

# Church Financial Demands and Christian Church Attendance in Kyeizooba Sub County, Bushenyi District of Uganda

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## ABSTRACT

Church financial demands has led to lack of trust among church leaders and their believers due to frequency of the financial demands from church members without accountability to the members. This has brought lack of trust among church leaders by followers hence reducing attendance of Christians in church and occasioned the creation of different churches by the members due to mistrust between each other. In the light of the above observations, the study calls for Church preachers to explicitly explain God's word and bring their worshippers to knowledge of God. The church should start self-sustaining projects like rearing cattle, chicken and other agricultural projects so that its treasury can be increased. There is need for churches to form worship memberships' care team that review the attendance of their worshippers. Finally, there is need for leaders of the church to constantly visit the homes of their Christian brothers, pray for them so that their investments can be blessed by God.

**Keywords:** Christian church, Church financial demands, Membership, Religious market, Worshippers

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## INTRODUCTION

Religious pluralism and religious market regulation are two main aspects that affect religious supply and people's willingness to pay for participation based on their beliefs [1]. New churches will find it harder to enter religious markets with heavy regulation, such as a state religion. Low church involvement results in a bad religious market. However, if religion and state are strictly separated, religious markets will thrive, many churches can compete for followers, more people will discover churches that meet their requirements, and more will be active in their churches [2]. The majority of studies analysed by Kocak and Carroll [3] found no correlation between religious pluralism and religious involvement. Tests using institutional arguments (state regulation) rather than religious plurality have likewise been mixed. Based on a simple correlation coefficient, Norris and Inglehart [4] suggested that religious regulation does not affect religiosity. Barro and McCleary [5] find that state religion increases religiosity. Gill and Lundsgaarde [6] find no influence of religious pluralism or regulation on church attendance. Many experts believe that when society creates greater rights and economic

possibilities, churchgoers become more conservative [7]. This seems to be true since non-believers avoid religious services and religious participants dislike liberal abortion laws that commonly accompany economically and politically modernised cultures. Lee and Suh [8] maintain that Church financial demands have reduced the rate of attendance in most churches. This has been due to the money levied on every baptized Christian and at times some people want to embezzle money collected after each prayer session. It is alleged that church attendance in Kyeizooba Sub-County in Bushenyi District has reduced and there is a feeling that it could be due to financial demands. When some Christians know that they have no money to give on Sunday, they refrain from going to attend church services or masses. If these problems are not solved, many people may refrain from attending church services frequently. Thus, it is against this background that the researcher investigates the effect of Church financial demands and Christian Church attendance in Kyeizooba Sub-County, Bushenyi District of Uganda.

### Church attendance level

Since the 1950s, Church School and Sunday school enrollment and attendance have declined along with membership [9]. This drop is not surprising, but it is interesting to observe that overall participation/enrollment rates, as a percentage of total membership, have decreased greatly from the 1950s and 1960s but have not changed dramatically. At least 19.9% of UCC students engaged in these programmes in 2017[10]. Compared to average weekly attendance, considerably fewer children and adults regularly participated in Christian Education/Faith Formation programmes. The gap between enrollment and attendance has grown, suggesting fewer Christian education/faith formation participants attend weekly. Average weekly church attendance has similarly declined [11]. Faith Formation programmes for adults were more popular than those for children. The loss in younger individuals in congregational life, competing interests for Sunday morning voters' attention, and increasing family variety around divorce and co-parenting may explain this. Church attendance is higher among older people and women. There's evidence linking church attendance to health. Regular church attendance is connected to happiness by the Pew Research Center [12], which runs the large Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. Religious belief grew with age, was higher

among women, right-wingers, and philosophers and ethicists, according to a 2005 European Union survey [13]. The Iona Institute found rising church attendance in Ireland despite Christian Church sex-abuse scandals. Some attribute the rise to recession [14]. Church attendance correlates with education, according to research. In 1996, 34% of high school dropouts and 44% of college graduates went to church on Sundays, according to Pew Research [12]. 48% of married people attended church on Sundays, compared to 29% of divorced and 31% of singles. While the well-educated and married may over report their church attendance, these data show that they have a stronger church-going identity than other Americans. In 2018, research found that "Students at Oxford, Cambridge and Durham are twice as likely to worship on a Sunday as the general population"—colleges at these universities have about fifty-six chapels [15]. Weekly church attendance is declining in sophisticated societies as people attend monthly or holiday services. Sociologists have linked this trend to boredom during services, lack of enthusiasm, generational incompatibility of belief systems, and current social changes. In 65 countries, 16 of 20 advanced countries had decreased monthly church attendance [16].

### Effect of church financial demands on Christian attendance

Church financial demands has led to the population decrease of Christians in the church due to high demand of money inform of offertories and church construction hence making some Christians refrain from attending church services. The money collected after each prayer session affect those who would want to attend without money[17]. Church financial demands has led to lack of trust among church leaders and their believers due to the frequency of demanding money from church members and spending them extravagantly without accountability

to them. This has brought lack of trust among church leaders by followers hence reducing attendance of Christians in church and at times some go and create their own churches due to mistrust between each other[18].

There have been too many conflicts in the church as a result of church demands. In some places people always have greater sense of intimacy and oneness. Crisis and conflicts in church inevitably spill over into the community thus reducing the attendance[19].

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design and study population

Descriptive research was used to obtain necessary information for the study. The study population

includes the selected Christian churches in Kyeizooba sub-county, Bushenyi District of Uganda.

### Sample size and study area

**Table 1 summarizing: sample size, Target population and sampling techniques.**

Category	Target population	Sample size	Sampling techniques.
Christian church leaders	4	4	Purposive sampling.
Church attendants	120	91	Random sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>95</b>	

The study was carried out in 4 selected Christian Churches in Rutete Town council, Kagadi District which was randomly selected and categorized. The

Study used 95 respondents; 91 Church attendants, and 4 Church leaders.

## RESULTS

**Table 2: Respondents' responses on the effect of church financial demands on Christian church attendance in Kyeizooba, Bushenyi District of Uganda**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Money is levied on every Christian and at times some people want doge thus affecting the Christian attendance in church	22(23.2%)	7(7.4%)	4(4.2%)	0	0
There is a lot of money collections after each prayer session and this also affect those who would want to attend without money.	16(16.8%)	5(5.3%)	7(7.4%)	1(1%)	1(1%)
Sometimes, some church leaders appoint at some individuals they know can give a lot. They call, them against their wish and so to avoid embarrassment, they do not come back to attend.	15(15.8%)	8(8.4%)	4(4.2%)	5(5.3%)	0

From the study findings in table 2 above, 22(23.2%) agree, 7(7.4%) strongly agreed, 4(4.2%) disagreed with the statement that money is levied on every Christian and at times some people want hide some money contributed by church members-thus affecting the Christian attendance in church. 16(16.8%) agreed, 5(5.3%) strongly agreed, disagreed 7(7.4%), strongly disagreed 1(1%) and 1(1%) were not sure with the statement that there is a lot of money collections after each prayer session

and this also affects those who would want to attend without money. From the table findings, 15(15.8%) agreed, 8(8.4%), strongly agreed, 4(4.2%), disagreed. 5(5.3%) strongly disagreed and 1(1.6%) were not sure with the statement that Sometimes, some church leaders appoint at some individuals they know can give a lot. They call them against their wish and so to avoid embarrassment, they do not return back to attend church services.

**Table 3: Respondents' responses showing the possible means of increasing church attendance in Kyeizooba sub county Bushenyi District.**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Church preachers should explain Gods word very well and bring people to knowledge of God.	20(21.1%)	6(6.3%)	0	0	0
The church should start prayer groups to encourage people join it	15(15.8%)	3(3.2%)	1(1%)	2(2.1%)	0
The church should start self-sustaining projects like rearing cattle, chicken and other agriculture projects so that its treasury will have money and stop asking money from Christians all the time they come to pray.	15(15.8%)	5(5.3%)	5(5.3%)	1(1%)	2(2.1%)
Explain the Christians the importance of giving charity and link it with biblical evidence rather than forcing Christians too give which in the end pushes them out from church.	7(7.4%)	2(2.1%)	0	0	1(1%)
Church leaders should sensitize its members on how to how to work hard and get out of poverty. The problem is that they do not have money if they had they would come and attend.	5(5.3%)	0	4(4.2%)	1(1%)	0

From the study findings in table 3 above, 20(21.1%) agreed, 6(6.3%), strongly agreed, with the statement that Church preachers should explain God's word very well and bring people to knowledge of God, 15(15.8%), agreed, 3(3.2%), strongly agreed, 1(1%), disagreed and 2(2.1%), strongly disagreed with the statement that the church should start prayer groups to encourage people join it 15(15.8%), agreed, 5(5.3%), strongly agreed, 5(5.3%). disagreed,

1(1%), strongly disagreed, and 2(2.1%) were not sure with the statement that the church should start self-sustaining projects like 18 cattle, chicken and other agricultural products, asking Money from Christians all the time they come to pray treasury will have money, greed 1(1%), not sure with the statement that the church should explain the Christians the importance of giving charity and link it with biblical evidence rather than forcing Christians to give

which in the end pushes them out from church. 5(5.3%), agreed, 4(4.2%), disagreed, 1(1%), strongly disagreed that Church leaders should sensitize its

## DISCUSSION

The study found that majority of the respondents who attended church prayers regularly were women with 31.6% higher extent, while men were on a lower extent with 21%. This implied that majority of men engaged in daily activities looking for money and end up not attending churches. This was in line with findings of Kvande, Klockner and Nielsen[20] when they observed that Church attendance remains stronger among older demographics and more common for women. There is evidence that links church attendance with health benefits. The Pew Research Center[12] which conducts the extensive research and information program Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, has linked regular church attendance with happiness. Findings also show that 15(15.8%) agreed, 8(8.4%), strongly agreed, 4(4.2%), disagreed. 5(5.3%) strongly disagreed and 1(1.6%) were not sure with the statement that sometimes, some Church leaders appoint at some individuals they know can give a lot. They call, them against their wish and so to avoid embarrassment, they do not return back to attend church programs. The findings are in line with the findings of Alawode[21] when he stated that church financial demands has led to the population decrease of Christians in the church due to high demand of money inform of offertories and church construction hence making some Christians refrain from attending church services. The money collected after each prayer session affect those who would want to attend without money. More so, findings show that 20(21.1%) agreed, 6(6.3%), strongly agreed, with the

Church financial demands has led to the population decrease of Christians in the church due to high demand of money inform of offertories and church construction hence making some Christians refrain from attending church services. The money collected after each prayer session affect those who would want to attend without money. Church financial demands has led to lack of trust among church

members on how to how to work hard and get out of poverty. The problem is that they don't have money if they had they would come and attend.

statement that Church preachers should explain God's word very well and bring people to knowledge of God, 15(15.8%), agreed, 3(3.2%), strongly agreed, 1(1%), disagreed and 2(2.1%), strongly disagreed with the statement that the church should start prayer groups to encourage people join it 15(15.8%), agreed, 5(5.3%), strongly agreed, 5(5.3%), disagreed, 1(1%), strongly disagreed, and 2(2.1%) were not sure with the statement that the church should start self-sustaining projects like rearing cattle, chicken and other agricultural projects so that its treasury will have money and stop asking money from Christians all the time they come to pray. 71(7.4%), agreed, 2(2.1%), strongly agreed, 1(1%), not sure with the statement that the church should explain the Christians the importance of giving charity and link it with biblical evidence. Rather than forcing Christians to give which in the end pushes them out from church. 5(5.3%), agreed, 4(4.2%), disagreed, 1(1%), strongly disagreed that Church leaders should sensitize its members on how to how to work hard and get out of poverty. The problem is that they do not have money if they had they would come and attend. The findings are in line with the findings of Nieuwhof [22] when he suggested that churches should form a worship membership care team, that reviews the attendance pads/slips every Sunday afternoon or Monday morning. If someone misses three Sundays of worship in a row, send them a handwritten note from the church.

## CONCLUSION

leaders and their believers due to demanding money from Christians and spending them extravagantly without accountability to the Christians. This has brought lack of trust among church leaders by followers hence reducing attendance of Christians in church and at times some go and create their own churches due to mistrust between each other.

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