**ABSTRACT FOR RACHEL KANSIIME (2017/PhD/030/PS)**

**Intra-Psychic factors, Coping Skills, Psychological Well-Being, and Caregiving Satisfaction among Caregivers of Patients with Cancer at the Uganda Cancer Institute and Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital**

**Background:** The needs and challenges of informal caregivers for patients with cancer have been studied to a greater extent in developed countries. However, in low and middle-income countries such as Uganda, there is paucity of information on this topic. According to available literature informal caregivers share similar experiences in their care-giving journey. Care-giving to a patient with cancer is a difficult situation that disrupts the lives of caregivers. This includes significant physical strain and a decrease in physical well-being. Because of all the challenges they face, it may hinder the satisfaction they derive from the care-giving relationship. Although this is true, not all caregivers get psychologically distressed or fail to experience care-giving satisfaction. The current study explored the role the intra-psychic factors of personality, hardiness and coping play on the psychological well-being and care-giving satisfaction among caregivers of patients with cancer in Uganda.

**Methodology**: This was a cross sectional study that employed quantitative methods. Instruments used to collect data were; NEO-FFI for personality, adjusted hardiness scale for hardiness, General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28) for psychological well-being, Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (COPE) for coping and the adjusted caregiver reaction assessment scale for care-giving satisfaction. All the questionnaires utilised in this study were subjected to structural validation and were found to be valid and reliable in an African-Ugandan sample of caregivers of patients with cancer. Multi-level analysis was done to assess the associations between the different factors.

**Results**: Analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the cancer caregivers showed that there were significant age differences between the male and female care givers and that cancer care giving is mainly done by younger females and older males. There were significant differences in the occupation of the caregivers which implies that the occupation of the caregivers influences the care-giving experience. There were gender differences in the caregivers’ religious affiliations, stage of cancer, and caregiver relationship to the patient. The personality domains of extroversion, neuroticism, openness and introversion were found not to influence psychological well-being of the caregivers while all the four domains of personality were found not to influence care-giving satisfaction on the first dimension of the care-giving satisfaction scale but extroversion, openness and introversion were found to influence care-giving satisfaction on the second dimension of the care-giving satisfaction scale. The domains of commitment, control, and challenge were found to influence the psychological well-being of the caregivers while all the domains of hardiness (commitment, control and challenge) were found not to influence care-giving satisfaction on the first dimension of the care-giving satisfaction scale but did influence care-giving satisfaction on the second dimension of the care-giving satisfaction scale. The coping domains of problem solving, denial, and venting were found to influence psychological well-being whereas all the domains of coping (problem solving, denial and venting) were found not to influence care-giving satisfaction on the first sub-scale of the care-giving satisfaction scale. The coping domain of venting was found to influence care-giving satisfaction only on the second dimension of the care-giving satisfaction scale.

**Conclusion**: The results of this study showed that personality, hardiness and coping influence the psychological well-being of cancer caregivers and influence care-giving satisfaction for the functional cancer caregiver. It is therefore recommended that coping and hardiness training programs coupled with psychological support sessions be provided for cancer caregivers. This will offer increased enrichment and support and reduce the psychological distress among cancer caregivers hence enhancing their mental health.