty.

Ostwald (2009, pp. 130-145) stated that “poverty is an entanglement in which the poor are caught in a poverty trap of material, physical weakness, powerlessness, isolation, and vulnerability.” In this regard, he emphasizes that “poverty remains one of the persistent problems of life, despite the economic programs implemented by individuals and nations to address it” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). In his view, Jesus’ statement which says “the poor you will always have with you” (Matthew 26:11), is “historically and globally relevant” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). However, he stresses that “poverty is not inherent in humanity, nor can it be blamed on the behavior of the poor; instead, it is a result of

specific imbalances in the social and structural processes of life” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). He further expresses that “the church's interest in the poor should be demonstrated by challenging the unjust socio-economic structures that hinder the poor from rising out of their situation” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). According to this view, the church called to demonstrate care by providing goods and services to the poor, as poverty is a threat to life; therefore, it should not be taught as a virtue.

Ostwald, in his view, “poverty poses a threat to the stewardship of nature, and it affects human dignity, which must be the concern of the church” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). What that means is that poverty “affects the freedom and the image of God in humanity” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). Therefore, a church is called to respond urgently in addressing poverty; we cannot afford to leave the poor on their own, just as they cannot be left to their own world of poverty. On this, emphasis has been made on the church to instruct the wealthy people to support the poor people with their resources, as humanity is called to benefit from God’s resources. He further stresses that the church must exercise “its prophetic role in denouncing all structures and situations that hinder the socio-economic freedom of the poor” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). However, he also admits that “some people are poor due to their own laziness and sinful lifestyle” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). Nevertheless, the need to liberate the poor remains on the table, and this can be done through “the message of the Gospel for spiritual transformation through faith in Jesus Christ” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145).

Ostwald, in summary, shares the view that “it is extremely challenging to eradicate poverty” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). Yet, mitigation of poverty remains vital, and the significant role has to be played by the church. He emphasized that it is the collective responsibility of all the stakeholders to make sure that social interventions take place to support the underprivileged manage and overcome the power of poverty. He furthermore agrees with the view that “the poor can sometimes be blamed for their state since certain destructive behaviors of the poor, such as laziness and alcoholism, can be the reason for their poverty” (Ostwald, 2009, pp. 130-145). However, he seems to argue about what the church has done and what the church can do better poverty.

Oladipo (2000, pp. 146-152) argues that “the church should be actively engaged in creating a just and equal society that enables all to live with dignity and contributes to the eradication of exploitation” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152). For Oladipo, poverty is not a problem because it is something that humanity can overcome. To him, the real problem is “the division of mankind, the rich and the poor, of which the church is also a victim” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152), as the church is also part of society.

Thus, he made it clear that such situations “where the rich have power over the lives of the poor should not be allowed to continue” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152).

For Oladipo, “the division between the poor and the rich” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152), perpetuated by social and economic systems, continues to widen the gap despite ongoing efforts to “achieve human equality and combat poverty” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152). He argues that “the present situation of the poor is not acceptable if the church is of the view that the poor are equally created in the image and likeness of God” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152). He, therefore, views the current situation of the poor as one that is being created by human beings, not by God.

Oladipo’s work is related to this study as it addresses Christians on the role of the religious leaders in the world, through a specific focus on mitigating poverty and challenging the unjust world order that dehumanises the poor. He appears satisfied with the church's efforts to mitigate poverty and the need for greater urgency in their work” (Oladipo, 2000, pp. 146-152). However, this study focuses on the factors that contribute to poverty response. That is why this paper aimed to explore the church's role in alleviating poverty in the Diocese of Maridi.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Understanding Poverty

Understanding poverty presents a challenge because it has multiple meanings for different individuals in various contexts. In that, identifying people as poor sometimes surprises them. In South Sudan, for instance, owning one or two cattle is often regarded as a symbol of great wealth, even in the absence of necessities. Thus, the understanding of poverty in some communities in South Sudan is attributed not to the level of income that one earns but the owned assets by individuals.

In other communities, poverty refers to individuals who lack the means to lift themselves out of poverty. Nevertheless, other scholars, such as Robert Chambers, quoted by Ostwald (2009, p. 139), describe “Poverty as entanglement in which the poor are caught in a poverty trap of material, physical weakness, powerlessness, isolation, and vulnerability” (Ostwald, 2009, p. 139). Meanwhile, Ostwald also quoted Friedman, who understands “poverty as a lack of access to social power, in which the household is under the influence of state power, political power, economic power, and social power” (Ostwald, 2009, p. 139). Given this force of realities in these views, we can see that there is no single understanding of

poverty. However, in this research, we will consider a simple understanding of poverty, which suggests that poverty is a state in which a person lacks the necessities of life, the state of not having enough money “to meet the basic needs of life at any level” (Ostwald, 2009, p. 139). In line with the above, Chambers (1995, p. 203), in a similar way, views “poverty as the lack of capability to achieve a minimum standard of living” (Chambers, 1995, p. 203). Now with this, he emphasizes that poverty is not just about income but also relates to access to opportunities and resources (Chambers, 1995, p. 203).

2.2.2 Theological Perspectives on Poverty

As seen above, Robert Chambers, as quoted by Ostwald (2009), describes “poverty as an entanglement in which the poor are caught in a poverty trap characterized by material and physical weakness, powerlessness, isolation, and vulnerability” (Ostwald, 2009, p. 139). In the words of Myers, “the problem with Ostwald’s definition of poverty is that if the material understanding of poverty is employed as a definitive understanding, it is likely that the church will be left out of the picture” (Myers, 2000, p. 64). However, this does not place an argument that the church denies the importance of having wealth for the well-being of humanity. Still, as Myers stated “accepting the secular and cultural understanding of poverty, the church by definition will be outside the game” (Myers, 2000, p. 64).

Myers, on the theological perspective of poverty, presents an alternative opinion, suggesting that “poverty should be understood as relationships that do not work for human well-being” (Myers, 2000, p. 64). By doing so, Myers understands “poverty as a holistic idea that describes the breakdown of this constellation of relationships” (Myers, 2000, p. 64). This view suggests that “humanity, from the beginning of creation, was intended to live in just and peaceful relationships with one another, with their environment, and with God” (Myers, 2000, p. 64). That means all poverty indicators are deeply rooted in broken relationships that are not working in favor of the well-being of humanity.

Having said this, it is worth affirming that Myers’s understanding of poverty aligns well because it encompasses both the physical and divine characteristics of poverty. In that way, we can understand poverty in its involvement of both Divine and Physical aspects. As such, many pages of the Bible, offers several understandings of the role and contribution of the church in mitigating poverty. In Proverbs 19:17, for instance, it states, “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done” (Proverbs 19:17). In this text, we see that the church has a responsibility to support initiatives aimed at addressing poverty.

2.2.3 The Role of the Church in Poverty Alleviation.

No doubt can be made regarding the call of the church to support the poor, help the needy, and care for those who cannot help themselves. For the church to effectively be on top of this problem, a comprehensive understanding of poverty must be acquired that extends past spiritual denial to encompass both physical and divine aspects of poverty. Why? Due to poverty, it is often viewed by many churches as a material, cultural, and secular issue. Because of this, the church often ceases to participate in the conversation.

Theologically speaking, Scripture outlines the principles by which the church and the community should address poverty. Exodus 22:21, for example, emphasizes that “God’s people were expected to be hospitable to strangers and foreigners” (Exodus 22:21). Those “with wealth were instructed to leave grain in the fields for the poor” (Leviticus 19:9-10). Another call for the “widows and orphans were to be cared for” (Deuteronomy 14:28-29), and “slaves and debtors were to be treated kindly and helped to gain their freedom” (Deuteronomy 15) (Mason, 1987, p. 4).

In the New Testament, Jesus “commanded his disciples to love others just as he loved them” (John 13:34; 15:12). That mean the call to fight poverty is a commitment to God. It is not for personal gain but rather to honor God with our resources. We care for the poor not for our benefit but because they are created in the image of God as well. Thus, the church plays a vital role in alleviating poverty.

Firstly, just as the poor and the oppressed were taken care of by Christ Jesus, the Christians must be empowered with skills to fight poverty. The level of poverty in Maridi Diocese requires the intervention of church leadership to address the congregation’s necessities and amplify the voices of the disadvantaged to those in authority. The church should “help the poor find their voice to work for justice and empowerment within the economic and sociopolitical settings” (Oladipo, 2000, p. 146). As stated by (Katola & Nyabwari, 2013), “the church's participation in providing competent leadership and partnering with the government will empower the poor with the skills to work hard and utilize their available resources” (Katola & Nyabwari, 2013).

Secondly, the church must remove the gap of deprivation. Where I come from, poverty is seen as a big devil. Interestingly, Myers argues on this matter that “no part of a community’s institutional life should

be left to this devil” (Myers, 2000, p. 67). The church’s role is to bridge the deprivation gap, where marginalized people feel blocked from opportunities due to a lack of education, skills, and knowledge that would help them move out of poverty (Mead, 2003, p. 88). The church needs to help poor people recognize that they have unique gifts and abilities. By doing this, the church can help poor people recover their sense of dignity, as the rich also recover from their pride.

Thirdly, the church also has a contribution to make in providing socio-economic and educational support. The church must engage community members in socio-economic systems that focus not only on material gain but also on personal transformation and life change. Working is biblical and is an aspect of God’s image, being significantly central to human dignity. People should be encouraged to work so that they can earn their income rather than relying on external support. The church also has a role in offering educational opportunities and availing of financial resources, especially to the youth, in preparation to enable them to face the challenges of their current and future jobs.

Fourthly, the church must embrace partnership. One of the key things the church can also do is to work in partnership with other organizations and retain unity in fighting poverty. Many organizations are involved in agricultural projects, environmental support, and Aid provision. When the church fosters partnerships, numerous job opportunities will be created in the private sector, thereby addressing the issue of unemployment. I think the church should take this very seriously.

This research paper argues that although poverty affects many people, it is not a permanent condition, and there is hope for the church to restore lives by alleviating poverty. As Jesus stresses in Matthew 25:40, the church is called to show “love and compassion and to come alongside the poor as part of the process” (Matthew 25:40) of alleviating poverty. The Scripture demands the church to “share food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter” (Isaiah 58:7). Thus, poverty is an enemy, Collectively, we need to fight it and allow people to enjoy a decent life. That is why Scholars such as Rieger (2016, p. 112) argue that in alleviating poverty, the church has “a prophetic role in advocating for social justice and economic equity” (Rieger, 2016, p. 112).

Therefore, the church can engage in mobilizing resources and stand in solidarity with the community to mitigate poverty effectively “(Lichtenstein, 2013, p.87). As it stands, the Scripture shows the proper responses that humanity can offer to God and the poor. The biblical record, from Genesis to Revelation,

supports principles that provide more specific insights into what it means to be human and how humans should live in relation to God. In doing so, Scripture reveals distinctive principles for caring for the poor and the need to alleviate poverty. As stated by Poe, “these principles are guided and shaped by the covenant relationship between people and their God, who represents justice and love” (Poe, 2020, P.9). Therefore, any life on earth must be respected and treated fairly.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

Although scholars such as Kuperus have conducted considerable research “on the role of the church in addressing poverty” (Kuperus, 2011, p. 278), the available materials on the subject are limited. However, the undeniable truth is that the church in South Sudan, particularly in Maridi, significantly played a profound role in transforming social structures and systems of the country to address poverty. However, some churches are very cold on this matter, thinking it is the government's concern. Hence, the effort to mitigate poverty is not being invested in.

The church, as an agent of transformation, comprises people who are set apart in response to the preaching of the gospel. The church, as the “light and salt of the world” (Matthew 5:13-14), is tasked with duty not only to the members of the church but also towards the members of communities. Thus, it is expected of the church to present the “image of the Kingdom of God” (Matthew 13:31-32, especially to “those who first seek the kingdom of God” (Matthew 6:33). That means the significance of the gospel preached by the church must be expressed not only in words but also in actions in people’s lives. Johnson, in his article titled “Church and Society in Modern History,” understands the “Church of Christ as the true and sole teacher of virtue and guardian” (Johnson, 1977, p. 505).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the methodology engaged to establish the role of the church in mitigating poverty among Christians living in the episcopal diocese of Maridi. The methodology includes the research design, study area, sources of information, population and sampling techniques, variable definitions and measurement levels, data collection procedures, instruments for data collection, quality control measures, data processing and analysis techniques, ethical considerations, and any encountered methodological constraints.

3.2 Research Design

This study embraced a cross-sectional research design and a quantitative approach to examine the role of the church in mitigating poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

A cross-sectional design involves collecting “data at a single point in time, which is appropriate for identifying relationships between variables without requiring long-term follow-up” (Fowler, 2014, NP). This design was selected for its practicality, cost-effectiveness, and ability to capture a snapshot of existing socio-economic conditions, church programs, and perceptions of the church’s poverty mitigation role.

The quantitative approach was chosen to allow for systematic measurement and statistical analysis of variables using structured questionnaires. According to Creswell (2014, NP), quantitative research enables researchers to test theories and examine relationships using numerical data and standardized instruments. This method provides objective, replicable results and is ideal for studies aiming to generalize findings across a population. Bryman (2016, NP) also emphasizes that quantitative research offers clarity and precision in concluding, especially when assessing how specific interventions relate to outcomes like poverty alleviation.

3.3 Area of Study

The research was conducted in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi, located in the Western Equatoria region of South Sudan. The Diocese is a key administrative and spiritual unit of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, comprising both urban and rural congregations. It plays a vital contribution not only spiritually

but also in social development through its involvement in education, health, agriculture, and poverty alleviation programs.

Maridi is predominantly inhabited by agrarian communities with limited access to formal employment, which makes the involvement of the church in fighting poverty especially critical. The area was selected because it reflects both the challenges and opportunities for church-led poverty mitigation in post-conflict and low-income settings. Furthermore, the Diocese has a history of implementing faith-based interventions, making it a relevant case for studying the intersection between religion and socio-economic development.

3.4 Sources of Information

The research relied on primary and secondary sources of information.

Primary data were collected directly from respondents using structured questionnaires. These included Christians living within the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi, church leaders, and beneficiaries of church-led programs. The primary data provided firsthand insights into the respondents' socio-economic status, their experiences with poverty, and their views on the church's role in poverty mitigation.

Secondary data were obtained from existing literature, including books, academic journals, diocesan reports, government policy documents, and previous research related to poverty, faith-based interventions, and community development. These sources were used to support the theoretical framework, inform questionnaire development, and provide context for interpreting the study findings.

3.5 Population and Sampling Techniques

The target population for this study included individuals within the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi who are either involved in or impacted by the church's poverty alleviation programs. This included Church leaders, community leaders, civil servants, and non-members who participate in church-related activities. The population was deliberately selected to capture a range of perspectives on poverty and the church's role in mitigating it.

Sample Size Calculation

To determine the appropriate sample size for this study, a quantitative approach was used, guided by the assumptions of statistical confidence and acceptable error margin. Since the exact population of

Christians within the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi was not readily available, Cochran's (1977, NP) formula for sample size determination for large or unknown populations was applied.

Cochran's formula is stated as:

$$n_o = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

- n_o = required sample size
- Z = Z-value (1.96 for 95% confidence level)
- p = estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population (0.5 used when unknown)
- e = desired level of precision or margin of error (0.05 for 5%)

Substituting the values:

$$n_o = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2} = 384.16$$

Therefore, the minimum recommended sample size was approximately 384 respondents

To account for possible non-responses or incomplete questionnaires, an additional 10% of the calculated sample was added:

$$10\% \text{ of } 384 = 38.4 = 384 + 38.4 = 422.4$$

Thus, the final sample size for this study was rounded up to **423 respondents**.

Sampling Techniques

To ensure inclusiveness across key demographic groups such as gender, socioeconomic status, and age, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. The population was divided into relevant strata (e.g., age groups, gender, and roles in the church), and respondents were randomly selected from each category. This method increases the representativeness of the sample and reduces sampling bias.

Additionally, purposive sampling was used to select participants with specific experience or involvement in church programs. This included church officials, program coordinators, and community members directly impacted by church-led poverty interventions. This allowed for more focused and insightful responses regarding the church's role in poverty mitigation.

3.6 Variable Definitions and Measurement Levels

This study comprised both independent and dependent variables. Each variable was defined conceptually and measured using indicators on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5), allowing for quantitative analysis.

- a) **Dependent Variable: Role of the Church in Mitigating Poverty** - This refers to the perceived and actual contribution of the church toward reducing poverty among Christians. It includes the church's outreach, support programs, and perceived responsibility in addressing poverty.

Indicators include:

- Agreement that the church should increase its poverty interventions
- Support for church-led training programs
- Belief in the church's social and spiritual responsibility
- Willingness to engage in church cooperatives or groups
- Trust in the church's economic influence

Measurement Level: Ordinal (Likert scale)

- b) **Independent Variables**

(i) **Socio-Economic Status**

This captures the respondents' current poverty experience and ability to meet basic needs.

Indicators include:

- Monthly income adequacy
- Ability to meet food, health, and education needs
- Employment or livelihood status

Measurement Level: Ordinal

(ii) **Church Programs and Initiatives**

Refers to the presence and accessibility of programs such as food aid, vocational training, and economic empowerment efforts run by the church.

Indicators include:

- Awareness of church-based poverty programs
- Participation in or benefit from such programs

- Perceived effectiveness of church initiatives

Measurement Level: Ordinal

(iii) Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations

Captures the extent to which individuals' beliefs shape their support for greater church involvement in poverty reduction.

Indicators include:

- Faith-based support for church-led poverty action
- Belief that poverty reduction aligns with Christian duty
- Recommendations for expanded church programs

Measurement Level: Ordinal

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

Data collection followed a structured and systematic approach to ensure reliability and accuracy. A self-administered questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire contained closed-ended items measured on a 5-point Likert scale and was designed to capture data on the respondents' socio-economic status, awareness, and participation in church programs, faith-based perspectives, and recommendations regarding church involvement in poverty alleviation.

Before full deployment, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group of respondents (not part of the final sample) to ensure clarity, relevance, and internal consistency. Based on the feedback, minor adjustments were made to improve wording and structure.

During actual data collection, trained research assistants were engaged to distribute and collect questionnaires across different parishes and communities within the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

To ensure broad representation, data were collected from diverse demographic groups, including church leaders, community members, civil servants, and youth involved in church activities. The data collection exercise was conducted over a period of two weeks.

Participation was voluntary, and ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were strictly observed throughout the process.

3.7 Data Collection Tools

The primary tool for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire. This instrument was designed to gather quantitative data related to the socio-economic status of Christians, church-led poverty alleviation initiatives, and respondents' perceptions and recommendations regarding the church's role in mitigating poverty.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections:

- a) **Demographic Information** – capturing age, gender, occupation, income level, education, and religious affiliation.
- b) **Socio-economic Status** – assessing poverty indicators such as access to food, housing, education, and employment.
- c) **Church Programs and Initiatives** – measuring awareness, accessibility, and participation in church-led poverty alleviation activities.
- d) **Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations** – evaluating perceptions of the church's responsibility and support for increased involvement in poverty reduction.
- e) **General Suggestions** – capturing respondents' ideas and preferences for future church-led poverty interventions.

The items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaire was pre-tested for clarity and reliability, and necessary revisions were made before full administration.

The structured nature of the tool allowed for standardized responses, facilitating quantitative analysis through descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical integrity was upheld throughout the research process to ensure the protection of participants' rights and the credibility of the study. The researcher sought informed consent from all respondents before participation. Each participant was briefed about the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, the right to withdraw at any time, and the assurance of confidentiality.

No identifying information was collected, and all data were kept anonymous to protect participants' privacy. The research avoided any form of coercion, and participants were not subjected to any harm or discomfort during or after the data collection process.

Additionally, the study adhered to ethical research standards as guided by “institutional policies and general ethical research principles, including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice” (Belmont Report, 1979, NP). Approval to conduct the research was obtained from relevant authorities within the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

3.9 Quality Control

To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data collected, several quality control measures were implemented throughout the research process. The questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group of respondents who were not part of the final sample. Feedback from the pre-test was used to revise unclear or ambiguous items, ensuring that all questions were easily understood and contextually relevant.

The researcher conducted training sessions for research assistants, emphasizing ethical practices, consistent administration of the questionnaire, and accurate recording of responses. During data collection, spot checks and field supervision were carried out to monitor the process and address any issues in real time.

To further maintain data integrity, completed questionnaires were reviewed daily for completeness and consistency before data entry. Data was then double-entered and cross-checked to identify and correct any errors. These measures helped to minimize bias, enhance reliability, and ensure the overall credibility of the study findings.

3.10 Data Processing and Analysis

After data collection, responses were first checked for completeness, consistency, and accuracy. The validated data were then coded and entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, which was used for all data processing and analysis.

The analysis followed a quantitative approach, involving both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to

summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and their responses to various questionnaire items.

To test the relationships between key variables, Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied. This helped in examining the strength and direction of associations between variables such as socio-economic status, church programs, and faith-based recommendations.

The results were presented using tables, charts, and graphs to enhance clarity and interpretation. The findings were then interpreted in relation to the study objectives and research questions, drawing meaningful conclusions and recommendations.

3.11 Methodology Constraints

Despite careful planning, this study faced several methodological constraints. First, the use of a cross-sectional design limited the ability to draw causal inferences, as data were collected at only one point in time. As a result, observed relationships among variables may not fully capture temporal dynamics or long-term effects.

Second, the self-reported nature of the data introduces potential bias, including social desirability bias, where respondents may have overstated or understated their experiences or perceptions to align with perceived expectations, particularly in a faith-based context.

Third, logistical challenges such as difficult terrain, limited access to remote communities, and language barriers may have restricted participation from some potential respondents, potentially affecting the overall representativeness of the sample.

Additionally, while "the sample size" was guided by Cochran's (1977, NP) formula, budget and time constraints limited the study to 423 respondents, "which may not fully represent the diversity" (Cochran, 1977, NP) of experiences across the entire Diocese of Maridi.

Finally, the reliance on structured questionnaires limited the depth of responses. Important contextual or emotional nuances that could be captured through qualitative interviews or focus group discussions were not explored, potentially leaving out rich insights into the role of the church in poverty mitigation.

3.12 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study followed a structured quantitative approach. After data collection, all completed questionnaires were first checked for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. The valid responses were then coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis.

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize demographic characteristics and key variables related to the socio-economic status of respondents, awareness and engagement with church programs, and recommendations for church involvement in poverty reduction.

Inferential statistics were then applied to examine the relationships between variables. Specifically, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to assess the strength and direction of linear relationships among the three key constructs: experience of poverty, perception of church initiatives, and faith-based recommendations for action. All statistical tests were conducted at a 95% confidence level ($p < .05$), with stronger significance noted at $p < .01$.

The results were presented using tables and charts for easy interpretation and to support clear conclusions based on empirical evidence.

3.13 Plan for dissemination

The findings of this study will be disseminated through multiple channels to ensure that they reach relevant stakeholders within and beyond the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi. A final research report will be submitted to the academic institution as part of the study requirements. Additionally, simplified summary reports and policy briefs will be prepared and shared with church leaders, community leaders, and other key stakeholders involved in poverty alleviation efforts.

Where feasible, the findings will be presented in community meetings, church forums, and stakeholder workshops to facilitate dialogue and encourage practical application of the recommendations. Further dissemination may include the preparation of a PowerPoint presentation, publishing a summary in a local newsletter, or submitting findings to a relevant academic or development-focused journal for broader reach and academic contribution.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses, and interprets the data collected from respondents in line with the study objectives. The findings were organized according to the three specific objectives of the study: (1) to determine the current socio-economic status of Christians, (2) to assess the church's existing poverty alleviation programs, and (3) to propose recommendations for enhancing the church's role in poverty mitigation. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and percentages. The results were then interpreted in the context of the research questions to draw meaningful conclusions and inform recommendations in the subsequent chapter.

4.2 Response rate

The response rate is the percentage of participants who responded to the survey. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003, p.83), researchers should strive to maximize response rates to ensure meaningful generalizations from the data.

Out of the 423 questionnaires distributed, 415 were correctly filled and returned. This resulted in a response rate of 98.1%.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003, p.83), a response rate of 70% and above is considered very good for survey research. Therefore, the response rate achieved in this study was excellent and provided a reliable basis for data analysis and interpretation.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age, education level, employment status, and household income. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. The results were computed into frequencies and percentages as presented below.

4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

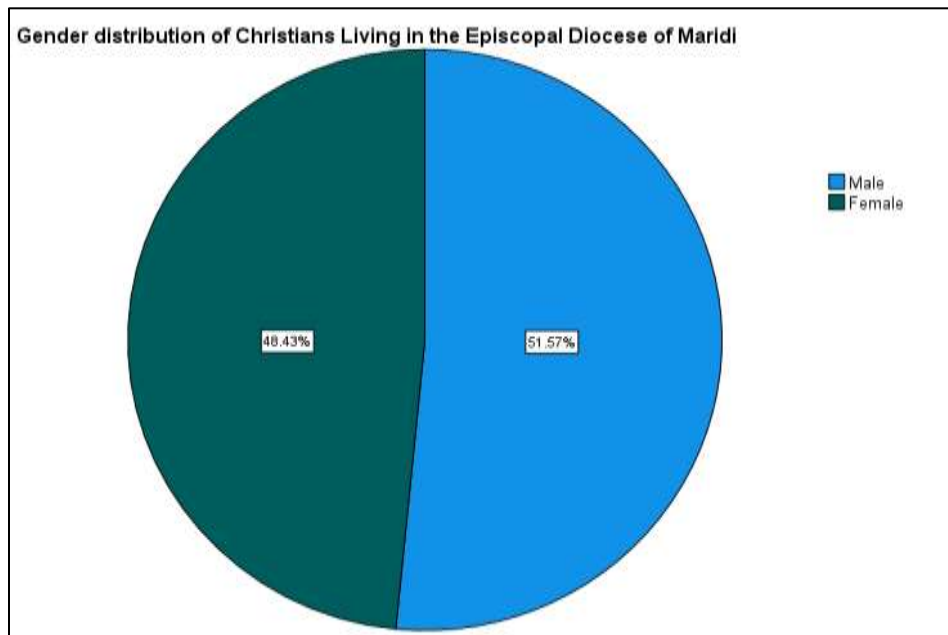


Figure 1 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The gender distribution of Christians living in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi is shown in Figure 1. The findings indicate that 51.57% of the respondents were male, while 48.43% were female. This near-equal representation suggests a balanced participation across gender lines in the study.

4.3.2 Age

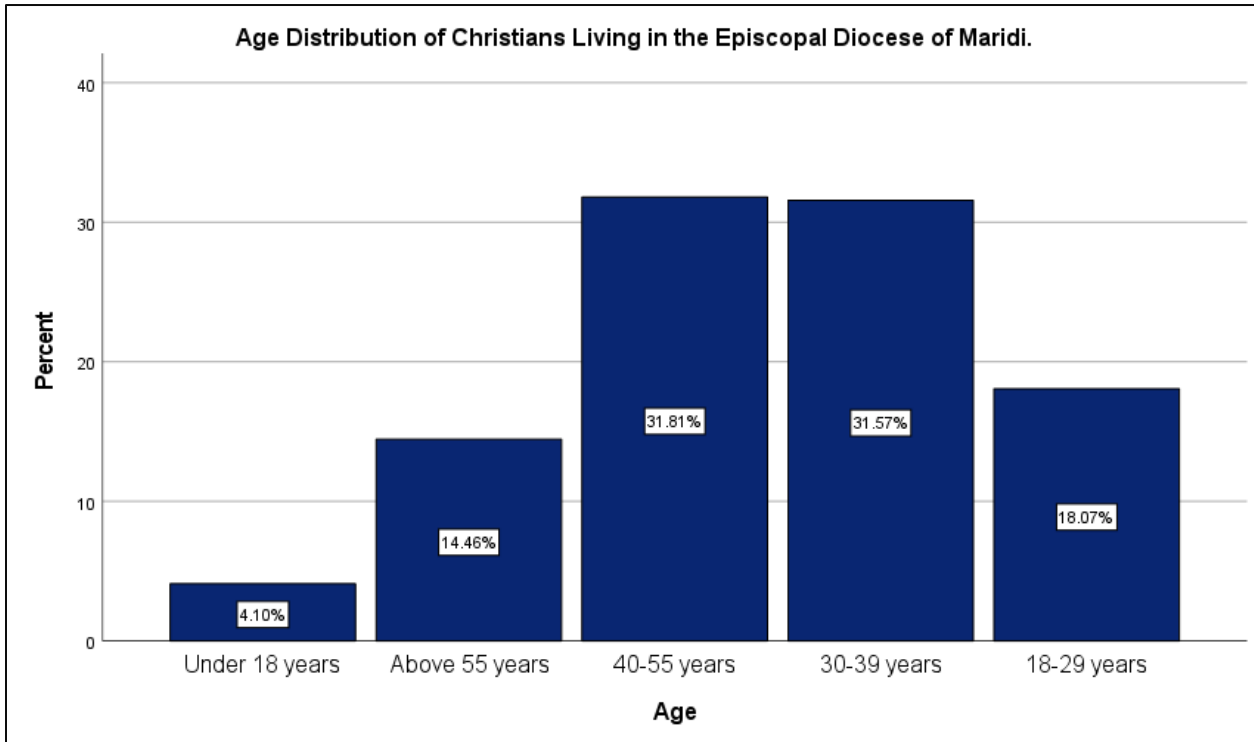


Figure 2 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The study also examined the age distribution of respondents. As presented in Figure 2, the majority (31.8%) of the respondents were aged between 40–55 years, followed closely by those aged 30–39 years (31.6%). Respondents aged 18–29 years made up 18.1%, while those above 55 years comprised 14.5%. Only 4.1% of the respondents were under 18 years. These findings indicate that the majority of respondents were mature adults, potentially contributing to more informed responses regarding poverty and church initiatives.

4.3.3 Highest Level of Education Attained

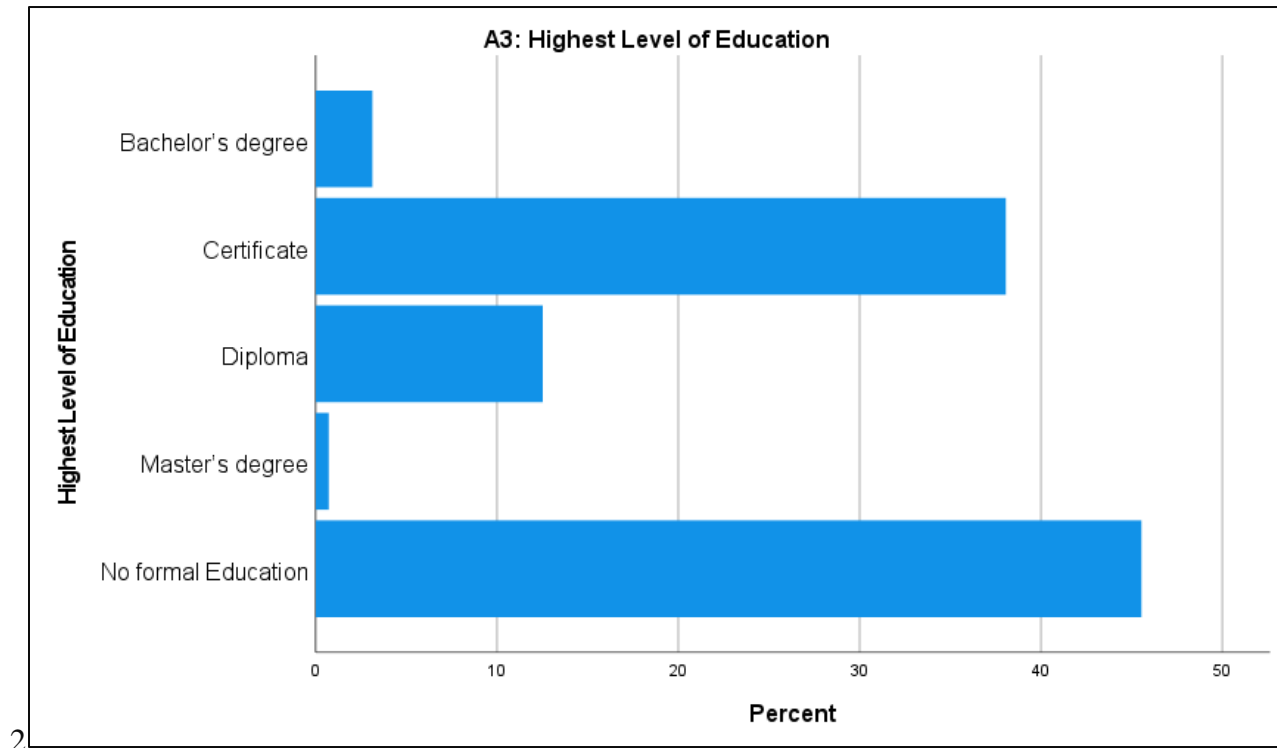


Figure 3 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The study further explored the respondents' highest level of education. As indicated in Figure 3, nearly half (45.5%) of the participants had no formal education, while 38.1% held a certificate. Those with a diploma accounted for 12.5%, and a small proportion had attained a bachelor's degree (3.1%) or a master's degree (0.7%). These findings reveal that the majority of respondents had limited formal education, which could have implications for their access to economic opportunities and engagement with church programs.

4.3.4 Employment Status

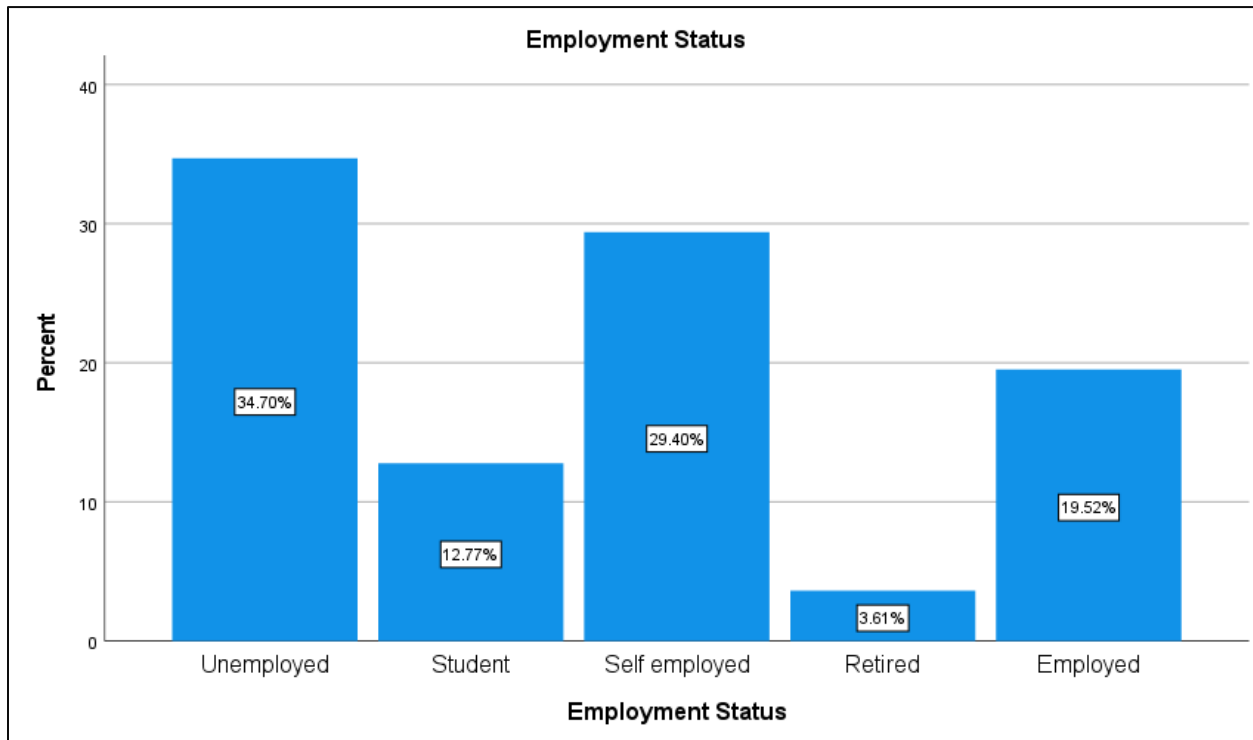


Figure 4 – *Source: Primary data, 2025*

The study assessed the employment status of respondents to understand their economic engagement. As shown in Figure 4, 34.7% of the respondents were unemployed, while 29.4% were self-employed. Employed individuals constituted 19.5%, and students accounted for 12.8%. Only 3.6% were retired. These results suggest that a significant portion of the population either lacked formal employment or relied on self-employment, highlighting potential economic vulnerability among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

4.3.5 Household Income Level

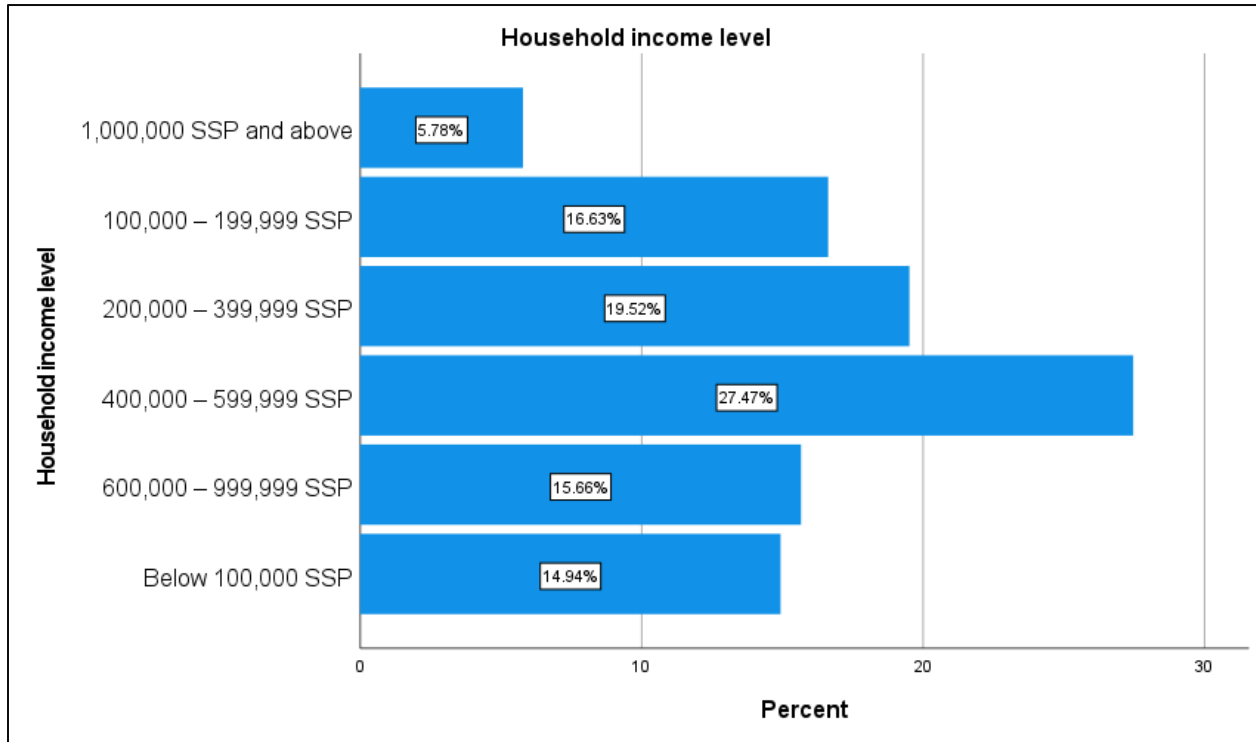


Figure 5 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The study also explored the monthly household income of respondents to understand their economic capacity. As presented in Figure 5, the majority (27.5%) earned between 400,000 and 599,999 South Sudanese Pounds (SSP), followed by 19.5% earning between 200,000 and 399,999 SSP. Respondents earning between 100,000 and 199,999 SSP made up 16.6%, while 15.7% earned between 600,000 and 999,999 SSP. About 14.9% earned below 100,000 SSP, and only 5.8% reported earning 1,000,000 SSP or more. These findings reveal that most Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi fall within low to middle income brackets, with a small proportion in the high-income category.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

This section presents a summary of the descriptive statistics for the study variables, focusing on measures such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations. It highlights key trends and response patterns drawn from the data collected in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi. The findings provide insight into respondents' experiences with poverty, the role of the church in poverty alleviation, and suggestions for strengthening church-led interventions.

4.4.1 Perception and Experience of Poverty

This subsection presents the respondents’ perceptions and lived experiences of poverty. The responses offer insight into how poverty manifests in their daily lives, highlighting key causes and consequences. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics for each statement.

Table 1: Perception and Experience of Poverty Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
B1: I have a good understanding of what poverty means.	415	1	4	2.55	0.899
B2: I have experienced poverty in the last two years.	415	1	5	2.36	1.491
B3: Lack of employment is a major cause of poverty in my household	415	1	5	2.86	1.335
B4: Health problems have contributed to poverty in my household.	415	1	5	2.56	1.161
B5: I struggle to meet basic needs like food, housing, and clothing.	415	1	5	3.83	1.469
B6: Insecurity has affected my ability to earn a stable income.	415	1	4	2.15	0.539
Valid N (list-wise)	415				

Table 1 – Source: Primary data, 2025

B1 – Understanding of Poverty: Respondents reported a moderate understanding of poverty (M = 2.55, SD = 0.899), suggesting some awareness but also variability in comprehension.

B2 – Personal Experience of Poverty: The mean score of 2.36 (SD = 1.491) reflects that a significant number have personally experienced poverty recently, although experiences vary widely.

B3 – Employment and Poverty: A mean of 2.86 (SD = 1.335) suggests that unemployment is seen as a notable contributor to household poverty.

B4 – Health and Poverty: Respondents moderately agreed that health challenges have increased household poverty (M = 2.56, SD = 1.161).

B5 – Struggles to Meet Basic Needs: The highest mean of 3.83 (SD = 1.469) indicates strong agreement that many respondents are unable to consistently meet basic needs such as food, housing, and clothing.

B6 – Impact of Insecurity: With a mean of 2.15 (SD = 0.539), respondents somewhat agreed that insecurity undermines their ability to earn stable incomes, though responses were relatively consistent.

4.4.2 Church Programs and Initiatives

This subsection explores respondents’ views on the church’s role in addressing poverty through various programs and initiatives. The analysis summarizes perceptions of program availability, personal benefit, and the church’s partnerships in poverty alleviation. Table 2 provides a breakdown of responses.

Table 2: Church Programs and Initiatives Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
C1: My church is actively involved in poverty alleviation efforts	415	1	5	4.45	0.835
C2: I have personally benefited from a poverty alleviation program run by the church.	415	1	5	4.43	0.884
C3: Church programs such as food aid or education support are available in my area.	415	1	6	2.75	1.685
C4: Vocational training programs are offered by my church.	415	1	5	1.89	1.389
C5: The church provides business or farming support to poor members.	415	1	6	1.89	1.378
C6: Church programs have improved my quality of life.	415	1	5	4.45	0.846
C7: My church collaborates with other organizations to fight poverty.	415	1	5	3.25	1.216
Valid N (list-wise)	415				

Table 2 – Source: Primary data, 2025

Interpretation:

- **C1 & C2 – Active Involvement and Personal Benefit:** High mean scores of 4.45 and 4.43, respectively (with SDs under 1) show strong agreement that churches are involved in poverty alleviation and that many respondents have personally benefited from these programs.
- **C3 – Availability of Support Programs:** The relatively lower mean of 2.75 (SD = 1.685) suggests that while some church-led support programs exist (e.g., food or education aid), their accessibility is inconsistent across areas.
- **C4 & C5 – Vocational and Economic Support:** Both items received low mean scores (M = 1.89), indicating that vocational training and business/farming support are perceived as largely unavailable or inadequate.

- **C6 – Impact on Quality of Life:** A high mean of 4.45 (SD = 0.846) shows that respondents believe church interventions have positively influenced their well-being.
- **C7 – Partnerships with Other Organizations:** The mean score of 3.25 (SD = 1.216) suggests moderate agreement that churches collaborate with other entities, though this may not be uniform across regions.

4.4.3 Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations

This subsection analyzes the role of personal faith, church teachings, and respondent recommendations on improving the church’s approach to poverty alleviation. The findings reflect both spiritual motivations and practical expectations for church-led interventions.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
D1: It is part of my faith to support poverty alleviation.	415	1	4	3.72	0.688
D2: My church preaches regularly about poverty and its effects.	415	1	6	2.95	1.496
D3: The church should expand its role in reducing poverty.	415	1	4	1.21	0.614
D4: The church should offer more vocational and entrepreneurship training.	415	1	4	1.11	0.472
D5: I am satisfied with the current church efforts toward poverty reduction.	415	1	5	2.23	1.544
D6: Church efforts should focus more on income-generating activities.	415	1	5	1.19	0.725
D7: Cooperative farming or savings groups should be promoted by the church.	415	1	3	1.08	0.378
Valid N (list-wise)	415				

Table 3 – Source: Primary data, 2025

Interpretation:

4.5 Correlation Between Variables

This section presents the results of the correlation analysis used to assess the strength and direction of relationships among the key variables in the study. Specifically, it examines how personal experiences of poverty, perceptions of church initiatives, and faith-based beliefs are related to each other. Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) was used to measure the linear relationships between the variables. The findings help to identify which aspects of church involvement are most closely associated with perceptions of poverty reduction and community support, providing insights into areas where church-based interventions may be most impactful.

4.5.1 Correlation Analysis

This section presents the results of a correlation analysis conducted to explore the relationships among the three major constructs derived from the study objectives: Perception and Experience of Poverty (Section B), Church Programs and Initiatives (Section C), and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations (Section D). Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the strength and direction of linear relationships among these variables at a 0.01 significance level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlations Analysis (n=415)				
		1	2	3
1	Perception and Experience of Poverty	1	.437**	.269**
2	Church Programs and Initiatives	.437**	1	.480**
3	Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations	.269**	.480**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 4 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The results indicate statistically significant positive correlations among all three core variables:

The results showed that respondents who reported experiencing higher levels of poverty—such as struggling to meet basic needs or recent poverty experiences —were also more likely to acknowledge the presence of church-run programs such as food aid or vocational training. This moderate positive correlation (r = .437, p < .01) may suggest that individuals in poverty are more likely to seek out, benefit

from, or become aware of the church's poverty alleviation efforts. While this does not confirm a causal relationship, it highlights a potential interaction between need and engagement with church initiatives.

A weaker but significant correlation is observed between Perception and Experience of Poverty and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations ($r = .269$, $p < .01$). suggests that individuals who experience poverty are somewhat more likely to support recommendations for increased church involvement in poverty reduction. Respondents facing poverty may perceive a greater need for church-based interventions, hence advocating for expansion of services such as vocational training or cooperative farming. However, the relatively weaker strength of this relationship indicates that while poverty experience may influence recommendations, it is likely shaped by additional factors such as individual faith, doctrinal beliefs, or personal values not captured in this study.

The strongest correlation is between Church Programs and Initiatives and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations ($r = .480$, $p < .01$). Respondents who positively rated the church's programs such as food aid, vocational training, and partnerships also tended to agree with faith-based statements recommending greater church involvement in poverty mitigation. For instance, individuals who observed or benefited from church programs were more likely to support the idea that the church should offer more entrepreneurship training, expand its poverty role, or promote income-generating activities. This finding suggests that practical engagement with church programs may reinforce or shape believers' expectations and faith-driven advocacy for deeper church involvement.

4.6 Multiple Regression Analysis

This section presents the results of a multiple linear regression analysis conducted to determine the extent to which key independent variables predict perceptions of the church's role in mitigating poverty. The model included three predictors: Perception and Experience of Poverty, Church Programs and Initiatives, and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations. The analysis aimed to identify which of these factors significantly influence respondents' views on the church's effectiveness in poverty reduction.

4.6.1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.442 ^a	0.195	0.192	0.68316	0.195	50.051	2	412	0.000	1.177

a. Predictors: (Constant), Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations; Church Programs and Initiatives

b. Dependent Variable: Perception and Experience of Poverty

Table 5 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The multiple regression model was used to assess the extent to which Church Programs and Initiatives and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations predict respondents' Perception and Experience of Poverty. The model yielded an R value of .442, suggesting a moderate positive correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

An R Square value of .195 implies that approximately 19.5% of the variation in respondents' perception and experience of poverty is explained by the combined influence of the two predictors: church programs and faith-based attitudes. This demonstrates that while other factors may also play a role, church involvement and belief systems contribute meaningfully to how poverty is perceived and experienced within the community.

The Adjusted R Square (.192) accounts for the number of predictors in the model and confirms the reliability of the explanatory power, showing that the model is not overly influenced by chance.

The Standard Error of the Estimate (0.68316) indicates the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line, with smaller values reflecting a better fit.

4.6.2 ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	46.718	2	23.359	50.051	.000 ^b
	Residual	192.283	412	0.467		
	Total	239.000	414			

a. Dependent Variable: Perception and Experience of Poverty

b. Predictors: (Constant), Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations; Church Programs and Initiatives

Table 6 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The ANOVA results confirm that the regression model is statistically significant in predicting the experience of poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi. The F-statistic ($F = 50.051$, $p < 0.001$) indicates that Church Programs and Initiatives and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations together have a significant impact on how individuals experience poverty.

The Regression Sum of Squares (46.718) demonstrates that a meaningful portion of the variation in poverty experience is explained by the church’s programs and faith-related beliefs. On the other hand, the Residual Sum of Squares (192.283) accounts for the portion of variability that remains unexplained by the model.

Since the p-value (Sig. = 0.000) is well below the 0.05 threshold, we can conclude with confidence that the model is a good fit. These findings underscore that the church’s efforts and the faith-based perspectives of its members meaningfully contribute to the understanding and mitigation of poverty in the Diocese

4.6.3 Regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	0.850	0.192		4.430	0.000	0.473	1.228
	Church Programs and Initiatives	0.494	0.062	0.400	7.936	0.000	0.371	0.616
	Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations	0.124	0.081	0.078	1.542	0.124	-0.034	0.283

a. Dependent Variable: Perception and Experience of Poverty

Table 7 – Source: Primary data, 2025

The regression coefficients provide insight into how the two predictor variables — Church Programs and Initiatives and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations — contribute to shaping the perception and experience of poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

The constant ($B = 0.850$, $p < .001$) indicates the expected baseline level of perceived poverty when both Church Programs and Faith-related beliefs are considered absent or neutral.

The Church Programs and Initiatives ($B = 0.494$, $\beta = 0.400$, $p < .001$) predictor has the strongest and statistically significant positive impact on the perception and experience of poverty. The positive coefficient ($B = 0.494$) and strong standardized beta ($\beta = 0.400$) suggest that respondents who are more aware of or engaged in church programs are also more likely to report experiencing poverty. This could mean that those experiencing poverty are actively seeking and benefiting from the church's support programs, such as food relief, livelihood initiatives, or vocational training.

The Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations has ($B = 0.124$, $\beta = 0.078$, $p = .124$). Although the relationship is positive, it is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This implies that personal or communal religious beliefs and recommendations do not independently predict the experience of poverty in this context. However, they may still serve an indirect or complementary role in sustaining hope, shaping attitudes toward suffering, or influencing participation in church-based support

4.6.4 Regression Model Equation

The regression model predicting Perception and Experience of Poverty (EP) based on two predictors — Church Programs and Initiatives (CP) and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations (FBR) — is expressed as:

$$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1(CP) + \beta_2(FBR)$$

Where:

- **EP** = Perception and Experience of Poverty (Dependent Variable)
- **β_0** = Intercept (Constant)
- **β_1** = Coefficient for Church Programs and Initiatives
- **β_2** = Coefficient for Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations
- **CP** = Church Programs and Initiatives
- **FBR** = Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations

Substituting the values from the regression output:

$$EP = 0.850 + 0.494(CP) + 0.124(FBR)$$

The intercept (0.850) represents the baseline level of poverty perception when both church programs and faith-related interventions are considered absent. It shows that even without these factors, some level of poverty perception still exists among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi.

The coefficient for Church Programs (0.494) means that for every one-unit increase in access or engagement with church programs, the perception or experience of poverty increases by 0.494 units. This suggests that church programs are reaching those in need, thus likely serving communities already affected by poverty.

The coefficient for Faith and Beliefs (0.124) shows a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with poverty experience. While this effect is modest and not significant ($p = 0.124$), it implies that religious beliefs alone may not directly influence poverty experience, but could still play a complementary role in offering emotional resilience or encouraging participation in church programs.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary of the study findings, discusses them in relation to existing literature, and draws conclusions based on the set objectives. The study examined the role of the church in mitigating poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi by assessing the current socio-economic status, evaluating existing church programs, and proposing practical recommendations to strengthen the church's poverty alleviation efforts.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study investigated the role of the church in mitigating poverty among Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi. The findings, organized by the study objectives, are summarized below:

Objective 1: To determine the current socio-economic status of Christians in the Diocese

The results revealed that a significant proportion of respondents experience poverty, with notable challenges in accessing basic necessities such as food, education, healthcare, and shelter. This indicates a generally low socio-economic status among Christians in the Diocese.

Objective 2: To assess the church's existing programs aimed at poverty alleviation

Correlation results showed a moderate positive relationship between church programs and poverty perception ($r = 0.437$, $p < .01$), suggesting that individuals who benefit from these programs tend to perceive a reduction in their poverty levels. Regression analysis further confirmed that church programs and initiatives significantly predict experiences of poverty ($\beta = 0.400$, $p < 0.001$). However, faith, beliefs, and recommendations had a weaker, statistically insignificant influence ($\beta = 0.078$, $p = 0.124$).

Objective 3: To propose recommendations for enhancing the church's role in poverty mitigation

The findings suggest that while existing church initiatives are making a measurable impact, there is a need to strengthen and expand these programs to better address poverty among Christians in the Diocese. The model's explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.196$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.192$) indicates that about 19.6% of the variation in poverty experiences can be explained by the current church efforts.

Overall, the study highlights the important but limited role that church programs currently play in alleviating poverty, pointing to the potential for more structured and expanded interventions

5.3 Discussion of Findings

This study found that among the three predictors—Perception and Experience of Poverty, Church Programs and Initiatives, and Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations—Church Programs and Initiatives had the strongest and most significant influence on respondents' perceptions of the church's role in mitigating poverty. This suggests that tangible, on-the-ground interventions such as food aid, vocational training, and community development programs strongly shape how people perceive the church's effectiveness in addressing poverty.

These results are consistent with prior studies, such as Mwesigwa and Kaggwa (2020) in Central Uganda, who observed that community engagement through practical programs significantly improved trust and support for faith-based organizations. Similarly, Okello (2018) in Northern Uganda found that churches investing in visible, impact-oriented interventions received greater public endorsement, especially in underserved rural areas where government presence is limited.

Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations also emerged as a statistically significant predictor, though weaker in strength. This supports findings by Niringiye and Ayebale (2017) in Kampala, Uganda, who noted that religious values and doctrinal teachings influence individuals' expectations of the church's role in social welfare. However, the current study suggests that belief alone may not be sufficient to shape perceptions unless reinforced by exposure to practical church activities—implying a dynamic interplay between faith and lived experiences.

Perception and Experience of Poverty, while significant, showed the weakest predictive power in the model. This aligns with findings by Chikwanha (2019) in Zimbabwe, who reported that while personal poverty experiences may increase the likelihood of seeking assistance, they do not necessarily lead to stronger expectations of institutional responsibility. In contrast, Tumwine and Nabukeera (2021) in Western Uganda found that individuals living in persistent poverty were more likely to advocate for church-led interventions—suggesting that the strength of this relationship may vary by region, cultural context, or denominational influence.

Overall, the regression results underscore the importance of visible and practical engagement over abstract belief systems or individual experiences of poverty in shaping how people view the church's role in poverty alleviation. These findings support the argument that action-driven faith, as manifested in

church programs and initiatives, resonates more effectively with communities than doctrinal messages or faith-based rhetoric alone.

5.4 Conclusion

5.4.1 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of faith-based poverty mitigation by reinforcing the relevance of Social Capital Theory and the Theory of Faith-Based Development. The strong influence of church programs and initiatives on perceptions of the church's role supports the notion that community networks, trust, and shared values are central to poverty alleviation in religious settings. The findings further highlight that practical engagement, rather than belief alone, enhances the legitimacy and perceived effectiveness of the church in development work. The relatively weaker influence of faith and beliefs implies that theoretical frameworks should be expanded to incorporate both spiritual and material dimensions of church engagement, offering a more integrated understanding of how faith-based institutions can address socio-economic issues.

5.4.2 Managerial Implications

For church leaders and program coordinators, the findings emphasize the importance of sustaining visible, practical interventions such as vocational training, food aid, and cooperative farming initiatives. Churches that actively implement and publicize their poverty-alleviation efforts are more likely to earn community trust and support. Moreover, program managers should integrate faith-based messaging with action, ensuring that spiritual guidance is accompanied by tangible support. The results also suggest a need for impact monitoring and beneficiary feedback to improve service delivery and tailor interventions to community needs.

5.4.3 Policy Implications

From a policy standpoint, diocesan leadership and faith-based development partners should consider institutionalizing structured poverty alleviation programs within church operations. Policies should promote the expansion of income-generating and vocational training activities, especially in rural dioceses like Maridi where poverty remains widespread. Furthermore, partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations should be formalized to leverage external resources and increase the scalability of church-led interventions. Finally, policies must acknowledge that faith alone does not

guarantee effectiveness—support structures, resources, and proper governance frameworks are essential for sustainable church-based poverty reduction efforts.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

- **Scale Up Church-Led Poverty Alleviation Programs:** Given the strong association between church programs and positive perceptions, churches should expand initiatives like **vocational training, food aid, and cooperative farming**. These efforts not only meet immediate needs but also build long-term resilience among community members.
- **Integrate Faith-Based Messaging with Practical Action:** While faith and beliefs play a role, the study shows that **tangible church interventions** significantly shape community support. Church leaders should ensure that spiritual teachings are **paired with concrete actions** that visibly improve livelihoods.
- **Establish Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:** To improve accountability and program impact, churches should implement **monitoring frameworks** that track outcomes, collect feedback, and adjust programs based on evidence and community needs.
- **Strengthen Partnerships with Development Agencies:** Churches should form strategic alliances with **government, NGOs, and international donors** to access resources, training, and technical support. These partnerships can help scale programs and introduce new models of intervention.
- **Raise Awareness of Available Church Services:** The study revealed that people in poverty are more likely to engage with church efforts. Churches should **improve communication channels**—such as church bulletins, community radio, or village forums—to raise awareness of available support and programs.
- **Train Church Leaders in Project Management and Development Work:** To ensure sustainability, church staff and leaders should be **trained in development planning, budgeting, monitoring, and community engagement**, enabling them to manage projects more professionally and effectively.

- **Encourage Community Involvement in Program Design:** Churches should adopt a **bottom-up approach**, involving local members in the identification of needs, design of programs, and implementation. This enhances relevance, ownership, and sustainability of interventions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: RESEARCH WORKPLAN

S/N	Activity	Nov	February	March	April	May	June	Person Responsibility
1	Identification of research topics and approval							Student
2	Proposal writing							Student/ Supervisor
3	Data collection							Student
4	Data analysis							Student
5	Submission of dissertation							Student
6	Seminar							Student/ Supervisor
8	Printing of dissertation							Student
9	Submission of final report							Student

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH BUDGET

S/N	Particular	Quantity	UNIT PRICE SSP	Amount in SSP
1.	Training for data collectors	Lumpsum	1,000,000	1,000,000
2.	Survey materials (Printing, etc.)	Lumpsum	500,000	500,000
3.	Transportation	Lumpsum	2,000,000	2,000,000
4.	Data analysis software (SPSS)	Lumpsum	1,500,000	1,500,000
5.	Miscellaneous Expenses	Lumpsum	750,000	750,000
	Total		5,750,000	5,750,000

APPENDIX III: CONSENT FORM.

Rev Alex Frazer, a student pursuing Master of Theological Studies at Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology, Uganda Christian University, researching ‘the role of the church towards mitigating poverty among Christians living in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi’. The research is part of the requirement for the award of the master's in the above-mentioned University; as such, there is no appraisal to whoever consents to take part in this study. Your information will be kept confidential. You will probably spend nearly 15 minutes answering the questions.

I am grateful for your support in my study.

I have read and understood the study program, and I have decided to contribute voluntarily without any force.

Respondent’s signature or thumb print _____ Date _____

Researcher’s signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS MITIGATING POVERTY AMONG CHRISTIANS LIVING IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARIDI.

QUESTIONNAIRE ID:	
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Objective 1: To determine the current socio-economic status of Christians in the Episcopal Diocese of Maridi			
SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION			
S/N	CATEGORY	QUESTION	RESPONSE
A1	Gender	1 = Male 2 = Female	
A2	Age	1 = Under 18 years 2 = 18-29 years 3 = 30-39 years 4 = 40-55 years 5 = Above 55 years	
A3	Highest Level of Education	1 = No formal Education 2 = Certificate 3 = Diploma 4 = Bachelor's degree 5 = Master's degree 6 = PhD	
A4	Employment Status	1 = Un employed 2 = Student 3 = Retired 4 = Self employed 5 = Employed	
A5	Household income level	1 = Below 100,000 SSP 2 = 100,000 – 199,999 SSP 3 = 200,000 – 399,999 SSP 4 = 400,000 – 599,999 SSP 5 = 600,000 – 999,999 SSP 6 = 1,000,000 SSP and above	

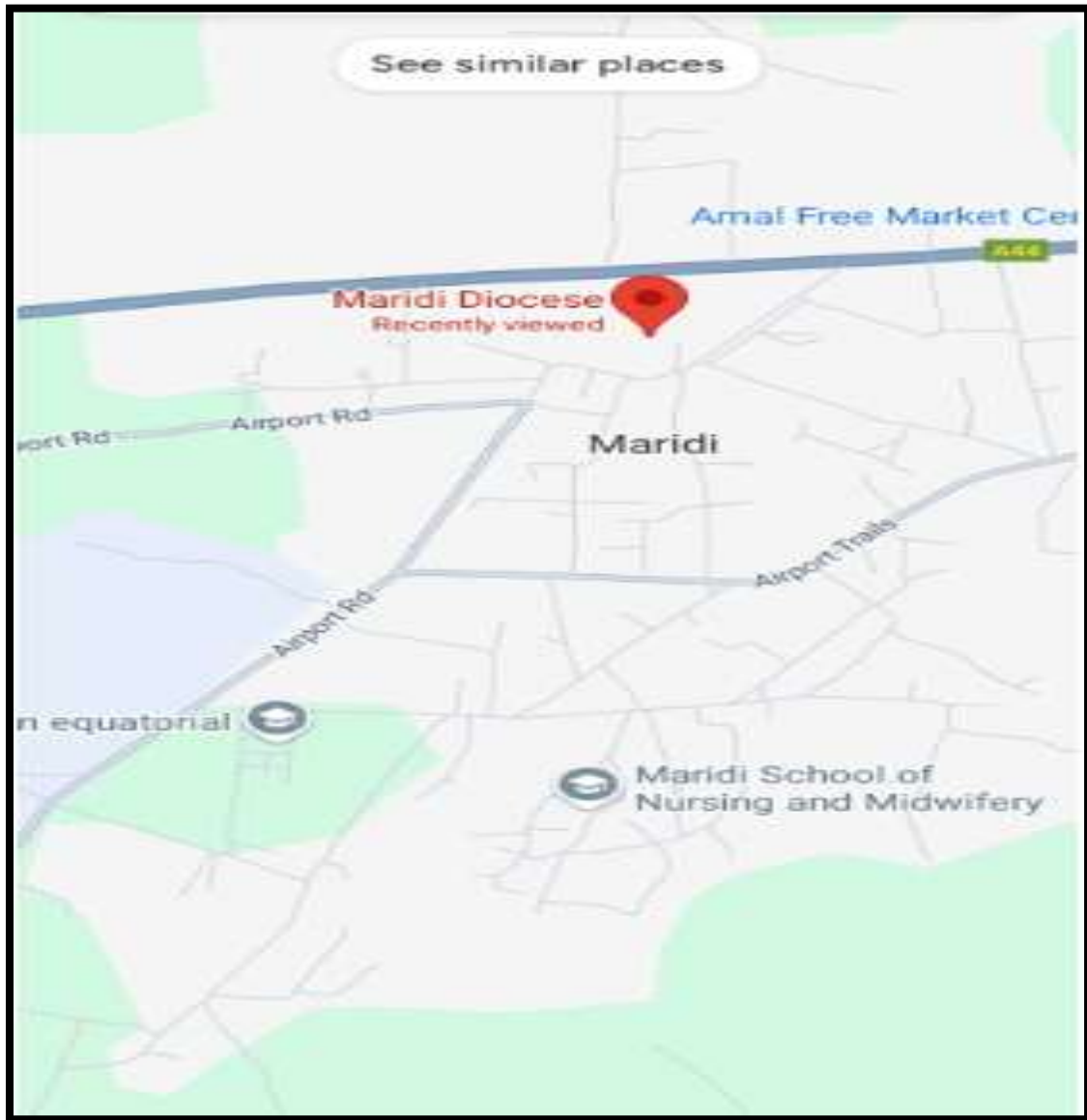
SECTION B: Perception and Experience of Poverty						
Please choose the most appropriate response to the question. Strongly Disagree (SA) =1. Disagree (D) = 2, Not Sure (N)=3, Agree (A)=4, Strongly Agree (SA)=5						
S/N	QUESTION	SD	D	N	A	SA
B1	I have a good understanding of what poverty means.					
B2	I have experienced poverty in the last two years.					
B3	Lack of employment is a major cause of poverty in my household.					
B4	Health problems have contributed to poverty in my household.					
B5	I struggle to meet basic needs like food, housing, and clothing.					
B6	Insecurity has affected my ability to earn a stable income.					

Objective 2: To assess the church’s existing programs aimed at poverty alleviation						
SECTION C: Church Programs and Initiatives						
Please choose the most appropriate response to the question. Strongly Disagree (SA) =1. Disagree (D) = 2, Not Sure (N)=3, Agree (A)=4, Strongly Agree (SA)=5						
S/N	QUESTION	SD	D	N	A	SA
C1	My church is actively involved in poverty alleviation efforts.					
C2	I have personally benefited from a poverty alleviation program run by the church.					
C3	Church programs such as food aid or education support are available in my area.					
C4	Vocational training programs are offered by my church.					
C5	The church provides business or farming support to poor members.					
C6	Church programs have improved my quality of life.					
C7	My church collaborates with other organizations to fight poverty.					

Objective 3: To propose recommendations for enhancing the church’s role in poverty mitigation						
SECTION D: Faith, Beliefs, and Recommendations						
Please choose the most appropriate response to the question. Strongly Disagree (SA) =1. Disagree (D) = 2, Not Sure (N)=3, Agree (A)=4, Strongly Agree (SA)=5						
S/N	QUESTION	SD	D	N	A	SA
D1	It is part of my faith to support poverty alleviation.					
D2	My church preaches regularly about poverty and its effects.					
D3	The church should expand its role in reducing poverty.					
D4	The church should offer more vocational and entrepreneurship training.					
D5	I am satisfied with the current church efforts toward poverty reduction.					
D6	Church efforts should focus more on income-generating activities.					
D7	Cooperative farming or savings groups should be promoted by the church.					

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX V: MAP SHOWING MARIDI DIOCESE



APPENDIX VI: TURNITIN REPORT



Alex Frazer

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS MITIGATING POVERTY AMONG CHRISTIANS LIVING

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