

**THE EFFECT OF HUMOUR ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF
UNDERGRADUATES**

BY

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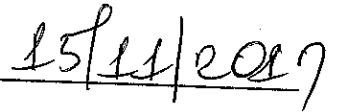
CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that OSUNPIDAN HANNAH AYOMIDE (PSY/13/1280) of the department of psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University Oye Ekiti, carried out this project under my supervision.



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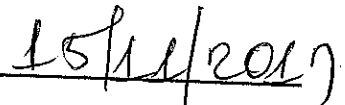


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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God almighty, who spared my life to see this very important moment of my life and saw me through to the end of this project despite my unfaithfulness and unworthiness. He remains my ever present help in times of needs. For it has been God and God alone.

To all who believe in the efficacy of humour for relaxation and stress relieve

To those who derive their livelihood from humour as comedians and entertainers

To those who make others happy and endeavour to make people laugh

This project is dedicated to them.

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I acknowledge the power, presence and efficacy of God almighty and His son, Jesus Christ before, during and after the completion of this project, He is ever faithful, ever sure.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent to which humour is associated with psychological well-being by examining the adaptive and maladaptive styles of humour in comparison with dimensions of psychological well being among 198 students of Federal university oye Ekiti, 119 male and 70 female students. Three hypothesis were tested in the study, they were as follows; humour will have effect on psychological well-being, youths with high level of humour will have better psychological well-being than those with low level of humour and that sex and age interaction will have significant effect on psychological well-being of youths. Multidimensional sense of Humour scale (Lefcourt 1984) was used in the measurement of humour while the ryff's psychological wellbeing scale (Ryff 1995) was used in measuring psychological wellbeing.

Results indicated that Sense of humour was significantly and positively related with psychological well-being [$r(288) = .32, p < .0001$]. Sense of humour was also significantly and positively related with all dimensions of psychological well-being except the purpose in life purpose in life [$r(188) = .11, p = .12$] There was no significant interaction effect of sex and age on psychological well-being [$F(1, 153) = .03, p = .86$]. Findings were discussed in light of previous literature. It was concluded that sense of humour has effect on psychological wellbeing.

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Keywords:humour,psychological wellbeing, adaptive humour,maladaptive humour,self-enhancing,self defeating,affiliative,aggressive humour.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Humor which can be seen as being funny or comedic has been stressed to have effect on psychological wellbeing of an individual, the effect can however be negative or positive. Most of the comedy shows in town today are not only to entertain but are also targeted at relieving stress and also solving physical and mental health issues and the likes. Comedy tends to relieve high blood pressure, because as one laughs out the stress, the body is more relaxed.

Psychological well-being is a state of balance in individual's level of functioning which includes autonomy, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, self-acceptance, environmental mastery and personal growth. The presence of these entirely amount to psychological well-being. It is generally known that humour contributes to higher subjective wellbeing (both physical and psychological). Previous research on humour and psychological well-being shows that humour is in fact a major factor in achieving, and sustaining, higher psychological wellbeing. This hypothesis is known as general facilitative hypothesis for humour. That is, positive humour leads to positive health. Not all contemporary research, however, supports the previous assertion that humour is in fact a cause for healthier psychological wellbeing. Some of the previous researches' limitation is that they tend to use a unidimensional approach to humour because it was always inferred that humour was deemed positive. They did not consider the types of humour, or humour styles, for example, self-defeating or aggressive humour. Research has proposed two types of humour that each consist of two styles, making four styles in total. The two types are adaptive versus maladaptive humour.

Adaptive humour consists of facilitative and self-enhancing humour, and maladaptive is self-defeating and aggressive humour. Each of these styles can have a different impact on psychological and individuals' overall subjective wellbeing.

1. Affinitive style humour. Individuals with this dimension of humour tend to use jokes as a mean of affiliating relationships, amuse others, and reduce tensions.
2. Self-enhancing style humour. People that fall under this dimension of humour tend to take a humorous perspective of life. Individuals with self-enhancing humour tend to use it as a mechanism to cope with stress.
3. Aggressive humour. Racist jokes, sarcasm and disparagement of individuals for the purpose of amusement. This type of humour is used by people who do not consider the consequences of their jokes, and mainly focus on the entertainment of the listeners.
4. Self-defeating humour. People with this style of humour tend to amuse others by using self-disparaging jokes, and also tend to laugh along with others when being taunted. It is hypothesised that people use this style of humour as a mean of social acceptance. It is also mentioned that these people may have an implicit feeling of negativity. So they use this humour as a means of hiding that inner negative feeling.

In the study on humor and psychological well-being, research concluded that high levels of adaptive type humor (affiliative and self-enhancing) is associated with better self-esteem, positive effect, greater self-competency, as well as anxiety control and social interactions. All of which are constituents of psychological wellbeing. Additionally, adaptive humor styles may enable people to preserve their sense of wellbeing despite psychological problems. In contrast, maladaptive humor types (aggressive and self-defeating) are associated with poorer overall psychological wellbeing, emphasis on higher levels of anxiety and depression. Therefore, humor

may have detrimental effects on psychological wellbeing, only if that humor is of negative characteristics.

The economic aspect of humor is also examined talking briefly about its entertainment usage, In the entertainment industry, there are men and women who work hard and put in their best to make other people happy and feel better as they continue their daily life and activities, they help people balance difficult life situations, work stress and relax a bit, they are known as entertainers or comedians in the humorous sense of it. These ones take a career in entertainment, they catch fun with it and many also derive a source of livelihood from it, as skit makers or stand-up comedians who perform at live shows or via social media (youtube, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat) and so on. A lot of comedians through humor has done good for themselves, their family members and the people around, gotten a life of their choice, increased their standard of living, travelled the world, and achieved their dreams and goals.

A whole lot of talented undergraduates, also derive their fame and popularity from their humorous personality or attributes, by entertaining other students they relieve stress of the day and handle other academic related stress and difficulties of the study environment. Through this they get recommended and they gain opportunity to show their talent outside the school environment, from there an entertainment career can start.

A good sense of humor is a quality that could contribute to psychological well-being. The mechanisms through which sense of humor might operate include helping to reappraise threats, serving as character strength, or facilitating happiness. The current research attempts to integrate these possibilities by examining whether a good sense of humor might operate globally by helping to maintain a more stable positive affect. Stable positive affect has been shown to facilitate more effective problem solving and to build resilience. However, not all humor is

adaptive humour, so we will also examine the roles that different styles of humor use might play. While there are many different skills that might be useful in supporting success and well-being, a good sense of humour has often been proposed as a personal quality capable of facilitating the achievement of psychological well-being (Lefcourt, 2001; Lefcourt & Martin, 1986; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). Over the years, researchers have identified a number of processes through which a good sense of humour might support well-being. We will briefly review the research supporting these processes and then suggest a broader model within which all of these processes might be understood. We will be asking how it is that a good sense of humour might play a role in supporting well-being, while also helping avoid psychological distress. Humour plays an important role as a potential source of psychological well-being. For example, the relationship of humour to interpersonal satisfaction has been explored in a number of studies. Having a good sense of humour facilitates the reduction of uncertainty and also serves to reduce social distance between persons (Graham, 1995). Individuals with a high sense of humour are seen as more socially adept (Bressler & Balshine, 2006), more attractive (Murstein & Brust, 1985), and better able to reduce tensions and conflicts in relationships, which may result in greater intimacy and trust (Hampes, 1994, 1999). As such, individuals with higher sense of humour would be capable of initiating and maintaining positive relatedness with others (Kirsh & Kuiper, 2003). Similarly, individuals who are able to use humour as a means of coping with stress find their social lives more enjoyable and more confident they feel when interacting with others (Nezlek & Derks, 2001). Other than the beneficial effects on interpersonal satisfaction, the specific effect of coping humour on mental health will also be evident. Presumably, individuals who can produce humour for social uses and adopt humour to cope should enjoy better relationship satisfaction and report a more positive attitude toward life experiences. It is therefore

conjectured that they are more likely to establish positive relations with others and gain mastery of environment. Some other studies examine the role of humour plays in attenuating the impact of stress on well-being. Martin and Lefcourt's (1983) findings supported the moderating effects of different measures of humour in the relationship between stressful life events and overall mood disturbance including depression, anxiety, tension, anger, and fatigue.

Psychological well-being refers to both a theory and measurement scales designed and advocated primarily by Carol Ryff. In her seminal paper, "Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being." she contrasts this with subjective well-being or hedonic well-being. Ryff attempted to combine different conceptions of well-being from the ancient Greek to the modern psychological such as theories of Individuation from Carl Jung, Self-actualization from Abraham Maslow and others. Comprehensive accounts of psychological well-being need also to probe people's sense of whether their lives have purpose, whether they are realizing their given potential, what is the quality of their ties to others, and if they feel in charge of their own lives. Apart from expanding the substantive meaning of psychological well-being, our call to reexamine the contours of positive functioning illustrates the complexity involved in defining and assessing structure within a particular domain.

Carol Ryff was motivated by two things: firstly, well-being should not be restricted to medical or biological descriptions instead it is a philosophical question about the meaning of a good life. Secondly, current psychological theories of well-being at that time lacked empirical rigor—they had not been and could not be tested.

To construct a theory that joins philosophical questions with scientific empiricism, Ryff mined for building blocks in a diverse selection of well-being theories and research, from Aristotle to John Stuart Mill, from Abraham Maslow to Carl Jung. She identified the recurrence and convergence across these diverse theories, and these intersections gave her the foundation for her new model of well-being.

Carol Ryff's model of Psychological Well-being differs from past models in one important way: well-being is multidimensional, and not merely about happiness, or positive emotions. A good life is balanced and whole, engaging each of the different aspects of well-being, instead of being narrowly focused. Ryff roots this principle in Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics, where the goal of life isn't feeling good, but is instead about living virtuously.

Carol Ryff's six categories of well-being are:

1) Self-Acceptance

High Self-Acceptance: You possess a positive attitude toward yourself; acknowledge and accept multiple aspects of yourself including both good and bad qualities; and feel positive about your past life.

Low Self-Acceptance: You feel dissatisfied with yourself; are disappointed with what has occurred in your past life; are troubled about certain personal qualities; and wish to be different than what you are.

2) Personal Growth

Strong Personal Growth: You have a feeling of continued development; see yourself as growing and expanding; are open to new experiences; have the sense of realizing your potential; see improvement in yourself and behavior over time; are changing in ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness.

Weak Personal Growth: You have a sense of personal stagnation; lack the sense of improvement or expansion over time; feel bored and uninterested with life; and feel unable to develop new attitudes or behaviors.

3) Purpose in Life

Strong Purpose in Life: You have goals in life and a sense of directedness; feel there is meaning to your present and past life; hold beliefs that give life purpose; and have aims and objectives for living.

Weak Purpose in Life: You lack a sense of meaning in life; have few goals or aims, lack a sense of direction; do not see purpose of your past life; and have no outlook or beliefs that give life meaning.

4) Positive Relations with Others

Strong Positive Relations: You have warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; are concerned about the welfare of others; are capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; and understand the give and take of human relationships.

Weak Relations: You have few close, trusting relationships with others; find it difficult to be warm, open, and concerned about others; are isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; and are not willing to make compromises to sustain important ties with others.

5) Environmental Mastery

High Environmental Mastery: You have a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; control complex array of external activities; make effective use of surrounding opportunities; and are able to choose or create contexts suitable to your personal needs and values.

Low Environmental Mastery: You have difficulty managing everyday affairs; feel unable to change or improve surrounding contexts; are unaware of surrounding opportunities; and lack a sense of control over the external world.

6) Autonomy

High Autonomy: You are self-determining and independent; are able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; regulate behavior from within; and evaluate yourself by personal standards.

Low Autonomy: You are concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others; rely on judgments of others to make important decisions; and conform to social pressures to think and act in certain ways.

The Science

While an untested model is just a daydream, Carol Ryff's model of Psychological Well-Being has faced continued waves of testing.

And her model has proved rather sturdy. Common to psychology, there is the usual squabbling over the questionnaires that tries to measure the six criteria. However, in general, researchers working across diverse population samples found that the data supports and is best explained by a six-factor model.

Ryff's model also survived cross-culturally, with studies applying it successfully to populations in Spain and Columbia, in Sweden, and in Hong Kong.

Some contradictory evidence exists, arguing that the six criteria could be simplified, as large overlaps have been found. Other studies do not find this overlap, and Ryff argues that these inconsistent findings were due to overly short questionnaires, rather than the model itself.

Carol Ryff's model of Psychological Well-Being provides a powerful framework through which to analyze and organize one's life, and to generate ideas about how to live better.

There are many different skills that might be useful in supporting success and well-being, a good sense of humour has often been proposed as a personal quality capable of facilitating the achievement of psychological well-being (Lefcourt, 2001; Lefcourt & Martin, 1986; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). Over the years, researchers have identified a number of processes through which a good sense of humour might support well-being. The briefly reviewed the research supporting these processes and then suggest a broader model within which

all of these processes might be understood. The researcher asked how it is that a good sense of humour might play a role in supporting resilience and well-being, while also helping avoid psychological distress. Thus, while a good sense of humour can lead to greater resilience and better psychological health, the current results, focusing on stable affect, find only self-enhancing humour provides reliable benefits. Life is full of challenges, so possessing the skills necessary to meet these challenges can lead to a happier life and a greater sense of well-being.

In an interview, Dr. Arnie Cann discusses his research and views on the important role of humour in psychological health and well-being. The interview begins with Professor Cann recounting how he originally became interested in studying humour. He then reflects on the main findings associated with the wide variety of humour-related studies he has conducted over the years. In doing so, Dr. Cann provides suggestions and ideas for further research investigating the role of humour in health and well-being. Specific topic areas discussed include the use of humour in the workplace and other social domains, personality approaches to humour, humour and interpersonal processes, humour and psychopathology, and humor's role in dealing with stress and well-being. One of the prominent themes in this interview is the clear recognition of sense of humour as a multi-dimensional construct that includes various components that may either be beneficial or detrimental to well-being. A further important theme is the major distinction between humour as an inherent personality construct versus humour that results from exposure to stimuli (e.g., a comedy film). Comments are also provided by Dr. Cann on how the positive affect stemming from humour may be of particular benefit to the individual. Also discussed is the recent move to more fully integrate contemporary humour research with positive psychology approaches. The interview concludes with Dr. Cann providing several

recommendations regarding future theorizing and research on the role of humour in psychological well-being.

The growing interest in positive human psychological functioning has focused on the potentially beneficial effects of humour on physical and psychosocial health and well-being (e.g., Edwards & Martin, 2010; Kuiper & Harris, 2009; Kuiper & McHale, 2009; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003). The cross-cultural stability of such relations has been assessed with samples from different countries (e.g., Bilge & Saltuk, 2007; Chen & Martin, 2007; Kazarian & Martin, 2004, 2006; Kuiper, 2010; Kuiper, Kazarian, Sine, & Bassil, 2010; Penzo, Giannetti, Stefanile, & Sirigatti, 2011). Several investigations have been conducted to ascertain the associations between aspects of humour and psychological characteristics such as dimensions of personality, empathy, resiliency (e.g., Dyck & Holtzman, 2013; Galloway, 2010; Hampes, 2010; Jovanovic, 2011; Kuiper, 2012) – as well as the influence of parental interactions during childhood on development of humour styles (Kazarian, Moghnie, & Martin, 2010), and the genetic and environmental predictors of the correlations between humour styles and traits of emotional intelligence (Vernon et al., 2009). Notwithstanding the large number of studies conducted and the variety of correlations examined, insights into the role of humour as a component of positive psychology linked to the various aspects of mental and physical health and psychological well-being remains rather weak. In contemporary psychological research, humour represents a multidimensional construct related to features of the stimulus, to mental processes affected, and to personal responses provided by people; whereas a sense of humour refers to a personal trait that covers the various cognitive, emotional, behavioral, psychophysiological, and social components of humour (Martin, 2000; Martin et al., 2003;

Vernon et al., 2009). Several conceptualizations of the construct have evolved over time. In the last century, humour has been considered a strategy for coping with stress or as a defense mechanism (Lefcourt & Martin, 1986), an ability to create humour and to amuse others (Feingold & Mazzella, 1993), an everyday conduct style (Craik, Lampert, & Nelson, 1996), an emotion-related temperament trait (Ruch, Köhler, & van Thriel, 1997), and an aesthetic response (Ruch & Hehl, 1998). Furthermore, humour has not always been viewed positively. Some examples come from early theorists of laughter such as Aristotle and Plato, who considered the sense of humour a result of a sense of personal supremacy derived from ridiculing another's lack of common sense, personal limitations, or unattractiveness.

These different conceptualizations of the construct – referring to all that is considered laughable – have been assessed by researchers using various measurement approaches: humour appreciation ratings such as the Wit and Humour Appreciation Test (WHAT; O'Connell, 1960), behavioral observation techniques such as the Humorous Behavior Q-Sort Deck (HBQD; Craik et al., 1996), and ability tests such as the State-Trait-Cheerfulness-Inventory (STCI; Ruch, Köhler, & van Thriel, 1996, 1997). The survey instruments also included self-report scales such as the Sense of Humour Questionnaire (SHQ; Svebak, 1974a, 1974b), the Coping Humour Scale (CHS; Martin & Lefcourt, 1983), the Situational Humour Response Questionnaire (SHRQ; Martin & Lefcourt, 1984), and the Multidimensional Sense of Humour Scale (MSHS; Thorson & Powell, 1993). The stress-moderating effect for sense of humour between stress and anxiety was also evident in a study of university male students (Abel, 1998). Individuals with a greater sense of humour were generally appraised to have less stress and reported to have less current anxiety than those in the low sense of humour group (Abel, 2002). In a study of executive and business

women, Fry (1995) found that humour, along with optimism and perfectionism, moderated significantly the relationship between daily hassles and self-esteem maintenance, emotional exhaustion, and physical illness. Specifically, the relationship between hassles and burnout is of higher magnitude for women with low humour scores than for women with high humour scores. The study of Nezu, Nezu, and Blissett (1988), on the other hand, illustrated that humour served as a moderator of stress for depression. By having a humorous outlook on life, stressful experiences and symptoms of depression are often alleviated. Nevertheless, a few studies do not support the proposed facilitative hypothesis for humour. Contrary to the hypothesis, Anderson and Arnoult (1989) found that university students who scored highly on coping humour reported lower levels of wellness when they had experienced much stress than when they had experienced little stress; whereas those who were low on coping humour revealed no stress and wellness relation.

Previous studies on the Effects of Humour and Gender on Social Support and Psychological Well Being claim that humour moderated the impact of negative life events on either depression or physical illness in a sample of university students. However, those students equipping greater humour did show reduced levels of depression, suggesting a direct rather than buffering effect of humour on psychological well-being. In a later experimental study, Lefcourt, Davidson, Prkachin, and Mills (1997) also failed to find a conclusive support for the stress-moderator effects of humour on blood pressure among five stressful tasks, though there was a main effect of coping humour among women in lowering blood pressure. With the exception of Lefcourt et al.'s (1997) study, none of the aforementioned studies incorporated gender as a variable in further moderation analyses. The relative neglect of possible gender differences in the moderating role of humour might play worths further investigation (Lefcourt, 2001b). While the "buffering"

effects of humour are well explored, its "enhancing" effects (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003, p.285) on psychological well-being have almost never been examined. That is, how humour interacts with social support in producing a stronger than additive impact upon psychological well-being would be of research interest. In the present study, we focused on how gender and humour interact in the relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Given the theoretical assumptions and existence of research findings, the first objective of this study was to explore if there was gender difference in the relationships between social support and psychological well-being. The second objective of this study was to examine if males and females differ in the degree to which the moderating role humour plays in the relationship between social support and psychological well-being.

1.2 Statement of problem

There has been an increasing interest in recent years in the relationship between humour styles and psychological well-being. Many atimes humour can be regarded as a thing of play which might be wrongly used or abused, this study thereby addresses the positive side of humour and how it can be used to assist psychological well-being. Research has consistently shown that happiness is positively related to the two adaptive humour styles and negatively related to the two maladaptive humour styles for instance, reported that the Ryff measure of psychological well-being related positively to affiliative and self-enhancing humour styles and negatively to a self-defeating humour style. One major problem of this research then is the fact that there is no set criteria to identify adaptive and maladaptive styles of humour, the positive sides of humour is overemphasized and the extent to which the two major types of humour differ is not strongly stated, people hate pain and love pleasure. Hence the positive side of humour.

Furthermore, Martin et al. noted that anxiety and depression correlated negatively with affiliative and self-enhancing humour styles but positively with self-defeating humour style, this leaves us with a problem to understand these variables and the link between i.e. how the correlation ensues. Having a high level of humorous orientation from multiple sources (e.g., media, family, friends, significant others) might allow individuals to re-appraise the unpleasant situations, share their upsetting emotions, and seek alternatives to cope, thereby ameliorating the possibly deleterious impacts of negative events on mental health, what then happens when the humorous orientation is low? This is a major problem for discussion. Consequently, it is plausible to assume that humour might lead to better psychological well-being of individuals.

Until recent times, there has been few research on humour and its effect on psychological well-being, humour is an important aspect of life yet it has been neglected, hence a low and shallow understanding of humorous behavior. In our day to day activities, humour is essential in environmental mastery, personal growth, autonomy, positive relations, purpose in life which further explains psychological well-being, but majority of the people only look at the funny or joke aspect alone, people need a wider horizon to accept humour. There are lots of mental health issues in the world today that requires interventions other than medical or pharmaceutical ones, humour is a good intervention as it helps to ease stress, relieve the body, helps individuals with mania and depression, restores the hopes of individuals and place them in a state of resilience and positivity, but people attribute all states of wellness to clinical interventions. The adaptive and maladaptive styles of humour are examined in relation to age and sex to know if variation in age and gender has effect of psychological well-being.

The increase in mental and psychological health issues such as stress, increase in blood pressure, depression calls for a better way for self-acceptance and self-expression Cann et al.

(2010) further demonstrated that the two self-directed humour styles (self-enhancing and self-defeating) are particularly strongly related to happiness. When they regressed measures of subjective well-being onto all four humour styles simultaneously only self-enhancing and self-defeating humour styles significantly predicted well-being. Similarly, Cann and Collette (2014) reported that among the four humour styles, only self-enhancing humour reliably contributed to stable positive affect ratings over a seven-day period. This study wants to examine humour and psychological well-being and the effect humour has on psychological well-being.

1.3 Research Question

Does humour have effect on psychological wellbeing?

1.4 Objectives of the study

Specifically, the objectives of this study are:

- i. To examine the effect of humour on psychological well-being;
- ii. To find out if undergraduates with high level of humour will have better psychological well-being than those with low level of humour;
- iii. To investigate if sex and age interaction will have significant effect on psychological well-being of undergraduates.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study will help or assist other researchers in conducting a valid research on humour since this scale has been adapted using local sampling techniques. This will help in generating data that are with true facts and not bias data based on assumption. By the application of this scale the researcher will have less error in their researched work since the scale would be adapted using Nigeria population.

It will inspire other researchers to further study humour; thereby examining the relationship between this scale and other variables of interest.

It will add to the existing literature of humour available all over the world; by adding to the existing body of knowledge in the area of humour especially within the Nigeria contest.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scientific scope of this study spans the field of developmental psychology and social psychology. The study is interdisciplinary in nature. It seeks to provide empirical evidence in its support, making use of design technique in the well-established field of both developmental and social psychology. The scope is confined to undergraduates in Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Oye-Ekiti region of Ekiti state. The students in the university are exposed to various resources, social activities that are available in the schooling environment

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical and conceptual framework

Humour is a social phenomenon that had been extensively explored throughout centuries, whereas sense of humour is an aspect of personality that was hardly explored and defined around 1970. Literature has identified several conceptual and psychometric limitations in these instruments. Earlier self-report measures have often considered sense of humour as a one-dimensional construct, often assessed in terms of laughter frequency. In addition, humour was regarded as producing only positive and beneficial effects including laughter responsiveness, humour appreciation and a socially skilled use of humour. These measures did not always consider that the uses of humour could have adverse effects on physical and psychosocial health and well-being (Dozois, Martin, & Bieling, 2009; Kuiper, Grimshaw, Leite, & Kirsh, 2004; Martin, 2004; Martin et al., 2003; Thorson, Powell, Sarmany-Schuller, & Hampes, 1997). Moreover, although the psychometric properties of the self-report measures of a sense of humour are often considered acceptable, several limits have been identified (Lefcourt & Martin, 1986; Martin, 1996, 2007).

Based on these assumptions and previous literature, Martin and colleagues (2003) developed their multidimensional approach by identifying four different styles of humour: two potentially adaptive-positive and beneficial (Affiliative and Self-enhancing) and two possibly maladaptive-negative and detrimental (Aggressive and Self-defeating), composing both the interpersonal and the intrapsychic uses of humour. According to Martin et al. (2003), Affiliative humour refers to the tendency to say funny things, to tell jokes, and to engage in spontaneous witty banter to amuse others for the purpose of facilitating relationships and reducing interpersonal tensions.

Self-enhancing humour involves a generally humorous outlook on life, a tendency to be frequently amused by the incongruities of life, and a primary focus on intrapsychic personal processes. Aggressive humour involves the use of sarcasm, teasing, derision, "put-downs", or disparaging humour for the purpose of manipulating without regard for potentially negative effects on others. Self-defeating humour comprises excessively self-disparaging humour, attempts to amuse others by doing or saying funny things at one's own expense as a means of gaining approval, allowing oneself to be the "butt" of others' humour, and laughing along with others when being ridiculed or disparaged.

These four humour styles have been assessed using the Multidimensional sense of humour scale (MSHS; Martin et al., 2003). The questionnaire has been developed and validated with several large Canadian samples showing satisfactory psychometric qualities with good levels of reliability and validity and a clear factor structure corresponding to the four humour styles highlighted above. The authors reported internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha: .77 for Aggressive, .80 for both Affiliative and Self-defeating, and .81 for Self-enhancing humour). The correlations between the scales appeared quite low, ranging from .12 to .36, signifying their independence. Test-retest reliabilities were between .80 and .85.

The MSHS received cross-cultural validation among European (Saroglou & Scariot, 2002), Chinese (Chen & Martin, 2007), American (Cassaretto & Martínez, 2009; Erickson & Feldstein, 2007), and Arabic samples (Kazarian & Martin, 2004, 2006; Taher, Kazarian, & Martin, 2008), demonstrating good psychometric properties and supporting the four-factor model in understanding the dimensions of a sense of humour. An examination of the item loadings of each dimension revealed that the four factors corresponded closely to the original proposal although there were some exceptions (Kazarian & Martin, 2004, 2006).

Most validations of the MSHS have generally been performed on adults with some exceptions (Chen & Martin, 2007; Erickson & Feldstein, 2007; Kazarian & Martin, 2004; Martin et al., 2003; Pietrantonio & Dionigi, 2006; Saroglou & Scariot, 2002; Taher et al., 2008). As far as age differences are concerned, younger people reported higher scores on Affiliative and Aggressive humour scales than did older participants while non-significant effects were observed for Self-enhancing and Self-defeating styles (Martin et al., 2003). Although studying humour during childhood and adolescence is considered important, to date there are insufficient psychometrically sound instruments specifically developed and standardized for these groups (Erickson & Feldstein, 2007; Fox, Dean, & Lyford, 2013).

The factor structure of the MSHS, investigated within an Italian context (Penzo et al., 2011; Pietrantonio & Dionigi, 2006), confirmed, with some minor differences, four distinct dimensions. A few items did not adequately load on the factor, as hypothesized. However, the reduced sample sizes and the exploratory procedure of the factor analysis did not allow for generalization of the data.

Regarding gender differences, previous and recent investigations show that males and females reported similar uses of both adaptive humour styles; however, they differed in the use of maladaptive styles. Significantly, males reported more frequent use of Aggressive and Self-defeating humour regardless of setting, sociocultural context or studied population (Kazarian & Martin, 2004, 2006; Kazarian et al., 2010; Martin et al., 2003; Pietrantonio & Dionigi, 2006; Saroglou & Scariot, 2002).

In the past, psychological theorists such as Freud (1928), Maslow (1954), and Allport (1961) postulated that certain types of humour such as affiliative or sarcastic humour were significantly associated with psychological health. Lately, several studies have examined links between

humour and particular aspects of psychosocial health and well-being. They sought to identify the potentially benign or detrimental uses of humour styles. Particularly, several studies have demonstrated that adaptive humour styles – Affiliative and Self-enhancing humour – are positively related to aspects of psychological well-being: openness to experience, self-esteem, intimacy, relationship satisfaction, mature and effective coping, positive self-evaluative standards, subjective happiness, and mainly positive moods and emotions. Conversely, maladaptive humour styles – Aggressive and Self-defeating humour – are positively related to psychological distress, neuroticism, anxious attachment, immature and avoidant coping, negative self-evaluative standards, negative emotions, low self-esteem, and interpersonal relationship dissatisfaction (Bilge & Saltuk, 2007; Chen & Martin, 2007; Erickson & Feldstein, 2007; Galloway, 2010; Kazarian & Martin, 2004, 2006; Kazarian et al., 2010; Kuiper et al., 2004; Kuiper & McHale, 2009; Martin, 2007; Martin et al., 2003; Saroglou & Scariot, 2002).

Thus, the development of a multidimensional model and the construction of a questionnaire specifically devoted to assessing psychological well-being, namely the Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scales (RPWB; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995), are important. This instrument, previously adapted to the Italian context (Ruini, Ottolini, Rafanelli, Ryff, & Fava, 2003; Sirigatti et al., 2009, 2013), relies on a validated construct; simultaneously, the RPWB is comprehensive, articulate, and useful in offering a positive description of good adjustment. More specifically, in Canadian and Italian samples, Martin et al. (2003) and Penzo et al. (2011) explored the relationships between the MSHS dimensions and the RPWB total score. In both studies, positive relations between adaptive humour styles and overall psychological well-being emerged, whereas only Self-defeating humour – among the maladaptive styles – showed an inverse correlation with the RPWB total score. Considering that in both studies the sample sizes were

rather small and that the only well-being indicator used was the total score, it may be advisable to replicate the investigation with a larger number of participants and widen the enquiry to the possible links between the MSHS dimensions and the six indexes of psychological well-being proposed by Ryff (1989), i.e., Self-acceptance, Positive Relations with others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, and Purpose in Life.

Based on the previous review of the literature, the present study sought to explore the cross-cultural stability of the humour dimensions – as proposed by Martin and colleagues (2003) – by investigating the psychometric properties, gender and age differences, and factor structure of the MSHS applied to Italian adolescents and young adults. The second aim of the research was to examine the possible relationships between participants' styles of humour and the dimensions of psychological well-being as conceived by Ryff (1989) and Ryff and Keyes (1995).

The theories underpinning this study are; Relief theory, Superiority theory and Incongruous juxtaposition theory.

2.1.1 Relief theory

Relief theory maintains that laughter is a homeostatic mechanism by which psychological tension is reduced. Humour may thus for example serve to facilitate relief of the tension caused by one's fears. Laughter and mirth, according to relief theory, result from this release of nervous energy. Humour, according to relief theory, is used mainly to overcome sociocultural inhibitions and reveal suppressed desires. It is believed that this is the reason we laugh whilst being tickled, due to a buildup of tension as the tickler "strikes". According to Herbert Spencer, laughter is an "economic phenomenon" whose function is to release "psychic energy" that had been wrongly mobilized by incorrect or false expectations. The latter point of view was supported also by Sigmund Freud.

2.1.2 Superiority theory

The superiority theory of humour traces back to Plato and Aristotle, and Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*. The general idea is that a person laughs about misfortunes of others (so called *schadenfreude*), because these misfortunes assert the person's superiority on the background of shortcomings of others. Socrates was reported by Plato as saying that the ridiculous was characterized by a display of self-ignorance. For Aristotle, we laugh at inferior or ugly individuals, because we feel a joy at feeling superior to them.

2.1.3 Incongruous juxtaposition theory

The incongruity theory states that humour is perceived at the moment of realization of incongruity between a concept involved in a certain situation and the real objects thought to be in some relation to the concept.

Since the main point of the theory is not the incongruity per se, but its realization and resolution (i.e., putting the objects in question into the real relation), it is often called the incongruity-resolution theory.

Francis Hutcheson expressed in *Thoughts on Laughter* (1725) what became a key concept in the evolving theory of the comic: laughter as a response to the perception of incongruity.. Arthur Schopenhauer wrote that the perceived incongruity is between a concept and the real object it represents. Hegel shared almost exactly the same view, but saw the concept as an "appearance" and believed that laughter then totally negates that appearance.

The first formulation of the incongruity theory is attributed to the Scottish poet Beattie.

The most famous version of the incongruity theory, however, is that of Kant, who claimed that the comic is "the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing." Henri Bergson attempted to perfect incongruity by reducing it to the "living" and "mechanical".

An incongruity like Bergson's, in things juxtaposed simultaneously, is still in vogue. This is often debated against theories of the shifts in perspectives in humour; hence, the debate in the series Humour Research between John Morreall and Robert Latta. Morreall presented mostly simultaneous juxtapositions, with Latta focusing on a "cognitive shift" created by the sudden solution to some kind of problem.

Humour frequently contains an unexpected, often sudden, shift in perspective, which gets assimilated by the Incongruity Theory. This view has been defended by Latta (1998) and by Brian Boyd (2004). Boyd views the shift as from seriousness to play. Nearly anything can be the object of this perspective twist; it is, however, in the areas of human creativity (science and art being the varieties) that the shift results from "structure mapping" (termed "bisociation" by Koestler) to create novel meanings. Arthur Koestler argues that humour results when two different frames of reference are set up and a collision is engineered between them.

2.2 Related empirical studies

Ehrenstein and Ertel (1978) started the experimental study of humour stimuli in psychology who varied structure and content in humour experimentally by forming sequences of words deviating from proper grammatical sequences and implementing taboo words.

Godkewitsch (1974), generated "artificial" humour stimuli and studied adjective-noun pairs varying in semantic distance computer-drawn caricatures with various degrees of exaggeration (Rhodes, Brennan and Carey 1987), or a weight-judging paradigm (Deckers 1993). These early approaches to artificial intelligence share several issues with contemporary computational approaches to humour. One is that the humour is comparatively low in overall funniness compared to naturally occurring humour. As a consequence, refined measurement needs to be

developed to be able to verify subtle differences at the lower end of the funniness spectrum. Another one is that, individual differences in the appreciation of different kinds of humorous stimuli will impact on the judgment of artificially created humour, independent of its "objective" quality. Knowledge in psychology has grown over the past 100 years and sophisticated ways of standardized experimentation have been established. Humour research is occasionally experimental and a few issues could be adopted for the evaluation of artificial humour to increase the information outcome of evaluation studies. In the following some influential factors and structural requirements are highlighted and discussed. Also instruments are listed that might be adopted in empirical testing of artificial humour. Furthermore, we exemplify the topics discussed by giving examples from a recently conducted experiment on the impact of a laughing virtual agent on the subjective experience of humour when watching funny film clips.

In 2008, a study was conducted using 155 undergraduate students at North London University in order to measure responses to humour using a British comedy. The participants were divided into one of three categories: watched a video of the comedy, listened to an audiotape of the comedy, or read a script of the comedy. Approximately half of the participants were observed by an overt video camera and half were observed by a covert video camera. Results showed that participants laughed and smiled much more frequently when watching a video of the comedy and listening to the audiotape of the comedy than when reading a script. The difference in the frequency of smiling and laughing between the video and the audiotape was not significant. Participants laughed and smiled more frequently when observed by a covert video camera than an overt video camera. Aspects of the video and audiotape such as visualization of the acting, auditory representation, and also the presence of audience laughter significantly increase the frequency of laughter and smiling.

In their experimental study, Fraley and Aron (2004) had participants share humorous experience in an initial encounter. Results showed this experience helped developing a sense of closeness between the pairs of strangers. Individuals who often enacted humorous messages in communication, were reported lower level of loneliness (Miczo 2004; Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 1996).

In a study of British expatriates living in Singapore, the use of humour to cope with stress predicted a significant decrement in depressive symptoms (Ward & Kennedy, 2001). It has been reported that those with higher levels of coping humour display less death anxiety (Thorson & Powell, 1993a; Thorson, Powell, Sarmany-Schuller, & Hampes, 1997). More recently, Ong, Bergeman and Bisconti (2004) found that bereaved older adult widows who possessed with greater humour coping skills, as measured by the Coping Humour subscale of the Multidimensional Sense of Humour scale were more likely to capitalize on daily positive emotions against daily depressive symptoms.

2.3 Hypotheses

- a. Humour will have significant influence on psychological well-being of undergraduates;
- b. Undergraduates with high level of humor will significantly have better psychological well-being than those with low level of humour;
- c. There will be a significant joint interaction effect of Sex and age on psychological well-being of undergraduates.

2.4 Operational definition of terms

Humour: The quality of being amusing, comical, funny, the tendency of particular cognitive experiences to provoke laughter and provide amusement. The term derives from the humoral medicine of the ancient Greeks, which taught that the balance of fluids in the human body,

known as humours (Latin: humour, "body fluid"), controlled human health and emotion. The ability to find things funny, the way in which people see that some things are funny, or the quality of being funny, the quality that makes a situation or entertainment funny. The multidimensional sense of humour scale (MSHS) by Martin and Lefcourt was developed in the year 1984 and its number of items for measurement is 24, it was used to measure humour and High score indicates high level of humour and low score indicates low humour.

Psychological well-being: a state of health, happiness and prosperity .It was measured using carol ryff's psychological well-being scale. The scale measures an individual's level of functioning along six dimensions autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, self-acceptance, It was developed by Carol Ryff in the year 1995 and it contains 42 items of measurement. Psychological well-being scale is an originally 18 item scale and later republished and extended to 42 items, developed by Ryff (1995).High score indicates better psychological well-being and low score indicates lower psychological well-being.

Undergraduates: A student at a University who has not yet received a degree. The position or condition of an undergraduate can however be regarded as undergraduateship.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

3.1 Research design

For the purpose of the study, the researcher used survey design in order to allow the researcher gather data about people's experiences, feelings, thoughts, and beliefs that are hard to observe directly. This design is aimed at extracting specific data from a particular group of people and analyzes their behaviours. This research made use of questionnaires; this questionnaire is characterized by close ended questions and on a Likert scale format.

3.2 Settings

The study was conducted using Federal University Oye – Ekiti, a University in Ekiti State which is a State in Nigeria. The researcher made use of this population because it was easy for the researcher to gather data from this population and this won't cause researcher fatigue which can influence the research.

3.3 Study Sample

The convenience sampling technique was used and Data were collected from two hundred (200) participants comprising of different ethnic groups in Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Oye (phase 1, 2, and 3) Oye campus, students participated. The names and addresses of the participants were not recorded to ensure anonymity. However, 189 was valid for analysis. 119 of which are male which represents (63%) of the respondents while the remaining 70 (37%) are females. 151 (80%) of the respondents practice Christianity as their religion, 27(14%) are Muslims while the remaining 11(6%) of the respondents belong to other religious groups.

3.4 Instrument

For the purpose of gathering data for this study, the demographic information was gender (male and female), actual age, marital status (married, single, engaged, separated or divorced, widowed and others), religion affiliation (Christian, Islam and others), ethnic group and educational level.

The first questionnaire used was the multidimensional sense of humour scale (MSHS)

The second questionnaire used was the psychological well-being scale (PWBS)

3.5 Procedure for data collection

The multidimensional sense of humour scale, as section C into a questionnaire was used. 200 participants accidentally filled the questionnaire. Firstly they had to agree to participate in the study through written informed consent. They were to tick yes for agreement and no for disagreement, their demographic information was also given, and were instructed to correctly and honestly fill the questionnaire as all their information provided will be confidential and there is no right or wrong answers.

The participants were given time to fill the questionnaire which were collected when they are done with it, while few were allowed to go with the questionnaire. Participants who omitted more than one item from the items questionnaires were removed for others in order not to affect the analysis. The participants completed a questionnaire containing the self-report measures for assessing humour styles and psychological well-being. After a brief presentation of the study's objectives and procedures, consent was directly obtained from participants in legal age. Research participation was granted only to individuals who had provided informed consent for the processing of personal data. The questionnaires were completed anonymously, Participation in the study was voluntary and confidentiality was assured; no incentives were offered. Upon completion of the questionnaires, participants received a debriefing that offered further information regarding the study.

3.6 Statistical method

The data collected were subjected to analyses using Statistical Package in Social Science (SPSS). The demographic information of the participants was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, percentages and standard deviation. Hypotheses stated were tested using inferential statistics. Specifically, Hypotheses one was tested and analyzed using independent sample t-test, Hypotheses two was tested and analysed using regression analysis while hypothesis three was tested and analyzed using 2x2 Anova.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains data presentations and analysis of the primary data collected through questionnaire administration to various respondents, including the result and interpretation of the hypotheses earlier stated in chapter two of this research work. The questionnaire contained questions which were used to test the validity or otherwise of the hypotheses. A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents out of which 189 were filled and returned. The rate of return of 94.5% was taken as valid and used for the purpose of the analysis.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected were scored and analysed. The following are the results:

Table 1: Distribution of Social-demographics

N = 189	n	%
Sex		
Male	119	63
Female	70	37
Religion		
Christianity	151	80
Islam	27	14
Others	11	6
Level		
100	48	25
200	47	25
300	50	27
400	44	23

Table 4.1 shows the social demographic distribution of the respondents. As regards to gender, 119 are male which represents 63% of the respondents while the remaining 70 (37%) are females. 151 (80%) of the respondents practice Christianity as their religion, 27 (14%) are Muslims while the remaining 11(6%) of the respondents belong to other religion group. The

result on academic level revealed that 48 (25%) of the respondents are in their level 1, 47(25%) are in level 2, 50 (27%) in level 3 while the remaining 44 (23%) are in their level 4.

Table 2: Mean score and standard deviations of study variables

Variables	M	SD	Range
Humour	77.08	8.37	49-95
Creation	22.04	3.86	8-30
Coping	23.52	3.36	12-31
Social	13.49	2.33	4-20
Attitude	14.28	2.45	8-23
Autonomy	20.51	2.87	12-28
Environmental mastery	22.69	3.47	12-33
Personal growth	22.29	3.17	12-32
Positive relations	23.81	4.12	14-58
Purpose in life	21.65	3.29	13-33
Self-acceptance	23.69	3.36	14-34
Psychological well-being	134.64	12.87	97-179

Table 2 above presented the mean score and standard deviations of the study variables. Humour has a mean of 77.08, standard deviation of 8.37 with range of 49-95. Creation has an average of 22.04, SD of 3.86 and range of 8-30. Social has 13.49 as its mean, SD of 2.33 with a range of 4-20. Psychological well-being has an average of 134.64, SD of 12.87 and a range of 97-197 also self-acceptance with mean of 23.69, SD 3.36 and a range of 14-34. The standard deviations predict that all the variables can deviate from their mean value to both sides significantly.

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation scores and correlations among study variable

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
N = 189					

1. Humour	-				
2. Creation	.84**	-			
3. Coping	.77**	.54**	-		
4. Social	.65**	.50**	.29**	-	
5. Attitude	.23**	-.08	-.04	.01	-
6. PWB	.32**	.26**	.24**	.05	.32**

*p < 0.05 (2-tailed) **p < 0.001 (2-tailed)

^aCronbach alpha

The result of correlation analyses are presented in table 3. Sense of humour was significantly and positively related with psychological well-being [r (288) = .32, p < .0001]. Sense of humour was also significantly and positively related with all dimensions of psychological well-being except the purpose in life subscale; autonomy [r (188) = .26, p < .0001], environmental mastery [r (188) = .19, p < .0001], personal growth [r (188) = .26, p < .0001], positive relations [r (188) = .18, p = .02], purpose in life [r (188) = .11, p = .12] and self-acceptance [r (188) = .24, p = .001].

4.2.1 Test of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Sense of humor will significantly influence the psychological well-being.

Table 4: Independent sample t-test- humor on psychological well-being (global score)

Variable	Low Humor		High humor		t (47)	95%CI	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Psychological well-being	125.08	14.92	141.33	11.76	-4.22	[-24.00, -8.51]	-1.23

An independent sample t-test (table 5) showed that the difference in psychological well-being scores between low (N = 25, M = 125.08, SD = 14.92) and high humor level (N = 24, M = 141.33, SD = 7.76) were statistically significant, t (47) = -4.22, p < .0001, 95% CI (-23.99, -8.51). This shows that individuals with high levels of humor had better psychological well-being than those with low levels of humor with a large effect size. Therefore, hypothesis one is supported.

Hypothesis 2

The dimensions of sense humor will significant predict psychological well-being.

Table 5: Regression analysis- dimensions of sense of humor on psychological well-being

Variable	β	T	R	R ²	F
Creation	.27**	3.11			
Coping	.14	1.75	.41	.17	9.46**
Social	-.13	-1.64			
Attitude	.28**	4.18			

Dependent variable: Psychological well-being

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5 showed that all dimensions of sense of humor interactively predict psychological well-being [F (4, 184) = 9.46, $p < .0001$, $R^2 = .17$]. In addition, creation [$\beta = .27$, $p = .002$] and attitude [$\beta = .28$, $p < .0001$] had significant independent influence on psychological well-being while coping [$\beta = .14$, $p = .08$] and social subscales [$\beta = .13$, $p = .10$] did not.

Therefore, hypothesis two is supported.

Hypothesis 3

Sex and age will significantly influence the dimensions of psychological well-being.

Table 6: 2x2 ANOVA – sex and age on psychological well-being

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
AGE	229.452	1	229.452	1.30	.26
SEX	66.148	1	66.148	.38	.54
AGE * SEX	5.388	1	5.388	.03	.86
Error	27000.252	153	176.472		

Table 6 shows that the main effects of sex [F (1, 153) = .38, $p = .54$] and age [F (1, 153) = 1.3, $p = .26$] were not significant on psychological well-being. Also, there was no significant interaction effect of sex and age on psychological well-being [F (1, 153) = .03, $p = .86$].

Therefore, hypothesis three is not supported.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

The main aim of this study is to find out the effect of humour on psychological wellbeing. However, this project has been classified into five (5) chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction of the research topic. The second chapter deals with the definition of concepts, theoretical and empirical framework. The literatures related to this research were reviewed particularly, the concept of humour, empirical studies and the clean surplus psychological theories which underpin this study. The theory connects the relationship between humour and psychological wellbeing. The third chapter deals with the research methodology, data sources, and estimation procedure used to analyse the result of the research work.

The fourth chapter presented the results of the analysis of the data gathered through questionnaire administration. The result and interpretation of the research hypothesis were also presented. This chapter also deals with the discussion of research findings as they relate to the objectives of the study and providing answers to the research questions formulated in this study. Finally, the fifth chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendation.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the result of empirical analysis in the previous chapter, the study has statistically and empirically provided evidence on the influence of sense of humour on autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.

It was discovered that sense of humour has significant and positive effect on positive relation, purpose, self-acceptance, personal growth and autonomy. This can be confirmed by the result which indicated that sense of humour significantly influence the combined dependent variables,

Wilks' $\lambda = .66$, $F(6, 42) = 3.68$, $p = 0.005$. This result corroborates the findings of Cann Stilwel & Taku (2010) who found that there is a positive relationship between social support, humour style and individuals' well-being. Zhao, Wang & Kong (2013) also have found a positive relationship between humour and psychological well-being. On a similar note Ozlem Karakus, Zehra Ercan & Aysel Tekgoz (2014) found a significant relationship between humour and self-acceptance.

The test for hypothesis helps us understand that, Humour was related with psychological well-being, it had positive relationship with almost all the dimensions of psychological well-being, because of its positivity, efficacy and efficiency in relieving stress and tensions. The higher the level of humour, the higher the tendency of better psychological well being, there was a correlation and this hypothesis was supported.

Also, the study found that individuals with high levels of humour had better psychological well-being than those with low levels of humour with a large effect size.

Sex and age had no effect on psychological well-being of undergraduates this is to tell us that humour can occur or is inherent in every living creature regardless of gender or how old or experienced an individual is, and also even non living organisms as the case may be, because even the site of a leave, an animal, a book, can arouse laughter or present itself to be funny. Furthermore, the study revealed that there was no significant interaction effect of sex and age on psychological well-being. This finding suggests that men and women use humour differently, especially in terms of coping with their environment; style of humour could indicate a role of gender socialization in perception of a social situation, stress, and subjective well-being. Also, age differences in humour identified by this study may also reinforce previous research on social

behaviour in older adults seeking closer, more emotionally gratifying social relationships (e.g., Carstensen, Fung, & Charles, 2003).

It would be presumptuous to make too much of one preliminary study with results from 189 University students. This study, utilizing a convenience sample, was conducted in just one geographical area, generalizations from these data are thus limited. For the basic purposes of the study, the evidence was sufficient to support the hypotheses, and Harvey Mindess (1987) seems to have been right when he said that there is a relationship between sense of humor and purpose in life. Apparently, the variance lies in the elements assessed by the MSHS sub-scales for Uses of Humor for Coping and, especially, Attitude toward Humor and Humorous People. Further analyses by scale item might reveal which particular items correlated best, with purpose in life, and thus give a better perspective on the concepts involved in these relationships.

On the overall, this study concludes that sense of humour significantly influence the dimensions of psychological well-being.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that people should identify the funny thing in any situation and create things which amuse others. People should develop a sense of playfulness or whimsy, the ability to have a good time, being good-natured. The study also recommend personal recognition of humor, of life's absurdities, and recognition of self as humorous; appreciation of humor, of humorous people and humorous situations; and use of humor as an adaptive mechanism, being able to laugh at problems or to master difficult situations through the uses of humor. As many aspects of humor revolve around the individual differences and personal preferences in the type of humor the individual finds funny and also personality

traits. It is not only these stable factors that play a role, the mood of the participants, at the time of the experiment, will also influence their answer style. It is recommended that before an individual's sense of humour is judged or labelled, the individual mood should be put into full consideration.

This study suggests that individuals who are basically healthy appear to use and view humour differently from those who have a psychological condition. Although individuals who are unwell or in pain may turn to humour as a coping strategy, it does not necessarily follow that humour is consistently to psychological well-being. The findings from the present study also suggested that students may differ from non-students with respect to well-being. Therefore, care should be taken with regard to generalizing from the results of studies that have used only student samples.

The study also recommends that government and regulators through its agencies at all levels to introduce appropriate strategy to the use of humor to achieve social goals: use humor as a social lubricant, as a means of easing the tense situation, enforcing social norms, enhancing the solidarity of the in-group.

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APPENDIX

MULTIDIMENSIONAL SENSE OF HUMOUR SCALE (MSHS)

The multidimensional sense of humour scale (MSHS) by Martin and Lefcourt was developed in the year 1984 and its number of items for measurement is 24

It measures the propensity to smile and laugh in a variety of daily life situations. Since the SHRQ is regarded as a test of "sense of humour", its validity in the field of humour appreciation was investigated. Two student samples (N = 105 and 101) from Indiana answered the SHRQ and rated the funniness and aversiveness of one of two sets of 35 jokes and cartoons taken from Form A and Form B of the 3-WD Humour Test [Ruch (1983) Humour Test 3-WD (Form A, B and K)]. Product-moment correlations between the SHRQ and humour appreciation was computed at the level of funniness and aversiveness for individual items, for humour categories as well as for total scores. Contrary to expectations, the SHRQ did not correlate with any level of 3 WD Humour Test scores suggesting that these two tests apparently tap totally different domains of humour. It may be that the SHRQ measures laughter that is only partially accompanied by the humour experience with that experience being more fully measured in the 3-WD Test. It appears that the SHRQ fails to fulfill the criterion that a test of "sense of humour" should be able to account for individual differences in humour appreciation. A hypothesis is proposed suggesting that the relationship between the SHRQ and humour appreciation might be mediated by social factors.

The construction of the SHRQ involved describing daily life situations which ranged from general to specific, unstructured to structured, unusual to common and from unpleasant to pleasant. Subjects responded to these statements on a 1 to 5 scale indicating their frequency or intensity of outward signs of amusement, such as smiling or laughing. The reliability and validity