

Social Support, Subjective Happiness and Resilience among University Students who identify as  
Muslims.

By

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### Declaration

I Nantongo Latifah in part with ( Nakakande Saniah, Kabuza Siliman, Kanonya Allan and Zawedde Fatumah Swabrah)declare to the best of my knowledge that this dissertation is my original work and no one has ever submitted this work to any institution of learning for any academic award.

Signed..........

Date.....07 - NOVEMBER - 2022.....

## Approval

This dissertation has been approved for submission in partial fulfillment for the award of the Bachelor of Community Psychology of Makerere University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Kasujja', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Dr. Rosco Kasujja

Date.....*7/11/2022*.....

Supervisor

## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandparents Mr Ddumba Ahmed kawuki and Mrs Naggayi Zam as well as my parents Mr Ssali Twaha and Mrs Nakayiza Yvonne who have been strong pillars in my entire life and making sure I reach this far.

I also dedicate this work to my husband Mr Ssebale Hamim who has also supported my studies at the University. This is for you all.

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### **Abstract**

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between social support, resilience and subjective happiness among students who identify as Muslims at Makerere University. The study targeted 100 respondents using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table, 46 males and 54 females aged 19 – 40 years of age and used quantitative correlation study design which was adopted to assess the relationship between variables. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 100 respondents. Collected data crosschecked for completeness and analyzed using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 22). Pearson Chi square test was used to test the hypothesis. Results showed that there is a significant relationship between perceived social support and subjective happiness;  $r = .355^{**}$  and  $p = .001$ . Since the P value  $.001 < .05$ . Perceived social support and resilience are also significantly related;  $r = .484^{**}$  and  $p = .000$ . Since the P value  $.000 < .05$ . And there is a significant relationship between subjective happiness and resilience  $r = .400^{**}$  and  $p = .000$ . Since the P value  $.000 < .05$ . In conclusion, social support, resilience and subjective happiness are significantly related.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Background**

Over the past few years, there has been a growing interest among psychologists in the field of Positive Psychology. Being a major focus in Positive Psychology, the concept of happiness has been widely explored and is acknowledged to provide many benefits (Kubzansky et al., 2018). Substantial evidence indicates that happiness predicts good physical health, longevity, and serves as a protective factor against illness. Happiness has also been linked to desirable outcomes, such as fulfilling relationships with other people, successful career, and good mental health (Kushlev et al., 2020). All things considered, happiness is essential for an individual's life. Happiness has also been linked to increase in self-confidence, self-disclosure, and self-esteem in an individual. Yet these have been linked to social support which increases each of them.

Research has demonstrated that factors such as levels of interaction and social support can affect the satisfaction and general health of people. Individual who have a high social support have a high ability to cope up with problems. This is because social support has been proven to increase resilience. Social support appears to be associated with resilience through a number of psychological and behavioral mechanisms, including motivation to adopt healthy and reduce risky behaviors; feelings of being understood; appraisal of potentially stressful events as being less threatening.

Resilience has been found to be the basic factor in alignment to happiness and social support. (Laird et al., 2019). Alongside this, resilience has positive associations with good psychological well-being and subjective happiness (Choi and Kim 2020), all of which are

indicators of good mental health. Furthermore, it has also been posited that resilience is not only protective in terms of mental health but also economically and biologically (Djalante et al. 2020). However, today's students, like all individuals, often face a challenging life event which rob them of happiness and leads them to have low resilience. They may face serious mental problems, including anxiety, stress, and depression, the loss of a loved one, the separation of parents (Diener & Tay, 2020). A survey conducted by American College Health Association (ACHA) (2015) on college students highlighted mental health concerns including sadness, loneliness, anxiety, and hopelessness not forgetting suicidal thoughts and behaviors. (Oswalt et al., 2020). Similarly, Kawuryan and Astuti (2019) investigated Psychological problems in a Muslim setting and discovered stress and depression among them.

In Uganda, Muslims constitute the largest religious minority group. While the Uganda National Population and Housing Census 2002 placed Muslims at 12.5% of the population, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) act Book puts the figure at 16%. Educationally, however, Muslims in Uganda are one of the most marginalized communities in the country which is the major factor for the social, cultural, economic, and political backwardness of communities in the world over. It is an open secret that literacy and educational levels of Muslims in Uganda are far below that of their Christian counterparts.

In Makerere University, muslim students find unity in their association called Makerere University Muslim Students' Association (MUMSA) which is Uganda's all inclusive umbrella organization in the Muslim students duly registered as a Faith Based Organization in the Makerere University Students' Guild and Uganda Muslim Supreme council. MUMSA was started in 1948 as the Makerere Muslims League, later changing to Uganda Muslims Solidarity in 1956 and finally in 1972 as MUMSA, to act as a networking platform for Muslim Students and professionals in

Makerere University among other objectives. Currently with approximately 3000 members, MUMSA has made major strides in Daawa (Islamic teachings), provision of Career Guidance and strengthening professionalism in the Muslim Community in Makerere University. There have been relatively few studies that investigated the positive aspects of students' psychological health, such as social support, happiness, and resilience, this implies that Resilience, happiness and social support have received little investigations in Ugandan Muslim. Therefore, this study will examine the relationship between subjective happiness and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims.

### **Problem Statement**

The student population is made up of young people from many different ethnic groups that have adopted various religions and Islam is one of the recognized religions (Azhar et al., 2022). Most researchers feel that religion is an important social force in society, and there is some evidence to suggest that religion has become more important as an aspect of the social environment (Dollahite et al., 2018). In Uganda today, religion is often seen as an appropriate means for addressing various social and wellbeing issues observed in modern society (Braam & Koenig, 2019). It is often suggested that individuals who are experiencing personal difficulties can be helped using a religious approach (Moon, 2020). Further, it is often believed that strong personal religious feelings are central to happiness and wellbeing. Studies about resilience and happiness are rare in a religious setting (Harris & Tao, 2021). Muslims students in Uganda and the world at large have been marginalized in formal education since the colonial days. Anecdotal evidence suggests a nearly ubiquitous gap in Muslim educational attainment across Uganda. While the magnitude of inequality in Muslim educational attainment in Uganda has been changing over time, limited scholarly attention has been given to this issue. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to

examine the level of social support, subjective happiness and resilience among students that identify as Muslims in Makerere University, do they feel supported and who are those people that give them support.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social support, subjective happiness, and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims.

### **Objectives**

The research was guided by the following objectives;

1. To examine the relationship between social support and subjective happiness among university students who identify as Muslims at Makerere University.
2. To examine the relationship between social support and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims at Makerere University
3. To examine the relationship between subjective happiness and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims at Makerere University
4. To explore the levels of perceived social support among university students identify as Muslims at Makerere University.

### **Scope**

#### **Geographical Scope**

The study focused on Muslim students in Makerere University in Kampala district which is located on Makerere Hill which is one of the many hills on which Kampala, the Capital City of Uganda, is built. The main Campus is about 5 km to the North of the City Centre along Sir Apollo

Kaggwa Road. This is because a Muslim students and their religion categories happiness into one form.

### **Contextual Scope**

A concise definition of Subjective Happiness is proposed by Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999), who defined Subjective Happiness as including three interrelated components: (i) presence of positive emotions, (ii) absence of negative emotions, and (iii) satisfaction with life. The former two refer to affect balance and are typically affected by situational factors. According to Islam, happiness is the fulfillment of material and moral, as well as spiritual needs. The concept of happiness in Islam is known as Falah. Falah is pleasure and peace that can be enjoyed by any individuals in life and after life (Aydin & Khan, 2021).

Resilience signifies the ability to bounce back from or withstand major or multiple stresses in life (Yıldırım & Arslan, 2020). Essentially, resilience is the capacity to thrive despite adversity, and to overcome the odds (Wilson & Arvanitakis, 2013). Garmezy, the founder of the contemporary research on resilience, suggests that the term resilience as used in psychology has emerged out of the experience of studying the attributes of competence and its development in school children, especially focusing on children who despite impoverished backgrounds manifest competence (Cicchetti & Garmezy, 1993).

Social support refers to the psychological and material resources provided by a social network to help individuals cope with stress. Social support means having friends and other people, including family, to turn to in times of need or crisis to give you a broader focus and positive self-image. Social support enhances quality of life and provides a buffer against adverse life events. Social support refers to assistance or support provided by members of social networks to an individual.



## **Significance**

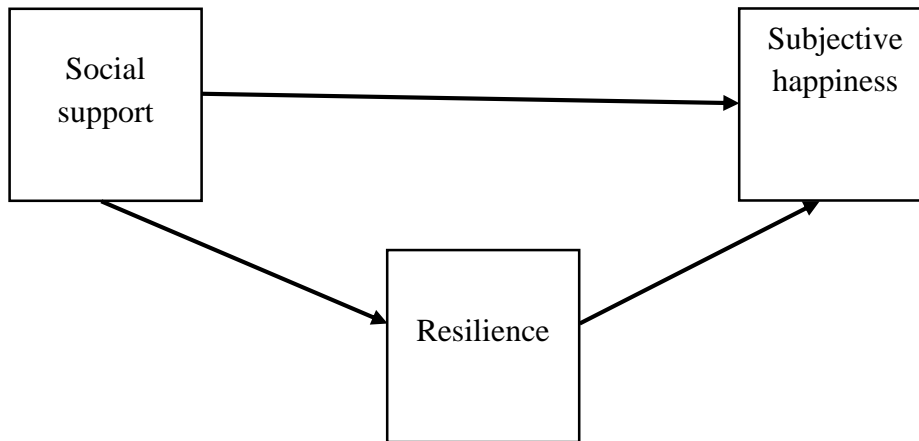
To the students as it will be important in the acquisition of a degree of Community Psychology as it is the University's prerequisite that every student on this academic programme must do research on a selected topic and area of study. Their first preparation is to write a research proposal that guides them in coming up with a dissertation that involves data entry and analysis, which is viewed as the final completion of the research work.

Happiness is the ultimate purpose of every human being (Bruni, 2004). This study may help clinicians/counselors to develop programs and intervention strategies that may focus on helping to achieve the ultimate goal of every individual that is happiness.

The study may contribute by adding to the literature of subjective happiness, resilience and social support among Muslim continuing students and can also serve as a guide avenue in terms of other studies especially to the student's fraternity who wish to advance with their studies adopting the same variables.

Assessing the positive aspect of the students' psychological health can give a baseline measures for future interventional studies aiming to raise students' wellness, rather than helping the students to cope with their psychological distress.

## Conceptual Frame Work



*(Source: Researcher, 2019)*

*Figure 1: A conceptual framework showing the relationship between resilience, subjective Happiness and social support.*

According to the conceptual framework above, resilience is directly related to subjective happiness and social support. Therefore, if an individual is not resilient they may not experience subjective happiness. And if the individual is resilient, they are more likely to experience subjective happiness. Social support affects the resilience and subjective happiness directly. If an individual has no social support, they are more likely to be less resilient and little or no experience of subjective happiness.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter explores the available literature on the different levels of social Support, subjective happiness and resilience, and continues to give the relationship between the three variables. The literature presented below gives the theoretical, conceptual, contextual and historical perspectives of the study.

#### **Social Support and Subjective Happiness**

Previous studies show that subjective well-being is affected by the amount of social support received by an individual. For example, the social support received from family and friends can directly enhance the experience of positive affect and may serve as a buffer to protect individuals from adverse and stressful events in their daily lives (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Therefore, the amount of received social support plays an important role in subjective well-being.

Similar to received social support, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies show that provided social support positively affects subjective well-being (Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003; Oarga, Stavrova, & Fetchenhauer, 2015). The longitudinal study of Brown et al. (2003) showed that older people who provided instrumental and emotional support to their friends, relatives, and neighbours have lower mortality compared with those who do not provide such support. The effect of provided support is even stronger than that of received support. A cross-cultural study further revealed that individuals with greater helping behaviours are more likely to report greater life satisfaction compared with those who are less helpful (Oarga et al., 2015). Thus, it is possible that providing social support to others enhances the competence, confidence, and eventually subjective happiness of individuals.

With regard to the relationship between the received and provided social support, Antonucci and Jackson (1990) stressed that the social norm determines one's provision and receipt of support. That is, the amount of support received from others may depend on the amount of support that one provides to others. The provided social support has also been identified as an important predictor of the support one receives in the workplace (Bowling, Beehr, & Swader, 2005). A longitudinal study also revealed that students who provided a greater amount of support receive higher levels of social support from others over time (Bokszczanin, 2012). Therefore, individuals who provide more social support to others are expected to receive more social support from others over time.

Only a few studies highlight the individual positive effects of provided and received social support on subjective well-being. However, the underlying mechanism of the relationship among these three constructs remains largely unclear. Past research on aging provides some insights into the relationship of provided and received social support with subjective happiness. Specifically, Liang, Krause, and Bennett (2001) showed that individuals who have over-benefited (i.e., whose amount of received social support exceeds the amount of their provided support) experience a higher level of adverse psychological and emotional consequences, such as distress, compared with those who have under-benefited (i.e., whose amount of received social support is much less than the amount of their provided support).

In addition, women who over-benefitted show a high level of self-efficacy compared with women who under-benefitted, while those women with a balanced amount of received and provided social support have a moderate level of self-efficacy (Jaekel, Seiger, Orth, & Wiese, 2012). The enhanced level of self-efficacy thus positively affects the intimate relationships and health of these individuals (Väänänen, Buunk, Kivimäki, Pentti, & Vahtera, 2005). These

findings reveal that apart from received social support, provided social support also plays an important role in subjective well-being.

### **Social Support and Resilience**

Perceived social support was defined by Shumaker and Brownell (1984) as an exchange of resources between at least two individuals where not less than one individual perceives that the exchange enhances his or her well-being. Perceived social support makes a person more resilient in times of stress and prevents a psychopathology from developing (Ozbay et al., 2007). It also equips an individual with the necessary resources to cope with a crisis (Chi et al., 2011).

An individual may receive support from family, friends or a significant other. Studies examining the different types of social support in different contexts have yielded interesting outcomes. Mattanah et al. (2010) show that perceived social support, in general, allows an individual to cope with hardship and bounce back from adversity. Zaleski, Levey-Thors and Schiaffino (1998) reported that perceived social support from friends can ease adjustment issues faced by students in college or university.

Interestingly, Prezza and Giuseppina (2002) show that perceived social support from friends and "significant other" decreases with age. However, all of the aforementioned studies relate to resilience only indirectly as this variable was not the main variable under study.

The connection between perceived social support and resilience has long been recognized, but not much has been done in terms of conceptualizing it in relation to resilience (Armstrong, Bernie-Leftkovich and Ungar, 2005). A similar view was echoed by a later study (Li, Ji and Chen, 2014) that argued though perceived social support was a well-known protective factor that promoted wellbeing, few studies have examined the role of different types of perceived social support, let

alone link it with resilience. In this study, different types of perceived social support (from family, friends and significant other) are posited to predict resilience positively, as indicated by the unidirectional bold line linking "social support" to "resilience". Students who have better perceived social support are hypothesized to have significantly higher resilience.

Resilience is a product of survival, as well as an indication of hardiness and of present and future internal strength. In the Werner and Smith study (1992), the management of stress with social support can be deemed successful insofar as it assisted students through the duration of the stress. Whether or not the social resource contributed to the resilience of the students remains untested.

Past studies have observed social support's capacity to enhance resilience while tempering risk; in other words, studies have observed social support as a protective factor among populations such as at-risk children (Werner and Smith, 1992) and adult survivors of troubled families (Wolin and Wolin, 1993). Yet, a recent review of scholarly literature revealed no studies testing the capacity of social support as a resilience protective factor among social work students.

Social support is defined by Hale, Hannum, and Espelage (2005) in several areas, encompassing emotional support, informational assistance, intimacy, comfort and physical kindness. Hale et al. (2005) defined perceived social support as having somebody to suggest help, when such assistance is needed. Social support can come from the emotional history of family, friends and one's equals. It can also be forthcoming as a result of interacting with one's social circle, including with professionals and even with the environment (Greenberger, Chen, Tally, & Dong, 2000). In fact, social support is a meta-concept which encompasses different dimensions of perceived and functionally realized social exchange, such as satisfaction with the quality and

quantity of support, feeling cared for, respected and being connected in one's social network (Chronister, Johnson, & Berven, 2006). In order to remain physically and mentally healthy, students must have strong social support, which generally can strengthen resilience to encounter stress (Faith, Douglas & Eleni, 2007). Burcusa and Iacono (2007) argued that social support not only protects individuals against depression, but also has been placed within related resilience.

### **Subjective Happiness and Resilience**

The finding that resilience interventions help in the creation of effective coping strategies for stress supports this view (Steinhardt and Dolbier 2008). Alongside this, resilience has positive associations with variables such as good psychological well-being (Sagone and De Caroli 2014; Sourì and Hasanirad 2011), subjective well-being (Bajaj and Pande 2016), and subjective happiness (Choi and Kim 2018), all of which are indicators of good mental health. Furthermore, it has also been posited that resilience is not only protective in terms of mental health but also economically and biologically (Djalante et al. 2020).

One of the indicators of good mental health is subjective happiness; Subjective happiness is the balance of positive and negative feelings and satisfaction in one's life (Diener et al. 2009). In essence, the more that an individual experiences more positive than negative feelings, and the more satisfaction they have in their life, the greater they will feel happiness.

Although highly resilient people generally face adversities with equanimity and a sense of control over their environment several factors may influence this positive response, such as personal attributes, social factors, and coping conditions.

## **Hypotheses of the Study**

The study was guided by the following hypotheses

1. There is a relationship between perceived social support and subjective happiness among University students who identify as Muslims.
2. There is a relationship between social support and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims.
3. There is a relationship between subjective happiness and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims.
4. There are levels of perceived social support among university students who identify as Muslims at Makerere University.



## **Chapter Three**

### **Methods**

This chapter presents the approach and methodology that guided this study. The chapter specifically presents the research design, study population, sample size determination, sampling techniques and procedure, data collection methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, procedure of data collection, data analysis and ethical clearance.

#### **Study Design**

The study adopted a correlational study design to assess the interrelationships between social support, subjective happiness, and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims. The researchers applied quantitative techniques of data collection to ensure structured and less biased capture of information to help the researchers gather data and make inference to wider stakeholders. This study design was adopted due to the relational nature of the hypotheses. Therefore, the need to measure the existing level of the relationship among the study variables (Pandey et al., 2019).

#### **Study Population**

The study population comprised of school going students of Makerere University, from College Of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT), College of Education and External Studies (CEES), College of Agric & Environmental Science (CAES), College of Business and Management Sciences (CoBAMS) aged between 20-35years, both female and male. These students were selected because they represented a critical period of physical development and psychological changes where there is need for support on the rightful coping strategies as they drift into adulthood. Students at this age are

affected by anxiety and depression as a result of experiencing stressful as well as negative life events.

### **Sample Size Determination**

According to Kothari (1990), sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. This study was limited to only 100 participants both male and female CHUSS, CEDAT, CEES, CAES, CoBAMS students of Makerere University aged between 20- 35 years, and this number was chosen from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table where the sample number of 100 respondents was used.

### **Sampling Techniques**

The study used the sampling procedures of Simple random sampling to select respondents. In Simple random sampling, participants are randomly selected from the study population at their different schools to enable them have the probability of being selected to participate in the study. Here, every respondent had an equal chance of being chosen in the sample population. In the study, respondents were contacted in person as the researchers needed first-hand information and ensured confidentiality from them. The study keenly inquired about respondents' views on the subject/problem under study.

### **Instruments**

The questionnaire consisted of four sections; A, B, C and D. section A focused on obtaining the bio data of the respondent which included age, sex, the course and the year of study of the respondent. Section B covered the standardized assessing instrument for social support using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988). This scale is 8-item self-reported scale assesses perception of social support adequacy from the friends and significant others. Each item was measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very

strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree). The scale had two subscales, friends and significant others. The higher the score, the higher the perceived social support. This scale had good internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha of .89. In this study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.81 for PSS-Fr, 0.84 for PSSFa, .78 for PSS-other.

Section C measured subjective happiness using the Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, **1999**) which was administered to evaluate the level of happiness of undergraduates as an index of their subjective well-being. The questionnaire consisted of four items (e.g., "Compared with most of my peers, I consider myself" as 1 = *less happy* to 7 = *more happy*). Each item was rated on a 7-point scale, with higher scores reflecting a higher level of happiness. The scale demonstrated a satisfactory internal consistency at both T1 and T2 ( $\alpha = .80$  and  $.79$ , respectively).

Section D measured Resilience using Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire (Nicholson McBride,). It is a 12 item on resilience, created by McBride. It is measured on a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Scores 0-37 a developing level of resilience, scores 38-43 indicate an established level of resilience, scores 44-48 indicate a strong level of resilience and scores 49-60 indicate an exceptional level of resilience. The reliability estimated by Cronbach's Alpha= .76.

## **Procedure**

Before going to the field, an introductory letter was obtained from the School of Psychology, which helped to introduce the researchers to the target population at different colleges. The researcher reached out to the Deans of the different schools, and were accepted to introduce themselves by name and school department heads and the target groups, they later

explained the purpose and objectives of the study and ensure that the obtained information is to be kept confidential. The researcher later asked of the people's willingness to participate and after their consent, they were recruited to the study. After filling in the questionnaires, they were collected, sorted and then coded for data analysis after where a final report was written presenting the results from the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The data was collected and crosschecked for completeness; it was then edited, coded, entered and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 22). It involved both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. In the descriptive statistics, there were frequency tables that summarized data. For inferential statistics, Pearson Correlation ( $r$ ) coefficient was used to test the significance of the hypothesis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethics are standards for proper conduct that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behavior (Resnick, 2013). The researcher informed all participants, of the purpose of the study, built rapport and ensured them of confidentiality of the information provided. Respondents were free to make their own consent either to accept or to reject participation in the study and they were also free to quit in case there are feelings of little interest. All that was done while observing the Standard Operations Procedures (SOP's) of COVID-19 Pandemic in Uganda.

## Chapter Four

### Results

#### Introduction

This chapter contains all the presentations and the descriptions of the demographic data including, ages of all the respondents, the descriptive statistics as well as the correlations that were carried out in this study.

#### Bio-Data

The respondents were asked to indicate their age in years, sex, class residence and guidance; the results are shown in the tables below.

**Table 1: Age of the Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percent
19.00	2	2.2
20.00	4	4.3
21.00	22	23.9
22.00	21	22.8
23.00	20	21.7
24.00	9	9.8
25.00	6	6.5
26.00	4	4.3
28.00	1	1.1
31.00	1	1.1
32.00	1	1.1
40.00	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

From table 1, the results indicated that the majority of respondents were in the age of 21years with a frequency of (23.9%), and those from 28-40 years were least represented with a frequency of 1(1.1%) of the respondents.

**Table 2: Sex of the Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Male	45	45.5
Female	54	54.5
Total	92	100.0

Results (see table 2), indicated that the female respondents were the majority 54(54.5%) while the male were the lowest 46(45.5%). This means that the study had more females participants compared to the males.

**Table 3: College levels of the Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Chuss	93	94.9
Cedat	1	1.0
Cees	2	2.0
Caes	1	1.0
Cobams	1	1.0
Total	98	100.0

Results (see table 3) shows that in the different colleges attended to, the majority of the respondents were from CHUSS with a frequency of 93(94.9%), while the lowest were from CEDAT, CEAS, and COBAMS carrying a frequency of 1 (1.0%) respectively.

**Table 4: Courses of the Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
BCP	14	13.9
BASS	20	19.8
SWASA	14	13.9
BIOP	23	22.8
BLISS	2	2.0
DVS	16	15.8
BJCO	4	4.0
BACE	1	1.0
B.Architecture	1	1.0
Bs.EDP	1	1.0
BGS	1	1.0
B.ECON	1	1.0
Bs.Educ	1	1.0
B.cox	1	1.0
Electrol Engineering	1	1.0
Total	101	100.0

Results (see table 4) showed that the majority of the respondents were doing BIOP with a frequency of 23(22.8%), followed with BASS with a frequency of 20(19.8%) while the lowest of the respondents were represented frequency of 1 (1.0%).



**Table 5: Year of Study**

	Frequency	Percent
1.00	7	7.1
2.00	46	46.5
3.00	46	46.5
Total	99	100.0

Results (see table5) on year of study showed that the majority of the respondents were in both Year 2 and 3 with a frequency of 46(46.5%), while the rest of the respondents were in Year 1 carrying the remaining frequency of 7 (7.1%).

**Table 6: How often do they meet?**

	Frequency	Percent
Once a Day	58	61.1
Twice a week	32	33.7
Once a month	4	4.2
Never	1	1.1
Total	95	100.0

Results (see table 6) on how often do the respondents meet with other Moslems showed that most of them meet once a day and they were represented with a frequency of 58(61.1%), while those who had never met were represented with a frequency of 1(1.1%).

**Table 7: Where do you meet them?**

	Frequency	Percent
Mosque	67	68.4
Everywhere	5	5.1
Halaq and others	12	12.2
Class and others	4	4.1
College	1	1.0
University or Campus	7	7.1
Hall or Residence	2	2.0
Total	98	100.0

Results (see table 7) showed that most of them meet at the mosque and they were represented with a frequency of 67(68.4%), while only 1(1.0%) were represented by those respondents who meet at college.

## Inferential Statistics.

### Perceived Social Support and Subjective Happiness.

The first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) of the study stated that, there is a significant relationship between Perceived Social Support and Subjective Happiness. To test this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation co-efficiency ( $r$ ) was used. The findings are shown in the table 8 below.

**Table 8: The Relationship between Perceived Social Support and Subjective Happiness**

		Perceived Social Support	Subjective Happiness
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	89	86
Subjective Happiness	Pearson Correlation	.355**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	86	97

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results (see table 8) show that  $r = .355^{**}$  and  $p = .001$ . Since the P value  $.001 < .05$ , the Alternative hypothesis is retained and it's concluded that there is a significant relationship between perceived social support and subjective happiness university students who are identified as Muslims at Makerere University. This implies that the higher the social support the higher the subjective happiness.

### Perceived Social Support and Resilience

The second hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) of the study stated that, there is a significant relationship between perceived social support and resilience. To test this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used. The findings are shown in the table 9 below.

**Table 9: The Relationship between Perceived Social Support and Resilience**

		Perceived Social	
		Support	Resilience
Perceived Social Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.484**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	89	73
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	.484**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	73	83

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results (see table 9) show that  $r = .484^{**}$  and  $p = .000$ . Since the P value  $.000 < .05$ , the alternative hypothesis is retained and it's concluded that there is a significant relationship between Perceived Social Support and Resilience among university students who are identified as Muslims at Makerere University. This implies that social support improves resilience .

### Subjective Happiness and Resilience among University Students.

The second hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) of the study stated that, there is a significant relationship between subjective happiness and resilience. To test this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used. The findings are shown in the table 10 below.

**Table 10: The Relationship between Subjective Happiness and Resilience**

		Subjective	
		Happiness	Resilience
Subjective	Pearson Correlation	1	.400**
Happiness	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	97	82
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	.400**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	82	83

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results (see table 10) show that  $r = .400^{**}$  and  $p = .000$ . Since the P value  $.000 < .05$ , the alternative hypothesis is retained and it's concluded that there is a significant relationship between subjective happiness and resilience among university students. This implies that happiness improves resilience and the vice versa.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussions, Recommendations and Conclusions**

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the study findings in relation to the findings of the previous researchers. It also contains the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study findings.

#### **Discussion**

##### **Social Support and Subjective Happiness**

The first hypothesis of the study stated that there is a relationship between perceived social support and subjective happiness among University students. From the study it is evident that a significant relationship exists between the two variables and this is in agreement and disagreement with many authors as seen below;

Previous studies are in agreement with the current findings when they show that subjective well-being is affected by the amount of social support received by an individual. For example, the social support received from family and friends can directly enhance the experience of positive affect and may serve as a buffer to protect individuals from adverse and stressful events in their daily lives (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

A study by Chou, (1999) is in agreement with the new findings when it shows that the happiness of Hong Kong Chinese young adults was associated with their development of satisfactory relationships with their family members and friends as well as the number of their close friends. By contrast, low levels of received social support are associated with more depression and negative emotions. Therefore, the amount of perceived social support plays an important role in subjective well-being.

The longitudinal study of Brown et al. (2003) is still in agreement with the new findings when it showed that older people who provided instrumental and emotional support to their friends, relatives, and neighbors have lower mortality compared with those who do not provide such support. The effect of provided support is even stronger than that of received support. A cross-cultural study further revealed that individuals with greater helping behaviours are more likely to report greater life satisfaction compared with those who are less helpful (Oarga et al., 2015). Thus, it is possible that providing social support to others enhances the competence, confidence, and eventually subjective happiness of individuals.

A longitudinal study by Bokszczanin, (2012), was in agreement with the new findings when they revealed that students who provided a greater amount of support receive higher levels of social support from others over time. Therefore, individuals who provide more social support to others are expected to receive more social support from others over time.

### **Perceived Social Support and Resilience**

The second hypothesis stated that perceived social support and resilience among university students are significantly related and the findings from the current study are in agreement with already got findings from different authors;

An individual may perceive to receive support from family, friends or a significant other. Studies examining the different types of social support in different contexts have yielded interesting outcomes. The current findings are in agreement with Mattanah et al. (2010) who showed that perceived social support, in general, allows an individual to cope with hardship and bounce back from adversity. Zaleski, Levey-Thors and Schiaffino (1998) reported that perceived social support from friends can ease adjustment issues faced by students in college or university.



The current findings are in agreement with Frey and Rothlisberger (1996), who examined social support among adolescents, found that they confided in friends more frequently on minor issues but turned to family on issues that caused them major distress. Interestingly, Prezza and Giuseppina (2002) also show that perceived social support from friends and "significant other" decreases with age. However, all of the aforementioned studies relate to resilience only indirectly as this variable was not the main variable under study.

The connection between perceived social support and resilience has long been recognized, but not much has been done in terms of conceptualizing it in relation to resilience (Armstrong, Bernie-Leftkovich and Ungar, 2005). A similar view was echoed by a later study (Li, Ji and Chen, 2014) that argued though perceived social support was a well-known protective factor that promoted wellbeing, few studies have examined the role of different types of perceived social support, let alone link it with resilience. In this study, different types of perceived social support (from family, friends and significant other) are posited to predict resilience positively, as indicated by the unidirectional bold line linking "social support" to "resilience". Students who have better perceived social support are hypothesized to have significantly higher resilience. All the above findings are in agreement with the current findings as elaborated above.

### **Subjective Happiness and Resilience**

The third hypothesis of the study stated there is a relationship between subjective happiness and resilience among university students. From the study it is evident that a positive significant relationship exists between subjective happiness and resilience among university students and there are previous studies that are in agreement and disagreement with the current study as follows;

The current findings are in agreement with the previous finding that resilience interventions help in the creation of effective coping strategies for stress supports this view (Steinhardt and Dolbier 2008). Alongside this, resilience has positive associations with variables such as good psychological well-being (Sagone and De Caroli 2014; Souril and Hasanirad 2011), subjective well-being (Bajaj and Pande 2016), and subjective happiness (Choi and Kim 2018), all of which are indicators of good mental health. Furthermore, it has also been posited that resilience is not only protective in terms of mental health but also economically and biologically (Djalante et al. 2020).

One of the indicators of good mental health is subjective happiness; Subjective happiness is the balance of positive and negative feelings and satisfaction in one's life (Diener et al. 2009). In essence, the more that an individual experiences more positive than negative feelings, and the more satisfaction they have in their life, the greater they will feel happiness.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study results showed that there is a significant relationship between social support and subjective happiness among University students who identify as Muslims. This is made evident by the fact that many students who identify as Muslims in Makerere university are happy due to the social support they get from their fellow Muslims they find at campus in different places such as at the mosque, Halaq gatherings, in the class rooms among others which gave them a big chance to interact with each other, share Islamic teachings and also make friends.

Additionally, majority of the Muslim students were resilient, and this has a lot to do with the support they earn from the Muslim society at the campus. However, those that were not resilient it was due to the fact that they missed people around them who could support them and associate with them in the Muslim circles and these were the lowest at large.

We learnt that helping each other even strangers we find at the mosque was very important since many of the respondents complemented about how they were welcomed by their Muslim friends when they had just joined campus.

Considering all of the facts, it is evident from our study that socializing is so much helpful in the mental health of students who identify as Muslims since they got platforms of sharing their daily stressors with fellow Muslims and in most cases were helped.

### **Recommendations**

The university management should establish and set in place policies which cater for students affected by depression and stress among the Muslim fraternity. Such policies may include school counseling programs for students affected which will help in the contribution towards the reduction of the daily stressors faced by these students at campus.

We recommend the university and Muslim leaders in particular to strengthen more the religious foundations at the campus which have been proven to be very important among students who identify as Muslims.

We also recommend the mosque board as well as Muslim leaders to go ahead with the Muslim gatherings that have also been proven to be a source of comfort and students finding friends at the campus.

Therefore other factors which contribute to resilience need to be investigated among university students, which include parenting, the teaching environment, the administration in the schools and the peer influence may be significant factors which contribute to the resilience. Hence need to be studied critically.

Moreover findings showed that there is a significant relationship between subjective happiness and resilience. Therefore all stakeholders need to understand that all aspects of subjective happiness are very vital in explaining resilience.

### **Areas for Future Research**

There is need to conduct a similar study in a rural settings of Uganda to observe if similar results or different results will be obtained since the experience in a rural setting may be even worse.

Future research is needed to carry out qualitative research on social support, subjective happiness, and resilience among university students who identify as Muslims with a big sample size to observe if it will have an impact on all the university students around Uganda.

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## Appendix I: Questionnaire

### Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

We are third year students of Makerere University pursuing bachelor's degree in Community Psychology. We are carrying out research on Social Support, Subjective Happiness and Resilience among University Students Who Identify Themselves as Moslems. We are humbly requesting for your voluntary participation in this study because you have been chosen and you're believed to have valuable information which is vital for this study. However you're free to withdraw and we assure you that the information given will be kept confidential and will only be disclosed for research purposes with the supervisor only.

Please kindly answer these questions and it will take you few minutes at least 15 minutes.

By signing below indicates that you have understood the purpose, procedure and information presented to you about this study and that you will voluntarily participate.

Signature of the researcher.....date.....

Signature of the respondent.....date.....

Section A: Back ground information.

(Please tick in the most appropriate box)

1. Age:
2. Sex: Male  Female
3. College: .....
4. Course: .....
5. Year of Study: .....
6. How often do you meet with other Moslems?

**Instruction: Tick appropriately**

Once a day	Twice a week	Once a month	Never
0	1	2	3

7. Where do you meet them?

.....

### Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

Instructions: We are interested in how you feel about the following statements. Read each statement

Carefully. Indicate how you feel about each statement.

Circle the	1	<b>if you Very Strongly Disagree</b>
Circle the	2	<b>if you Strongly Disagree</b>
Circle the	3	<b>If you Mildly Disagree</b>
Circle the	4	if you are <b>Neutral</b>
Circle the	5	<b>if you Mildly Agree</b>
Circle the	6	<b>If you Strongly Agree</b>
Circle the	7	<b>If you Very Strongly Agree</b>

No.		<b>Very strongly disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Mildly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Mildly agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Very strongly agree</b>
1.	Is there a special person who is around when I am in need	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Is there a special person with whom I can share joys and sorrows.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I get the emotional help & support I need from my Friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I have a special person who a real source of comfort to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	My friends really try to help me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I can count on my friends when things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings. I can talk about my problems with my friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## How resilient are you?

Instruction: For each question, score yourself between 1 and 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Be honest: understanding the specific areas in which you lack resilience will enable you to get the most out of our 10 point booster plan.

<b>N O.</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>1.</b>	In a difficult spot, I turn at once to what can be done to put things right.					
<b>2.</b>	I influence where I can, rather than worrying about what I can't influence.					
<b>3.</b>	I don't take criticism personally.					
<b>4.</b>	I generally manage to keep things in perspective.					
<b>5.</b>	I am calm in a crisis.					
<b>6.</b>	I'm good at finding solutions to problems.					
<b>7.</b>	I wouldn't describe myself as an anxious person.					
<b>8.</b>	I don't tend to avoid conflict.					
<b>9.</b>	I try to control events rather than being a victim of circumstances.					
<b>10.</b>	I trust my intuition.					
<b>11.</b>	I manage my stress levels well.					
<b>12.</b>	I feel confident and secure in my position.					

## The Subjective Happiness Scale

The SHS is a 4-item scale of global subjective happiness. Two items ask respondents to characterize themselves using both absolute ratings and ratings relative to peers, whereas the other two items offer brief descriptions of happy and unhappy individuals and ask respondents the extent to which each characterization describes them.

Lyubomirsky, S, & Lepper, H. S. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46,137-155.

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not a very						a very
happy						happy
person						person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Less happy						more

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						a great
						deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						a great
						deal