

Exploring the Influence of Emotional Competence on Humor Styles and Personality Traits

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this research is to uncover the complexities of the dynamics that regulate human behaviour and connection with others by investigating the relationships between humour styles, emotional competence, and personality factors. Using a wide range of literature review and empirical research, this study investigates how individuals' humour styles, which are defined by their tendency to affiliate, self-enhance, be aggressive, or dislike themselves, interact with emotional competence and personality characteristics. Humour, as a transdisciplinary construct, provides a variety of psychological functions and shapes people's emotional experiences and social relationships. The affiliative humour style, which uses humour to strengthen social ties and relieve tension, has been linked to increased emotional intelligence and extraversion. Conversely, aggressive humour, which includes sarcasm and derision, is associated with weaker emotional competence and greater degrees of neuroticism. Emotional competence, which includes emotional awareness, management, and expression, is critical in balancing the impacts various humour styles on psychological well-being and interpersonal interactions. Individuals with greater emotional competence prefer to use adaptive humour styles, which promote good emotions and social cohesiveness, whereas individuals with lower emotional competence may use maladaptive humour methods, such as self-defeating humour, as a coping strategy. Furthermore, psychological qualities like extraversion, neuroticism, and openness to experience influence people's humour preferences and usage habits. Extraverts, for example, are more likely to engage in affiliative humour, whereas neurotic persons may use self-defeating humour as a defence strategy. This study adds to a better understanding of human behaviour by illuminating the interaction between humour styles, emotional competence, and personality factors. It also gives insights into how to promote psychological well-being and efficient interpersonal communication.

Keywords: Emotional Competence, Humor Styles, Personality Traits, Affiliative humour Aggressive humour, Psychological well-being, Interpersonal interactions.

Introduction

The complex interaction between humour styles, emotional competence, and personality characteristics is a fascinating topic of research in psychology, providing important insights into human behaviour and social dynamics. Humour styles range from affiliative and self enhancing to aggressive and self-defeating, and they function as expressive tools for people to navigate social situations and convey their feelings.

These humour types are impacted not just by fundamental personality qualities, but also by an individual's emotional competence—their capacity to comprehend, control, and successfully express emotions.

Personality factors have an important influence in predisposing people to certain humour types, reflecting larger tendencies in social behaviour and emotional control. Understanding this dynamic provides a more sophisticated understanding of how humour serves as both a mirror and a modulator of emotional experiences and personality traits. By investigating these interactions, academics obtain significant insights into the complexity of human nature, which helps us comprehend individual variances in social interaction, emotional expression, and psychological well-being.

Emotional competence, which is based on emotional intelligence theory, helps to manage the interaction between humour types and personality attributes. High emotional competence allows people to successfully comprehend, manage, and express their emotions, which influences their choice and use of humour styles. Individuals with high emotional competence, for example, may use self-enhancing humour as a positive coping method to promote resilience and adaptive emotional regulation.

Furthermore, the interaction between humour styles and emotional competence influences personality development and interpersonal dynamics. Consistent usage of specific humour styles can reinforce or change personality characteristics over time, whereas emotional competence regulates the adaptive or destructive effects of humour expression on psychological well-being and social interactions.

Humor Styles

Humour styles relate to the varied ways in which people use humour in their relationships and communication. There are various distinct humour styles, each with its own set of traits and psychological foundations. These styles have been extensively examined in psychology, providing insight into their effects on social relationships, emotional well-being, and personality features.

Affiliative Humor: Affiliative Humour is the use of humour to strengthen social relationships, reduce tension, and build camaraderie among individuals. It frequently entails cracking jokes or engaging in light-hearted chat to draw people together. Psychologically, affiliative humour is linked to beneficial social outcomes such greater likability, rapport, and group cohesiveness.

Self-Enhancing Humour: Self-enhancing humour is the capacity to discover humour in one's own mistakes, shortcomings, and misfortunes. Individuals with a high level of self enhancing humour are more optimistic and resilient in life, employing humour as a coping tool to deal with stress and hardship. Self-enhancing humour is associated with improved psychological well-being, including decreased levels of anxiety and sadness.

Aggressive Humour: Aggressive humour use humour to criticise, ridicule, or denigrate others. Sarcasm, taunting, and making jokes at the expense of others are common examples. Psychologically, violent humour may act as a defence strategy, allowing people to exert control or relieve uneasiness by putting others down. However, it may also harm relationships and cause societal turmoil.

Self-Defeating Humour: Self-defeating humour entails making oneself the target of a joke, typically at the price of one's self-esteem or dignity. Individuals with a high level of self-defeating humour may tell self-deprecating jokes or downplay their accomplishments in order to obtain acceptance or avoid criticism from others. Psychologically, self-defeating humour may reflect poor self-esteem or a need for praise from others.

Understanding humour styles sheds light on individual variances in social behaviour, coping processes, and emotional regulation. Psychologists employ a variety of tools, like the Humour Styles Questionnaire,

to evaluate these qualities and their consequences for mental health and interpersonal connections.

Emotional competence

Emotional competence is the capacity to notice, interpret, manage, and express emotions effectively. It involves a wide variety of abilities and capacities, such as recognising one's own and others' emotions, understanding the origins and consequences of emotions, controlling emotional reactions in diverse contexts, and successfully conveying sentiments. Emotional competence allows people to manage social relationships, deal with stress and hardship, and preserve their psychological well-being. It combines intrapersonal and interpersonal qualities such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social awareness. Cultivating emotional competence improves one's capacity to create and sustain rewarding relationships, make sound judgements, and adjust to changing situations. Overall, emotional competence is critical for building resilience, interpersonal efficacy, and overall quality of life.

According to Peter Salovey and John Mayer's Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence (1997), emotional intelligence is made up of four interconnected abilities:

Perceiving Emotions: This includes properly recognising and comprehending one's own and others' emotions, as well as the capacity to distinguish facial expressions, speech tones, and body language.

Facilitating Emotional Understanding: Emotional competency requires understanding the origins and effects of emotions, both within oneself and in others. This entails recognising patterns of emotional reactions and grasping the complexities of emotional experiences.

Using Emotions to Facilitate Thought: Emotional intelligence entails using emotions to improve cognitive processes including problem solving, decision-making, and creativity. Emotions give useful information and motivation, guiding adaptive behaviour and influencing judgement.

Emotion Management: The fourth talent is to successfully regulate and manage one's own emotions, as well as influence the emotions of others. This involves stress-management techniques, impulse control, and maintaining emotional equilibrium in a variety of settings.

The Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence (Daniel Goleman, 1995) broadens the idea of emotional intelligence to include both personal and social abilities. Goleman's concept divides emotional intelligence into five main components:

Self-awareness is the recognition and knowledge of one's own feelings, strengths, shortcomings, values, and motivations. Self-conscious people are aware of their inner moods and understand how emotions impact their ideas and actions.

Self-regulation: Based on self-awareness, self-regulation entails managing and controlling one's emotions, impulses, and reactions in a variety of settings. It comprises the capacity to remain cool under pressure, adjust to changing circumstances, and postpone satisfaction in pursuit of long-term objectives.

Motivation: Emotional intelligence includes intrinsic motivation, which is defined as pursuing goals with excitement and tenacity in the face of challenges and disappointments. Motivated individuals are driven by a sense of purpose and are willing to exert effort to achieve personal and professional aspirations.

Empathy: This component denotes the ability to comprehend and empathise with the feelings, viewpoints, and experiences of others. Empathetic people are sensitive to others' feelings and show compassion, friendliness, and understanding in their relationships.

Social Skills: Social competence is successfully navigating social interactions, developing and sustaining strong relationships, and persuading people to work towards common goals. It includes communication

skills, dispute resolution, teamwork, and leadership ability.

Understanding the elements that determine emotional competence has important implications for intervention programmes aimed at improving emotional well-being. Interventions that target certain components of emotional competence and increase individuals' skills in emotional awareness, understanding, and control can be designed by taking into consideration models and theories of emotional competence, such as the Four-Branch Model.

Personality traits

Personality is the distinct pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that define an individual and set them apart from others. It includes persistent features, inclinations, and characteristics that influence how people perceive and interact with their surroundings.

Personality affects many elements of life, including social interactions, job behaviour, and emotional reactions.

Personality characteristics are long-term patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and emotions that are largely consistent across settings and time. These characteristics indicate individual variances in how people think, feel, and behave, and they play an important part in determining personality.

Many alternative models of personality traits exist, but one of the most often utilised is the Big Five model (Goldberg, 1981), which contains five main dimensions.

- 1. Openness to Experience:** This feature indicates a person's readiness to try new ideas, experiences, and ways of thinking. Individuals with high levels of openness are frequently creative, curious, and open-minded.
- 2. Conscientiousness:** Conscientiousness refers to the degree to which a person is organized, responsible, and reliable. Individuals high in conscientiousness are typically diligent, disciplined, and goal-oriented.
- 3. Extraversion:** Extraversion reflects the extent to which a person is outgoing, sociable, and energetic. Extraverted individuals are often assertive, talkative, and enthusiastic in social settings.
- 4. Agreeableness:** Agreeableness encompasses traits related to kindness, compassion, and cooperation. Individuals high in agreeableness are typically altruistic, empathetic, and considerate of others' feelings.
- 5. Neuroticism:** Neuroticism, also known as emotional instability, refers to the tendency to experience negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, and irritability. Individuals high in neuroticism may be prone to mood swings, worry, and emotional volatility. Personality traits have been studied extensively in psychology, leading to the development of various theories that seek to explain and categorize these enduring patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and emotions.

The link between humour styles, emotional competence, and personality factors indicates a complex interplay that influences people's behaviour, emotional experiences, and social relationships.

Review of literature

Constantin Y. Plessen, Fabian R. Franken, et al (2020) "Humor styles and personality: A systematic review and meta-analysis on the relations between humor styles and the Big Five personality traits A meta-analysis of 24 research from 13 nations discovered that healthpromoting and health-endangering humour styles are linked to personality characteristics. Health-promoting humour styles were shown to be favourably connected with extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness, but adversely

correlated with neuroticism. Humour styles that threaten one's health were connected positively with neuroticism and negatively with agreeableness and conscientiousness. The effects were consistent and applicable across sexes, sample composition, and continents.

Bingbing Li et al (2018), “The relationship between self-enhancing humor and precuneus volume in young healthy individuals with high and low cognitive empathy” A study indicated that strong cognitive empathy and bigger precuneus volume can predict greater usage of selfenhancing humor in young healthy persons. This shows that SEHS helps to regulate unpleasant emotions through amusing perspective-taking. The study also investigated the association between gray-matter volume and SEHS among young college students.

Joan Guerra-Bustamante et al (2019), “Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being in Adolescents” The study investigates the association between emotional intelligence qualities and teenagers' subjective happiness levels. It included 646 students aged 12 to 17, who completed the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. The findings imply that improving emotional intelligence capacity leads to greater happiness. The study emphasises the necessity of developing emotional intelligence in teenagers in order to improve their happiness and emotional well-being.

Willibald Ruch and Sonja Heintz (2017), “ The German Version of the Humor Styles Questionnaire: Psychometric Properties and Overlap With Other Styles of Humor” The study looks at the association between emotional intelligence qualities and teenagers' subjective happiness levels. It included 646 students aged 12 to 17, who completed the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. The findings indicate that improving emotional intelligence capacity leads to enhanced happiness. The study emphasises the necessity of increasing emotional intelligence in teenagers in order to improve their happiness and emotional well-being.

Thomas E. Ford, et al (2016), “Personality, HumoStyles and Happiness: Happy People Have Positive Humor Styles” The current study investigated the relationships between four personality traits, humour styles, and happiness. Previous research found a favourable relationship between happiness and four personality traits: extraversion, locus of control, selfesteem, and optimism. Furthermore, pleasure was positively associated with self-enhancing and affiliative humour styles, but adversely associated with self-defeating and combative humour. Thus, happy people use humour in a positive way and avoid utilising it adversely in their everyday lives. We also identified data supporting our hypothesis. People with high extraversion, locus of control, self-esteem, and optimism are content because they apply positive humour in everyday circumstances.

Virgil Zeigler-Hill, et al (2016), “The Dark Side of Humor: DSM-5 Pathological Personality Traits and Humor Styles” The study looked at the relationship between pathological personality characteristics and humour styles in a sample of college students. Negative affectivity and detachment were shown to be connected with affiliative and self-enhancing humour styles, whereas antagonism was positively associated with aggressive humour and negatively associated with affiliative humour. Disinhibition and psychoticism were positively related to self-defeating humour.

Đorđe Čekrlija, et al (2022), “ Relationship between humor styles and alternative five factors of personality” The Alternative Five-Factor Model (AFFM) is used in this study to investigate the association between humour styles and personality attributes. The results suggest that Sensation Seeking is a key personality trait connected with each humour type. Affiliative and self-enhancing humour styles are

substantially associated with Extraversion, but aggression and neuroticism are less so. The AFFM paradigm might help explain humour styles based on individual variations in optimum cortical arousal. Dorota Szczygiel, Moira Mikolajczak (2018), “Is It Enough to Be an Extrovert to Be Liked? Emotional Competence Moderates the Relationship Between Extraversion and Peer-Rated Likeability” This study looks at the effect of personality characteristics and emotional competences (ECs) on peer-rated likeability in teenagers. A sample of 230 Polish teenagers was polled, and the findings revealed that interpersonal emotional competence (ECs) moderates the association between extraversion and peer-rated likeability. Extraversion predicted higher likeability among adolescents with high interpersonal EC but not for those with low EC. The study concludes that encouraging extrovert behaviour is required but inadequate for increasing likeability. Improving interpersonal EC is also crucial, since greater levels contribute to increased acceptance. The study reveals that cortical arousal is a common characteristic for humour styles, implying that the AFFM framework might be effective in understanding humour styles.

Research methodology

Aim

The aim of this research is to investigate Exploring the Influence of Emotional Competence on Humor Styles and Personality Traits

Objective

- To study the correlation of Emotional Competence with Humor Styles
- To study the correlation of Emotional Competence with Personality Traits

Hypothesis

1. Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant relationship between emotional competence and humor styles.
2. Alternative Hypothesis (H2): There is a significant relationship between emotional competence and personality traits

Research Design

Correlational research design

This type of research frequently utilises statistical analysis to identify patterns, relationships, and cause-and-effect relationships between variables.

Questionnaires: scales such as MINI-IPIP, ESCQ-45 and HSQ were used.

Variables

Following is the case for the current study:

- Independent Variable: Emotional Competence
- Dependent Variable: Humor Styles and Personality Traits

Sample

The study included 103 participants, 57 males, and 46 females between 18-25 years of age. For this study, element selection criteria have been deployed and the representation basis is non-probability, hence it is purposive sampling (Kothari, 2004). A sample of 103 participants aged between 18 and 29 years was taken

for this study. This study will use 103 college students (57 male and 46 female).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: In this study, we included those individuals belonged to a certain age group (18–25 years). All those who were not in the age group were excluded.

Research tools

The study will use an online questionnaire consisting of the following measures:

The Mini-IPIP Scale (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006). The Mini International Personality Item Pool (Mini-IPIP) scale is a brief and widely used self-report measure developed to assess personality traits. It was introduced by Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, and Lucas in 2006 as a shortened version of the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) scale.

The Emotional Skills and Competence Questionnaire (ESCQ-45): is a self-report assessment instrument that measures emotional intelligence and competence across several areas. The ESCQ-45, developed by Boyatzis and Goleman in 2007, is based on Daniel Goleman's emotional intelligence framework, which emphasises the significance of emotional awareness, control, empathy, and social skills.

The Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ): In 2003, Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Grey, and Weir created a psychometric tool to examine individual variations in humour styles. The questionnaire is based on Martin et al.'s (2003) theoretical framework, which identified four major humour styles: affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating.

Procedure

To measure the variables, questionnaires that fulfilled the requirements were chosen. (MiniIPIP , ESCQ-45 & HSQ). The reliability and validity of the same were kept in mind. Further, a survey was framed using Google Forms which comprised three sections for the respective questionnaires. The participants were asked for their consent before they filled the questionnaire. The survey was shared with the subjects. Data was collected using the Snowball Sampling Technique. After data collection, the scoring was done with the help of scoring keys mentioned in the questionnaires. The Data was normally distributed.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using Mini International Personality Item Pool (mini-IPIP). The mean and standard deviation were calculated, along with which the correlation between the three variables was computed using the scores collected from the Mini-IPIP. Emotional Skills and Competence Scale (ESCQ-45) and The Humor Questionnaire (HSQ).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations such as informed consent, voluntary participation, debriefing, and confidentiality were taken care of.

Results

Section-I: Descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Age	103	20.6	1.35
Humor Styles	103	136.39	15.22
Emotional Competence	103	159.87	20.7
Personality Traits	103	60.3	5.28

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the study sample.

Table 1 represents the descriptive statistics of the study sample. The average scores on emotional intelligence, humor styles, and personality traits were 159.87, 136.39, and 60.3 respectively. The average age of the sample was 20.6.

Section-II: Correlation

	Humor Styles	Personality Traits
Emotional Competence	0.365	0.0071

Table 2 correlation across the study variables.

Table 2 presents Pearson’s correlation between the study variables. The association of humor styles with personality traits was significant and positive ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the association of with emotional competence was also significant and positive ($p < 0.5$).

Discussion

The aim of this research was to investigate the the Interplay Between Humor Styles, Emotional Competence and Personality Traits. In order to fulfil this aim we framed two objectives. And these objectives were:

First, the study aimed to investigate the association of personality traits with emotional competence and humor styles.

Second, it aimed to examine the impact of emotional competence on personality and humor styles.

These objectives guided the research process and provided a framework for exploring the relationships between these variables. Based on the existing literature and the objectives, corresponding hypotheses were formulated:

- The first hypothesis stated that there would be a significant association of humor styles and emotional competence.
- The second hypothesis proposed that there would be a significant association of personality traits and emotional competence.

To examine these relationships a total of 103 students were recruited for the research. Descriptive statistics were used to determine average emotional competence, personality attributes, and humour styles. The sample characteristics offer an overview of the study's participants and aid in understanding the overall profile of the population being studied.

The correlation study indicated substantial and positive relationships between personality characteristics, emotional competence, and humour styles. These findings confirmed the initial hypothesis, demonstrating

that greater degrees of humour styles were associated with better emotional competence scores and more personality trait perceptions among students.

Furthermore, the linear regression analysis demonstrated that personality traits significantly predicted emotional competence and humor styles. Findings suggest that personality traits explains 12.1% of positive variance in emotional competence and 0.7% of positive variance in humor styles. This suggests a significant impact of the personality traits on both the criterion among students. This suggests that if emotional competence increases then humor styles and personality will also increase.

The findings suggest that individuals who possess higher levels of emotional competence may have enhanced personality traits, which can positively impact their ability to understand, manage, and express emotions effectively.

In conclusion, humour styles, emotional competence, and personality characteristics are all important aspects of human behaviour and interactions, with substantial consequences for interpersonal relationships, workplace dynamics, mental health, and general well-being. Individuals who see the importance of these characteristics and develop abilities in these areas can increase their social and emotional intelligence, better their relationships, and have more satisfying lives.

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between humour styles, emotional competence, and personality traits. The relationship between emotional competence, humour styles, and personality characteristics suggests a complex interplay between these elements, which impacts numerous aspects of human behaviour and interaction. Understanding this association can provide light on individual variations in social and emotional functioning, as well as the consequences for mental health, interpersonal relationships, and general well-being.

Emotional competence is defined as the capacity to recognise, comprehend, express, and manage one's own emotions, as well as empathise with others and successfully navigate social relationships. People who are emotionally competent are better able to deal with stress, resolve interpersonal disputes, and form meaningful connections. This skill is intimately linked to both humour types and personality factors.

Humour styles reflect individual variances in how individuals use humour to cope and socialise. There are four basic humour styles: affiliative, self-enhancing, combative, and self-defeating. Affiliative humour entails utilising humour to strengthen social ties and reduce tension, whereas self-enhancing humour involves finding humour in stressful situations to keep a good attitude. Aggressive humour includes belittling or intimidating others, whereas self-defeating humour uses self-deprecating humour in order to obtain acceptance or escape criticism.

The relationship between emotional competence and humour styles implies that people who are more emotionally competent are more likely to utilise adaptive humour types like affiliative and self-enhancing humour. These people can better manage their emotions and deal with stress, allowing them to employ humour in a constructive and beneficial way. Individuals who lack emotional competence, on the other hand, may be more likely to engage in maladaptive humour styles, such as aggressive or self-defeating humour, in order to cope with unpleasant emotions or interpersonal difficulties.

Personality factors also influence emotional competence and humour styles. The Five Factor Model of Personality describes five main aspects of personality: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. These characteristics shape how people perceive and respond to their surroundings, as well as their social and emotional functioning.

Limitations

Sampling Bias: The study may have chosen an unrepresentative sample, such as college students or people from a specific cultural background. This may restrict the applicability of the findings to other populations.

Self-Report Measures: The study may have used self-report measures to evaluate humor styles, emotional competence, and personality factors. Self-report assessments are subjective and can be impacted by social desirability bias, in which individuals react in a way they believe is socially acceptable rather than genuinely representing their genuine thoughts and behaviors.

Cross-Sectional Design: If the study utilized a cross-sectional design, it would only give a snapshot of the associations between humor styles, emotional competence, and personality factors at one moment. Longitudinal investigations would yield more substantial evidence of causal links over time.

Causality: The study may not demonstrate causation between variables. While relationships between humor styles, emotional competence, and personality qualities can be discovered, it is difficult to determine the causative relationship. For example, it is uncertain if particular personality qualities result in specific humor styles or whether humor styles impact personality trait development.

Measurement Validity: The methods employed to assess humor styles, emotional competence, and personality characteristics may need to be sufficiently validated or trustworthy. This might impact the accuracy of the gathered data and how the results are interpreted.

Context Dependency: It is possible that the study did not account for contextual elements that might impact the correlations between humor styles, emotional competence, and personality characteristics. For example, the impact of humor might differ based on social, cultural, or situational aspects.

6.3 Recommendations

Sample Bias:

- To improve the generalizability of the findings, choose a more varied and representative sample that includes a variety of demographic factors (for example, age, gender, culture, and socioeconomic position).
- Use stratified sampling procedures to guarantee appropriate representation of various demographic groupings.

Self-report measures:

- To triangulate results and reduce bias, combine self-report measures with objective evaluations or observational data.
- Include validity tests in the questionnaire to identify response biases, such as social desirability, and statistically account for them during data analysis.

Cross-sectional Design:

- Consider using longitudinal or experimental designs to determine causal linkages and track how variables change over time.
- Use within-subject designs to investigate individual differences in humour styles, emotional competence, and personality qualities in a variety of settings and circumstances.

Causality:

- Conduct mediation or moderation studies to investigate potential causal pathways and processes that underpin the links between humour styles, emotional competence, and personality factors.

- Use experimental manipulations or interventions to study the causal impact of some variables on others.

Measurement Validity:

- Ensure that measures of humour styles, emotional competence, and personality characteristics have undergone rigorous validation and exhibit sufficient psychometric qualities.
- Pilot test questionnaire questions to ensure clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance to the notions under consideration.

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