

Research Article

RELATIONSHIP OF SENSE OF HUMOR AND SUBJECTIVE HAPPINESS: MEDIATING ROLE OF WORKPLACE HARDINESS AMONG MEDICAL OFFICERS

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Abstract

Humor is taken into account as vital work resource for medical professionals. It has been an additional attributable for many productive outcomes such as hardiness and subjective happiness. The main objective of this study was to examine the mediating role of workplace hardiness between sense of humor and subjective happiness among medical officers of Pakistan. It had been hypothesized that Hardiness is probably going to mediate between sense of humor and subjective happiness. A sample consisted of 200 Medical officers out of which 105 males with the age range of 25 to 40 years (M=30.01, SD=1.88) and 95 females (M=30.99, SD=1.91) were recruited through non probability purposive sampling from the different hospitals of Pakistan. It was a correlational study. Humor style Questionnaire, Psychological Hardiness Scale and Oxford Happiness Inventory were used. The findings of the current study indicated a significant relationship between the sense of humor and subjective happiness with hardiness as a mediator. Regarding gender there were significant differences in all instruments. Mediation Analysis through Process Macro revealed that Hardiness considerably mediates the association between sense of humor and subjective happiness. Sobel z test was additionally run to ascertain the indirect effect which is also significant. This research acknowledge the constructive socio psychological account within the literature by incorporating the 3Hs (Humor, Hardiness and Happiness) and gives an estimation of particularities which will facilitate to improve the practice of related specialists and people. Providing that sense of humor and hardiness are significant predictors of Subjective happiness in medical officers, by making and empowering these capacities, we can promote their psychological state. *ASEAN Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 23(8) August, 2022; 1-9.*

Keywords: Sense of Humor, Hardiness, Subjective happiness

Introduction

The medical profession is growing at a quick pace with an intention towards important accomplishments. However, the dynamic nature of our healthcare system and policies has brought the workers towards suffering raised stress [1]. Literature revealed that numerous factors effect human life in all spheres of life as professional,

social, educational, home or health settings [2]. Particularly in all health sector medical officials face various stressors in their clinical practice including time workload, time pressure, emotional problems and multiple roles. Consistent workplace stress may impact on the physical, psychological and subjective happiness

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of health professionals that in turn can lead to burnout and sometimes they experience traumatic stress like symptoms. These consequences may not solely impact on their well-being however, additionally on their ability to practice efficiently [3]. Curiously, the need of maintaining an equitable level of employee happiness is hardly restricted. However, it has an immense implication on the end of the healthcare system. Promoting hardiness promoting environments among the health professions are often explored as a way to scale back unhealthy and increase healthy outcomes of stress in medical professionals.

It is likely that the atmosphere of an advanced healthcare system for the medical officers is fraught with many types of stressors and a standard approach to deal with it is humor and hardiness which are now covered in Positive Psychology. Humor, workplace hardiness and Happiness also called the 3Hs and are typically pointed as helpful ways that assess hardiness to stress once endeavor professional goals [4]. They are related to positive psychology, sometimes as an accompaniment to coping strategy. The sphere of positive psychology is regarding valued subjective experience such as positive individual traits such because the capability for love, courage, social talent and forgiveness well-being and happiness [5].

Positive psychology as a new trend over the two recent decades. Nowadays, this trend is known for handling wellbeing, joy and subjective happiness of people. In fact, positive psychology is that the scientific studies of best and favorable human functions, with the aim of understanding factors that singly or collectively facilitate the people reach additional growth and development [6]. This movement tends to create use of human beings' strengths as a protector against mental diseases [7]. In this regard, factors that result in additional adjustment and satisfaction of human when are facing the threats of life among the foremost basic structures in analysis of this approach [8]. In the current study we are going to emphasize the different variables of positive psychology to promote the wellbeing and happiness.

One of the variables is subjective happiness whose domain of investigation has exceeded the individual life and reached social interaction. Happiness may be a dynamic construction. It is very clear and distinctive; individuals sometimes acknowledge and so will simply disclose if they're happy or not and struggle to explain

specifically [9]. Happiness has been understood in terms of well-being and acceptance and additionally as a gratifying experience. Happiness is employed quite instead as a subjective phrase for well-being in psychology. Happiness represented as an emotion or feeling that is related to many different positive feelings that reciprocally give rise to subjective well-being. A contented individual is somebody with a high degree of subjective well-being, indicate a lot of optimistic than bearish thoughts and wishes towards one's own life. The degree of emotional blissfulness find yourself being related with elements like life occasions, pay level [10], feeling, thought and practices [11].

Next, humor is one among the three main factors within the current reasearch. Humor may be is a global and usually positive activity that is veteran by individuals of various social and cultural categories everywhere the world [12]. The positive psychology perspective views humor as a person's own quality that enhance hardiness and wellbeing by means of the cognitive reappraisal of the stressful events [12]. The literature revealed that the actual usage of humor might contribute to healthy communication, positive organizational culture, quality of life and physical and mental health [13]. On the other hand the negative use of humor can hurt to one's well-being. Thus, it is vital to know the particularities in reference to humor to promote positive usage [14].

The positive use of humor taken into account as person own attribute that promotes hardiness and happiness. Likewise, hardiness that is another dimension in the current study has been studied as an inside resource and temperament attribute decreasing the negative effects of stressful life events on psychological and physical state [15]. There are different terms like psychological hardiness and mental toughness that are used in the previous studies to refer to an identical argument [16]. Hardiness is particularly vital in healthcare profession as these medical officials are often exposed to probably traumatic and stressful events [17].

The relationships among the humor, hardiness and subjective happiness are typically examined to be positive, whereas many researches have reported negative relationships between some components of humor and hardiness [18]. Thus, it is vital to enhance the knowledge regarding the association between the humor, hardiness and subjective happiness and development on the far side of the Health field. Moreover, from a

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hardiness perspective, several positive character strengths like humor, leadership, kindness, love and social intelligence all showed an increase in growth following major traumatic experiences, like a severe accident, attack, or illness [19].

Concordantly, the literature revealed that the numerous psychological factors relating to motivation, confidence, positive temperament, focus, and perceived social support along with social factors interact to influence the stress-hardiness-performance relationship [20]. Moreover, hardiness based approaches to humor in previous researches are few due to their sole

focus on humor as a positive attribute. Thus, the humor styles model that acknowledges each positive and negative aspects of humor is recommended to be used among a hardiness perspective [21]. However a lot of literature is required to know the particularities in reference to the 3Hs that includes humor, hardiness and happiness relating to the aforementioned complex elements and their interactions. The researches on these complexities are growing. Such tries to shed light on all aspects can give important contributions to the literature (Figure 1).

Hypothetical Model

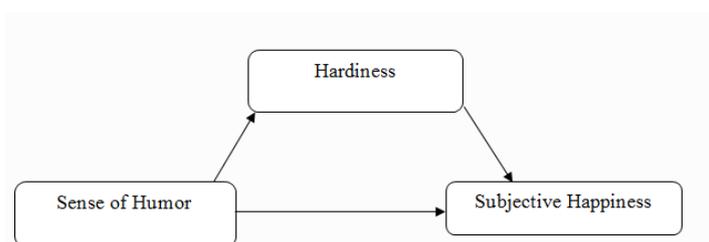


Figure 1: On the premise of literature the theoretical framework this current study highlighted the interaction of three vital factors humor, hardiness and happiness among the medical officers in Pakistani context.

Hypotheses

HI: Sense of humor and hardiness are likely to have positive relationship with subjective happiness among medical officers.

HII: Hardiness is likely to mediate between Sense of Humor and subjective happiness of medical officers.

HIII: There are probably to be gender differences in Sense of Humor, hardiness and subjective happiness of medical officers.

Method

Research design and participants' description

It was a Correlational study. For the present research a sample of 200 Medical officers out of which 105 males with the age range of 25 to 40 years (M= 30.01, SD=1.88) and 95 females with the age range of 25 to 40 years (M=30.99, SD=1.91) medical officers were recruited through non probability purposive sampling strategy from the different hospitals of Pakistan. Only those participants were considered who have at least one year of work experience.

Assessment Measures

Humour style questionnaire

The scale assessed sense of humor and contained 32 items. The scale consists of four subscales of humor, which measures all four dimensions of humor i.e. affiliative humor styles, self-defeating humor style, aggressive humor style and self-enhancing humor style. The scale is 7 point Likert-type whereas 1= Totally Disagree and 7= Totally Agree. All four scales have high reliability coefficient, such as; self-enhancing humor $\alpha= 0.73$, affiliative humor $\alpha= 0.73$, self-defeating humor style $\alpha= 0.75$, aggressive humor style $\alpha=0.68$.

The psychological hardiness scale

This psychological hardiness scale was developed to determine the level of psychological hardiness. It is a 21-item self-reported questionnaire. The items are rated on a five-point Likert type (1: Absolutely agree to 5: Absolutely disagree)

Oxford happiness inventory

To measure Subjective happiness, Oxford Happiness Inventory was used. It comprises of 29 items. The scale is 6 point Likert-type, where 1= strongly disagree and 6= strongly agree. The scale evaluates that the person is happy or unhappy. The high scores are indicators of high subjective happiness. The Cronbach alpha of scale is $\alpha=0.91$.

Procedure

Formal permission was sought from the authors of scales and concerned authorities of the hospitals for the purpose of data collection from the medical officers [22]. Participants were approached and the purpose and nature of research as explain to them, confidentiality of provided data and anonymity was also assured to them. They are also informed about their right to withdraw from study at any time. Informed consent was taken before the

administration of assessment measures from each participant. Different analyses were used to analyze the data using SPSS [23].

Results

The study explored the relationship among sense of humor, hardiness and subjective happiness among medical officers. Pearson product Moment correlation was run to find out the relationship among the study variables. The results of Table 1 revealed that sense of humor along with its subscales affiliative style humor, self-enhancing humor have significant positive relationship with hardiness and subjective happiness. Whereas aggressive and self-defeating humor showed negative relationship with hardiness and subjective happiness. Moreover it further revealed that overall Sense of Humor and Hardiness have significant positive relationship with subjective happiness [24].

Table 1. Inter correlation of sense of humor, hardiness and subjective happiness among medical officers (N=200).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Sense of Humor	-	.91*	.42**	-.44**	-.49**	.70**	.37*
2. Affiliative Style Humor		-	.40**	-.27*	-.47**	.64**	.38*
3. Self Enhancing Style Humor			-	-.63*	-0.69	.61**	.37*
4. Aggressive Style Humor				-	0.4	-.35*	-.37**
5. Self-Defeating Style Humor					-	-.62*	-.57*
6. Hardiness						-	.39**
7. Subjective Happiness							-

Note: * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$

The study also examined the mediating role of Hardiness among the relationship between sense of humor and happiness. To analyze the indirect

effect, mediation analysis through Process with bootstapped based on 1000 samples (Model 4) was used. Results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mediating role of Hardiness in Relationship between Sense of Humor and Subjective Happiness among Medical Officers

Antecedent	Consequent							
		Hardiness (M)				Subjective Happiness (Y)		
		β	SE	p		β	SE	p
Sense of Humor (X)	a	0.37	0.01	0.05*	b	0.09	1.77	0.05*
Hardiness (M)		-	-	-	c'	0.35	0.13	0.01**
		R ² =0.45, R2=0.16						
		F=(1, 198)=142.73, p =0.00***, F=(2,197)=14.44, p=0.00***						

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05, β =Standardized regression Coefficient

Table 2 showed that the values for the indirect affect that does not include zero. So, the confidence interval does not comprise zero means there is true indirect effect [25]. Results of

Sobel z test showed that the size of indirect effect is significant so in the relationship between humor and happiness, results confirmed the mediating role of hardiness (Figure 2).

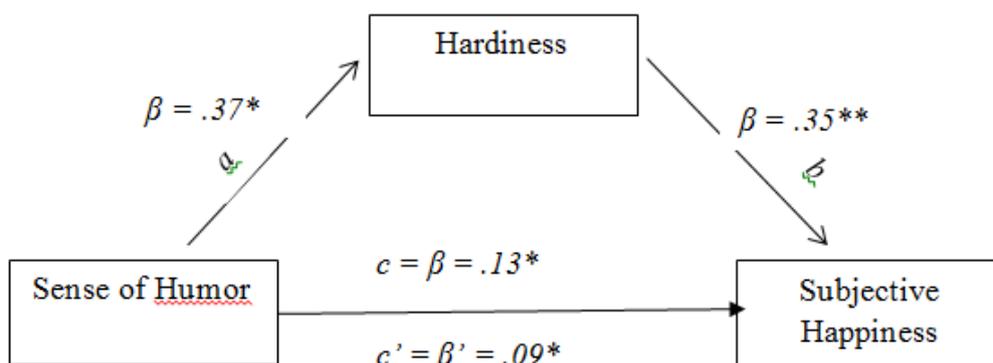


Figure 2. Model depicting the mediating role of Hardiness with Sense of Humor and Subjective Happiness.

Note: a=path a direct relationship between Sense of Humor (IV) and Hardiness (M). b=direct relationship between Hardiness (M) and Subjective Happiness (DV). c=direct (total) relationship of Humor (IV)and Subjective Happiness (DV), c'=indirect effect showed relationship of Sense of Humor (IV) and Subjective Happiness (DV) after controlling Hardiness (M).

The findings of Table 3 indicated that there is a significant gender difference on sense of humor, hardiness and subjective happiness among medical officers [26]. Mean scores revealed that males have more sense of humor and females are higher on hardiness and subjective happiness

Table 3: Gender difference in sense of humor, hardiness and subjective happiness among medical officers (n=200).

	Men	Women			
	(n=105)	(n=95)			

Variables	M	SD	M	SD	t(198)	P	Cohen's d
Humor	111	16.8	99.12	14.5	3.12	0.01	0.79
Hardiness	65	14.2	72.56	16.4	1.41	0.02	0.52
Happiness	95	6.6	99.97	7.82	0.1	0.48	0.68

Discussion

The present research aimed to analyze the probability of relationship and predicting subjective happiness primarily based on variables of humor styles and hardiness. The analysis of the gathered data indicated that the medical officers' subjective happiness may be defined via hardiness and sense of humor. The findings of the existing study are in line with those of the researches conducted by numerous researchers. Previous researches support the positive relationships between sense of humor, hardiness and happiness.

The relevant studies using same measures and different combos of these components, point out some common aspects. For example, mental hardiness and humor have an impact on wellbeing by reducing the stressful events perception as threatening and allowing using powerful coping strategies. In conjunction with happiness, psycho-social variables including advantageous social relationships, self-efficacy, self-mastery, self-esteem and hope are consistently been related to hardiness, reduced distress and better health.

In this study all the respondents have been medical officers with at least one year of work experience in the medical field and some of the findings were fairly consistent with the previous literature. The respondent's ratings have been particularly high and had been moderate but positive significant relationship between the overall sense of humor, hardiness and subjective happiness. Further, the significant positive relationship between the "affiliative" humor styles, self-enhancing sense of humor dimensions of sense of humor which are consistent with previous studies that found a positive relationship with hardiness and subjective happiness.

However, negative relationship was examined among the aggressive and self-defeating humor that is sub-dimension of humor and the hardiness

and subjective happiness. Moreover, the negative correlation was significant between the aggressive and affiliative humor styles, while aggressive humor was positively related with the overall humor in the present study. These results may contribute to the discussions on the interpretation of higher hardiness more in females and humor of any kind as positive, better, healthy and happier since the experiences in the process and output are subjective, multifaceted or not definite regarding their scientific, personal interpretation and societal perception.

These results were also consistent with some of the complex explanations on hardiness, wellbeing, and humor in the literature suggesting that there are also negative associations between hardiness and mental health outcomes. The processes relating humor use to cognitive appraisals and performance may vary dramatically and may support some aspects of a hardiness model, but not others. While humor use can promote distancing from the sources of stress, greater use of humor was linked with more external attributions for failure on a bogus intelligence test and those who used humor also spent less time and performed poorer on a subsequent test.

The mean ratings of all 3H Humor, Hardnies and Happiness measures were found to be relatively high. Further, positive humor general score was higher than negative one. But, higher overall humor scores refer to the higher hardiness and happiness. Hence, the humor component in particular was distinct, offering results for positive and negative humor types as well as adverse meanings revealed through their correlation with other dimensions, as discussed above. Furthermore, the gender was the only common variable that differed significantly in all measures of the current study. Moreover, the significant results in humor styles included more distinctive aspects.

The relationship between humor and hardiness has been nicely documented in numerous previous organizational literatures. Christopher (2015) reported that humor is beneficial for healthcare professionals coping with emergent situations as it offers a sense of internal control whilst the outer world makes no sense. Although negligible our study additionally found that humor has a significant role in predicting hardiness and happiness.

Congruent to our findings, previous researches indicated that affiliative humor with its mechanism of sharing jokes and banter permits for the maintenance of a strong social support network. Parallel to this previous literature also revealed that social support plays a main role in benefitting personal growth and coping. Thus, supporting the findings of our study that benign sharing of banter and jokes can benefit workers by way of fostering the necessity resource to cope with the adversity. In this study the result of mediation analysis observed hardiness as a significant mediator among the humor and subjective happiness at work.

Congruent to our research, the correlation among the adaptive humor styles (self-enhancing and affiliative humor) happiness at work has been corroborated in several previous investigations on the subject. Furthermore, Cann and Collette (2014) in the light of Frederickson's broaden and build theory argued that adaptive sense of humor ensures building positive affect which strengthens our hardiness base and promotes well-being and happiness.

In another related literature, Kuiper (2012) observed humor as a facet of resilience responsible for enhancing quality of life and psychological well-being. Another concept which deserves recognition while clarifying the mediating model of humor is cognitive reappraisal. As discussed earlier, self-enhancing humor ensures a cognitive shift for the positive thus enabling coping.

Primarily, previous work on cognitive reappraisal demonstrated that a positive reappraisal gives way to enhancing positive affect and facilitating resilience in the short run. Subsequently with time the enhanced level of hardiness translates into happiness and well-being (McRae & Mauss, 2016). The study contributed in the previous literature by highlighting the impact of humor styles and hardiness on subjective happiness among medical officers.

Limitations/ Suggestion/Recommendations for Future Research

Our present study has some methodology setbacks. We were not able to account for common method variance in this current study. On the other hand qualitative data can enriched this research further. Similarly, a social desirability scale may have added special insight in our findings. Primarily based on this, upcoming works can have a look at longitudinal role of humor in hardiness and happiness. Moreover, predictors of humor styles may be traced back to test what shapes particular humor styles.

Implications of the Findings

The increasing quantity of now day's researches on humor is a indication that the construct itself is interesting sufficient to be studied from several different angles. Our current study has some theoretical implication. According to our present findings, we can suggest and endorse that organizations should inspire their personnel to use more humor. As stated earlier, empirical works that focus on humor and well-being at workplace have been very few in Pakistan. As a consequence, our present study has attempted to fill literature gap with its findings.

It similarly increased at the previous presumption regarding hardiness as a probable mediator among humor and happiness. Organizations can gain benefit from including more self-enhancing humor as it offers possibility to minimize the gap between the authority and the subordinates, thereby, ensuring wonderful results. Humor can be veritably used as a coping instrument to help employees get accustomed with the organizational lifestyle.

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