

Relationship Between Prayer Types And Subjective Well-Being Among Students In Faith-Based Secondary Schools In Kiminini Sub County, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: *The rise in numbers of adolescents and young adults with mental health problems in Kenya and other parts of the world is worrying. Though a number of youths in secondary schools engage in unacceptable behavior that have led to violence and destruction of property and lives, in faith based secondary schools, these cases are few. Several studies have indicated that there is a relationship between individuals' well-being and spiritual factors such as prayer. This research therefore sought to investigate whether there is a relationship between prayer type and subjective well-being among secondary school students in Kiminini Sub County.*

Materials and Methods: *The study used a quantitative research method for data collection and analysis. A correlational study survey was employed to establish the relationship between prayer type and subjective well-being. The study targeted 27 faith-based secondary schools within Kiminini Sub-County with a total population of 14,606 from which a sample of 401 was reached using proportional stratified random sampling method. SPSS-23 was used to analyze the data, which included descriptive and inferential statistics. The study was guided by the Religious/Coping Theory and the Life Circumstance Theory.*

Results: *The results showed that there is significant correlation between all prayer types and subjective well-being as follows, colloquial prayer and SWB, $r = .263$, $p = .000$, petition prayer and subjective, $r = .172$, $p = .000$, ritual prayer and subjective, $r = .274$, $p = .000$, meditative prayer and subjective, $r = .232$, $p = .000$. The study recommended that teachers, religious leaders and counselors should support students to strengthen their prayer life in order to raise their SWB.*

Conclusion: *The study concluded that there was a significant statistical relationship between prayer type and subjective well-being.*

Key Words: *Prayer Type, Subjective Well-Being, Secondary School Students, Faith-Based Secondary Schools.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that globally, 16 % of youth and adolescents have mental health issues. Depression is the major cause of illnesses that affect them (WHO, 2019). The Kenyan population is comprised of adolescents and young adults and 10.3% of this population have mental health problems on. This emphasises the need of providing safe spaces and situations that promote general well-being in order to attenuate harmful mental health outcomes, as well as the importance of evidence-based therapies.

An ideal student should be disciplined, perform well academically, and meet learning outcomes (Karimi, 2008). Spiritual practices play a crucial role in attaining the ideal level of an ideal student (Nabiela and Amalia, 2019). Psychologically, it is said that there is a relationship between individuals' well-being and spiritual factors such as prayer (Kiyani et al., 2011).

Rahman et al. (2019) found out that spiritual treatment approaches such as silent repetition of prayers and meditation helped in rehabilitating youth who engaged in social problematic behaviours. According to Rahman et al.'s (2019) study, youth who involved themselves in social undesirable behaviours came from societies that had low regard for spiritual and religious practices. As a result, this affected the well-being of the community.

Francis and Fisher (2014) conducted a study in Australia among 1002 secondary school students. The study sought to investigate the association between prayer and happiness among students. The study's findings revealed a substantial ($p = 0.001$) relationship between prayer and student satisfaction.

A study conducted by Kagema (2021) among 99 secondary school students and 68 school administrators in Nyeri County, Kenya, found out that regular prayer sessions, Biblical discussions, and Christian-based guidance and counselling promoted students' moral, social and spiritual development. Government secondary schools lack formal prayer activities, resulting in more aggression and unethical behavior among students (Oduor & Kajilwa, 2016). Subjective well-being is an essential component of a student's academic life. The current study sought to examine whether there is any relationship between prayer and subjective well-being among students of faith-based secondary schools in Kiminini Sub-County, Kenya

II. MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted among students of faith-based secondary schools in Kiminini Sub-County in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya, between January and May 2023. A quantitative research method was used and a correlational survey design was employed to establish the relationship between the relationship between the prayer and subjective well-being variables.

A sample size of 401 students was arrived at using Yamane's (1967), formula. The study used Multi-stage sampling method. In the first step, simple random selection was used to choose seven schools from Kiminini Sub-County's seven wards, namely Kiminini, Sikhendu, Sirende, Waitaluk, Nabiswa, Hospital, and Milimani. In the next stage, the researcher employed proportionate sampling technique to offer equal opportunities to all the 27 schools and to allow fair representation. In the third stage systematic sampling technique was adopted to get participants for the study from the seven selected schools. This sample size included both male and female students from the faith-based schools.

The study used two standardized instruments to collect data. The instruments were pre-tested before use and they reported internal consistency of 0.630 for the Big Five Inventory and 0.875 for Relationship Assessment Scale. Information about the relationship between prayer type and SWB among secondary students was generated by use of the two questionnaires, that is, The Prayer Type Scale (Poloma & Pendleton, 1989) and The Oxford Happiness Scale (Hills & Argyle, 2002).

The Prayer Type Scale is a four-point Likert scale with fifteen components. There are four subscales that measure distinct types of prayer: colloquial prayer (items 1-6), petitionary prayer (items 7-8), ritual prayer (items 9-10), and contemplative prayer (items 11-15). The items are assessed using the response alternatives never (1), rarely (2), occasionally (3), and frequently (4). The potential answer range is 15 (lowest) to 60 (highest), and the higher the score, the greater the practise of prayer demonstrating involvement in various prayer kinds.

The OHQ is a 29-item, 6-point Likert scale. Strongly disagree (1), moderately disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), slightly agree (4), moderately agree (5), and strongly agree (6) are the response alternatives. To determine an individual's happiness score, first score the 12 items in reverse, then combine the scores for the 29 items and divide the total by 29.

In terms of interpretation, 1-2 implies that an individual is not happy, 2-3 that they are slightly dissatisfied, and 3-4 that they are neither pleased nor unhappy. A score of 3.5 is the precise numerical average of joyful and sad replies. A score of 4 indicates that a person is moderately happy, and this is the average score. A 4-5 score indicates one is pretty happy while 5-6 shows one is very happy. Besides feeling good, being happy has benefits of good health, better marriages and attainment of goals. The highest score is 6 and it is an indication of being too happy, a condition that may impact an individual's life negatively. The researcher pre-tested the instruments and they yielded a Cronbach alpha of .769 and .731 for prayer Type Scale and OHQ scale respectively. This result confirmed that the two instruments were reliable.

After obtaining written permission from the relevant authorities, the researcher proceeded to the field to collect data from faith-based schools in Kiminini Sub-County. The participants gave a written consent before filling the questionnaires which had a section for demographic characteristics, prayer questionnaire and subjective well-being questionnaire. The field data was analysed using the SPSS version 23. Descriptive statistics are used to collect data on participants' demographic parameters such as age, gender, religious background, and kind of school. To determine the relationship between prayer and the respondents' SWB, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was conducted.

III. RESULTS

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Participants

Variable		Frequency(n)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	138	34.4
	Female	263	65.6
Religious Background	Catholic	138	34.4

	Lutheran	21	5.2
	Anglican	34	8.5
	Another Christian Church	200	49.9
	Muslim	4	1.0
	No religious affiliation	4	1.0
Type of School	Boy's day/boarding	81	20.2
	Girls' day/boarding	199	49.6
	Mixed day/boarding	11	2.7
	Mixed day	110	27.4
Class Level	Form 2	129	32.2
	Form 3	154	38.4
	form 4	118	29.4
Guardian/Parent	Both parents	266	64.8
	Mother	73	18.2
	Father	18	4.5
	Other	50	12.5
Frequency in Prayer	Not at all	29	7.2
	Once	92	22.9
	Twice	149	37.2
	Thrice	56	14.0
	Many times	75	18.7
	Total	401	100%

As shown on Table 1, female respondents were the majority at 65.6 (n = 263) while male respondents were 35.4% (n = 138). Respondents from other Christian churches had a higher representation of 49.9% (n = 200) followed by the Catholics at 34.4% (n = 138). On the other hand, respondents with no religious affiliation and the Muslims were the least with 1.0% each (n = 4) Respondents from girls' day and boarding schools were the most at 49.6% (n = 199) and mixed boarding schools produced few participants at 2.7% (n = 11). Respondents in form 3 were the majority in the study at 38.4 (n = 154). Form fours had the least representation of 29.4% (n = 118). Respondents staying with both parents were the majority in the study at 64.8 (n = 260) while those that prayed twice a day were the majority at 37.2% (n = 149).

Table 2: Level of Prayer of respondents

Levels	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Low level of prayer	6	1.5
Moderate level of prayer	95	23.7
High level of prayer	248	61.8
Very high level of prayer	52	13.0
Total	401	100.0

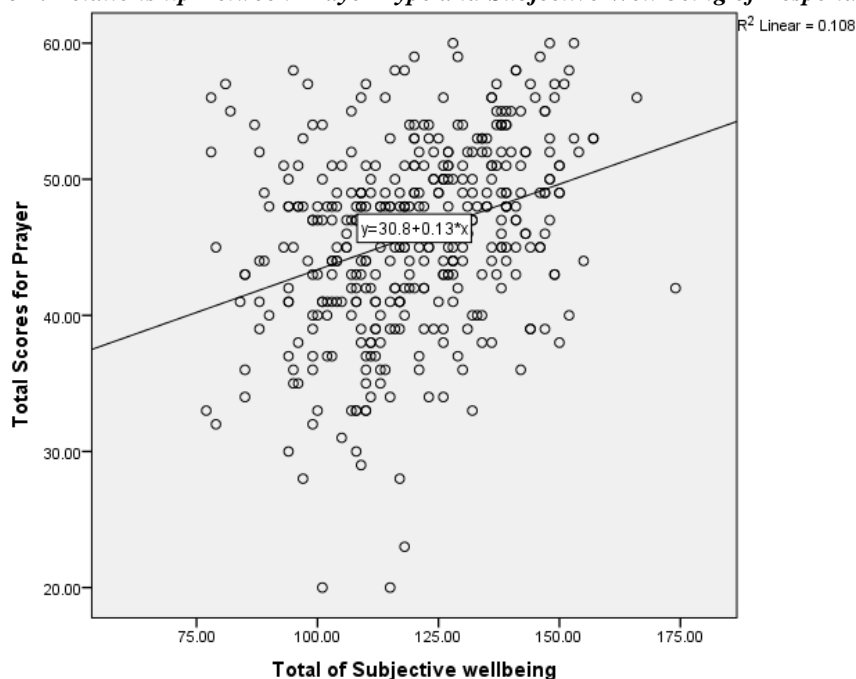
Table 2 findings show that 61.8% (n = 248) of respondents in faith-based secondary schools in Kiminini Sub-County reported high levels of prayer, followed by 23.7% (n = 95) who reported a moderate level of prayer, and 13.0% (n = 52) who reported a very high level. Low level of prayer was reported by only 1.5% (n = 6). The result therefore reveal many of the students in faith -based secondary schools engaged in various prayer exercises.

Table 3: Level of Subjective Well-being of Students

Levels	Frequency	Percent %
Somewhat happy	69	17.2
Pretty happy	274	68.3
Very happy	58	14.5
Total	401	100.0

Table 3 findings show that the majority of the respondents in faith-based schools in Kiminini were pretty happy 68.3% (n = 274). The number of respondents who were somewhat happy was 17.2 % (n = 67) while 14.5 % (n = 58) were very happy. No respondent reported somewhat unhappy.

Figure 1: Relationship Between Prayer Type and Subjective Well-being of Respondents



The predictive relationship between the variables is graphically represented by the linear regression in Figure 1. According to the analysis of the scatterplots, there is a linear association between prayer type and subjective well-being, with the following values: $r = .328$, $n = 401$, and $p = .000$.

Table 4: Correlation between Prayer Types and SWB

		Total of Subjective wellbeing	Colloquial Prayer	Petition Prayer	Ritual Prayer	Meditative Prayer
Total of Subjective wellbeing	Pearson Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	401				
Colloquial Prayer	Pearson Correlation	.263**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	401	401			
Petition Prayer	Pearson Correlation	.172**	.298**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000			
	N	401	401	401		
Ritual Prayer	Pearson Correlation	.274**	.339**	.167**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001		
	N	401	401	401	401	
Meditative Prayer	Pearson Correlation	.232**	.473**	.243**	.389**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	401	401	401	401	401

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

Table 4 shows the results of the study examining the relationship between prayer types and subjective well-being.

The results show that there is a positive and significant correlation between all prayer types and subjective well-being as follows, colloquial prayer and SWB, $r = .263$, $p = .000$, petition prayer and subjective, $r = .172$, $p = .000$, ritual prayer and subjective, $r = .274$, $p = .000$, meditative prayer and subjective, $r = .232$, $p = .000$. This

results therefore reveal why students in faith-based secondary schools in Kiminini are happy. The prayer activities they engage in raise their level of SWB.

IV. DISCUSSION

Relationship Between Prayer Type and Subjective Well-Being

The study's objective was to determine the relationship between the type of prayer and subjective well-being among faith-based secondary school students in Kiminini Sub-County, Kenya. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and The Prayer Type Questionnaire were used to measure this objective. Using the Pearson Correlation coefficient, the relationship among the variables was tested.

Findings indicated that there is significant correlation between all prayer types and subjective well-being as follows, colloquial prayer and SWB, $r = .263$, $p = .000$, petition prayer and subjective, $r = .172$, $p = .000$, ritual prayer and subjective, $r = .274$, $p = .000$, meditative prayer and subjective well-being, $r = .232$, $p = .000$. These findings are in line with You and You (2016) findings which found out that religious activities positively associated with SWB of Korean adults. Similarly, findings of the current study uncover the importance of Sedlmeier's et al. (2014) study which reported that mindfulness meditation aided in reducing stress, negative emotions, enhancing attention besides solidifying the learning process and memory. Lastly, Bingaman, (2013) affirmed the findings of the current study by arguing that daily contemplative practices may be an efficient remedy for dysfunctional emotional reactions. In short, the results of the reviewed study and the present investigation both indicate that there is an association between prayer types and SWB.

The strongest correlation was found between ritual type of prayer and subjective well-being as follows, $r = .274$, $p = .000$. The current findings agree with those of Rubinart's et al. (2017) study which confirmed that Jesus' prayer enhanced interpersonal sensitivity and moderation of anger among adult individuals in Spain. As per the findings, it seems that the respondents of both studies believed that connecting themselves with the supreme being through ritual prayers leads to encounter of ultimate happiness and contentment.

In relation to the above findings, the following correlations were noted regarding colloquial prayer and SWB, $r = .263$, $p = .000$. Similarly, with reference to meditative prayer and SWB, the findings were as follows; $r = .232$, $p = .000$. These findings have been supported by Albatnuni, (2020) who found out that pious Muslim students from Ottawa University, Canada were optimistic, mindful and supportive. Nell and Rothmann (2018) also reported similar findings when they established a statistically significant association ($P < 0.05$) between religiosity and SWB.

Lastly, the correlations between petitionary prayer and SWB reported the following results; $r = .172$, $p = .001$. In other words, the findings suggest that students who involved themselves in petitionary prayer experienced affection, satisfaction and happiness. These results concur with Chang et al. (2013) who conducted a study among primary care adults in U.S.A and found out that religious elements such as hope correlated with high levels of life satisfaction and positive emotions among the respondents.

In accordance with the findings of the reviewed study and current work, it is evident that respondents in each study strongly depend on the Supreme Being in order to acquire their needs. This could be the reason behind similar findings outlined. The findings also enlighten the researcher as to why the students of faith-based secondary schools in Kiminini report high levels of SWB which is an important aspect of life.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that there is a significant relationship between prayer types and subjective well-being of secondary school students in faith-based schools in Kiminini Sub-County, Kenya. Specifically, there was significant correlation between colloquial prayer and SWB, meditative prayer and SWB, ritual prayer and SWB as well as petitionary prayer and SWB. In general, these findings signify that prayer types were associated with individuals' happiness, affect and satisfaction.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study recommends that religious leaders who are in charge of the spiritual welfare and promoters of faith in the schools, sponsor, come up with programs that encourage and strengthen spiritual exercises in the school. These may include programs like Christian Union for protestants and Young Christian Student Associations for Catholics. This is because the results of this study have revealed a positive and significant relationship between prayer type and SWB.

Counsellors especially those working in faith-based secondary schools in Kiminini Sub-County, Kenya may use these findings to help students who reported low levels of prayer and subjective well-being discover how to address their conditions. Furthermore, the practitioners may use these findings to educate students in faith-based schools in Kiminini Sub-County, Kenya on how prayer contributes to individuals' well-being.

The current study recommends that head teachers and assistant teachers design school timetables in a manner that will offer students opportunity to practice their faith by engaging in more in spiritual exercises. In

doing so, they will positively contribute to students' well-being. The study's findings showed that type of school and prayer frequency determined students' level of subjective well-being. In other words, these findings indicate that the two demographic variables influenced students' subjective well-being in faith-based schools in Kimini Sub-County, Kenya.

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