



SENSE OF HUMOR AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPACITIES AMONG DIFFERENTLY-ABLED WOMEN

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Abstract: Studies based on humor are increasing day by day due to its connection with positive psychology. This study is based on the relationship of sense of humor and the positive psychological capacities in differently abled Emerging adult women. The sample size is 50 and the sample was collected from Chennai. This study studies the relationship between sense of humor and the four main dimensions, hope, confidence, resilience and optimism among differently abled women. A correlational study was done in which it was found that sense of humor has a positive relationship with positive psychological capacities, hope and resilience. This study can give a foundation for future studies on differently abled people.

Keywords: sense of humor, positive psychological capacities, differently abled, Emerging adults

I. INTRODUCTION

It is widely known that a sense of humor brings positive energy in an individual and also in the people around them. Sense of humor is sometimes innate and most of the times a learnt ability. But are there any other positive psychological capacities that are enhanced? Is a sense of humor directly responsible for the enhancement of these positive psychological capacities?

In a social interaction, the enjoyable human activity which occurs is referred to as humor (Martin & Kuiper, 1999; Provine & Fischer, 1989). Humor may also be defined as “a form of play which allows people to adopt a non-serious attitude to situations in their daily lives” (Kimberly R. Edwards, 2013). Humor involves a cognitive-perceptual process where a event, individual, image is interpreted as surprised, incongruous, etc (Apter, 1991; Martin, 2007). When an object is being viewed as less important or less valuable than it was initially, it is known as diminishment and this is a perception of incongruity. To consider anything to be humorous, both the playful incongruity and diminishment become important aspects (Martin, 2007).

A specific emotional response is evoked for these cognitive processes. The term ‘mirth’ was proposed by Martin for identification of the emotion associated with humor. Both laughter and smile were considered to be non-verbal, vocal and facial expressions which communicated humor to others (Kimberly R. Edwards, 2013). Since humor includes intellectual, emotional and social viewpoints, it compels an individual by helping them to adapt to stressful situations and by expanding levels of social support (Martin, 2007).

1.1 Population and Sample

The population is 5 institutions in Chennai, out of which one was chosen as the sample. The sampling method used was Purposive sampling and the sampling size is 50, which consisted of differently abled women of the age 18-35.

1.2 Data and Sources of Data

For this study, primary data was collected from the participants. As this is a non-experimental study, the participants were given the two questionnaires and the data was collected.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Larry W. Hughes (2008) conducted a study on the relationship between sense of humor and positive psychological capacities. The study was conducted on 92 respondents, out of which 5 did not complete the surveys. It was found that overall sense of humor and psychological capacities were positively and significantly related.

In a study done on relationship between stress and humor by Timothy Eugene Spruill (1992) on 130 participants. It was found that there was no significant relationship between stress and humor.

Physical health and humor were found to have a positive correlation whereas there was a negative correlation between psychological well-being and humor (Spruill T.E.,1992).

Another study conducted by Arnie Cann and Chantal Collette (2013) on sense of humor, stable affect and psychological well-being on 120 participants. The result was found that the presence of humor tendencies had very limited role for enhancing psychological health (Cann. A & Collette .C,2013).

Kim R Edwards and Rod A Martin (2014) conducted a study on Role of humor as a character strength in positive psychology with 176 participants. The findings are that humor was positively correlated with happiness.

Another research has suggested that there is no relationship between humor and happiness (Peterson et al,2007)

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Population and Sample

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2.4 Aim

The aim of the study is to find the relationship between Sense of Humor and Positive Psychological Capacities in differently abled emerging adult women.

2.5 Statistical Tools

A. Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS)

Description of the tool:

The Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS), developed and validated by Thorson et al., was used. The tool is useful for comparing groups on sense of humor for determining correlates between sense of humor and other personality variables. It is a self-report scale which contains 24 items.

Procedure:

The respondents were instructed to read each statement and choose the option that is best suitable for them. Respondents were asked to rate on a five-point Likert scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). They were also informed that their response would be kept confidential.

Scoring:

There are 24 items in the tool. The scoring for the tool is: 0 – strongly disagree 1 – Disagree 2—Neutral 3—Agree 4—Strongly Agree The inverted scoring is there for the items 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 24. The total score that can be obtained is 96. The higher the score is, the higher their sense of humor is.

Validity:

The MSHS has been validated across a wide range of demographic variables consistently revealing reliabilities in excess of .90 across gender, race and age.

The internal reliability assessed by Cronbach's alpha in factor I "Production and Social Use of Humor" is 0.93, in the II factor "Adaptive Humor" is 0.84, the factor III "Negation to Use Humor" is 0.63, in the fourth factor "Attitude toward Humor" is 0.74 and the factor V "Appreciation of Humor" is 0.71

B. Psychological Capital Questionnaire**Description:**

The PsyCap Questionnaire developed by Luthens et al., was used. The tool is useful for comparing the four different positive psychological capacities. It is a self-report scale which contain 24 items six for the four dimensions: hope, self-efficacy, resiliency and optimism.

Procedure:

The respondents were instructed to choose the option that was best suitable for them. The respondents were asked to rate on a seven-point Likert scale, from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"). They were also informed that their respondents would be kept confidential.

Scoring:

The questionnaire consists of 24 items. The scoring is as follows:
1-strongly disagree 2-disagree 3-somewhat disagree 4-Neutral 5-somewhat agree 6- agree
7-strongly agree

The inverted scoring is present for the questions 21, 23 and 24.

The overall score is taken by calculating the mean of each dimension.

Validity:

The PsyCap has been validated across a wide range of demographic variables consistently revealing reliabilities in excess of .91 across gender and age.

Internal consistency was estimated by the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. For the global scale we obtained an $\alpha = .908$. The first factor (F1 - Self-Efficacy/Trust) presents an $\alpha = .844$; the second (F2 - Hope) shows an $\alpha = .821$; the third factor (F3 - Resilience) has an $\alpha = .736$ and, finally, the fourth factor (F4 - Optimism) presents an $\alpha = .656$.

2.6 Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis was done in SPSS 20 and the analysis was Pearson's product moment correlation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Shows the Pearson correlation for Sense of Humor and Positive Psychological Capacities.

	Sense of Humor	Positive psychological capacities
Sense of Humor	1	.35*
Positive psychological capacities		1

Note: * correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The above table shows the Pearson Product moment correlation of Sense of Humor and Positive Psychological Capacities. The sample consisted of 50 differently abled emerging adult women. The correlation obtained for the above sample for sense of humor and positive psychological capacities is .35. This is interpreted as a significant positive correlation between the two variables at 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) level. Hence, as Sense of Humor increases Positive psychological capacities also increase. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and an alternate hypothesis is formulated for the same. The alternate hypothesis is as follows: "there is a significant relationship between sense of humor and positive psychological capacities."

Table 2: Shows the Pearson Correlation for Sense of humor and the four dimensions of psychological capacities (confidence, Resilience, Hope and optimism)

	Sense of humor	Confidence	Resilience	Hope	Optimism
Sense of humor	1	.37	.30*	.37**	.21
Confidence		1	.83	.88	.71
Resilience			1	.69**	.32*
Hope				1	.43**
Optimism					1

Note: **Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

The above table shows the Pearson product moment correlation of Sense of Humor, confidence, Resilience, Hope and optimism. The correlation obtained for sense of humor and confidence is .37. It is interpreted that there is no significant relationship between sense of humor and confidence at 0.01 or 0.05 levels. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, and it is interpreted that sense of humor does not have a relationship with confidence.

The correlation obtained for sense of humor and Resilience is .30. It is hence interpreted that there is a significant positive relationship between sense of humor and resilience at 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$). This refers to the increase in resilience as the sense of humor increases. As there is a significant relationship between the variables, the null hypothesis is rejected, and an alternate hypothesis is formed. The alternate hypothesis is "There is a significant relationship between sense of humor and resilience".

The correlation variable obtained for sense of humor and hope is .37. It is interpreted that the variables have a significant positive correlation at 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). This is interpreted as the steady increase in hope as sense of humor increases. As there is a relationship between the two variables, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is formed. The alternate hypothesis is: "There is a significant relationship between sense of humor and hope."

Optimism does not have any relationship with sense of humor. The correlation coefficient obtained is .21 which is not significant at 0.01 or 0.05 levels. It is interpreted that the two variables do not have a relationship. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

As mentioned in the above table, it is inferred that resilience has a highly positive relationship with hope and a positive relationship with optimism. These are significant at 0.01 and 0.05 levels respectively. Similarly, hope and optimism have a significant positive relationship at 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$).

In conclusion, sense of humor has positive significant relationships with resilience and hope, whereas no relationship with optimism and confidence. With the above data it is concluded that as resilience and hope increase, sense of humor increases and vice versa.

IV. REFERENCE

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