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Research Paper

Exploring the Impact of Adaptive and Maladaptive Humour Style on Emotional Intelligence as a Coping Mechanism Among Psychology Students

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ABSTRACT

Humour is frequently viewed as a useful way to cope, particularly for young adults facing academic and emotional difficulties. This study focused on exploring the connection between emotional intelligence and the application of both adaptive and maladaptive humour styles among psychology students. A cohort of undergraduate and postgraduate psychology students underwent evaluation through standardised psychometric instruments. The findings revealed a notable positive relationship between emotional intelligence and adaptive humour styles, particularly in terms of affiliative and self-enhancing humour. On the other hand, maladaptive forms of humour, such as aggressive and self-defeating humour, showed a negative relationship with emotional intelligence. Additionally, emotional intelligence was recognised as an important factor influencing the tendency to engage in and utilise adaptive humour as a means of coping. The results indicate that improving emotional intelligence in students may promote healthier coping strategies through humour, thus supporting emotional well-being and interpersonal effectiveness. The results of the research advocate for the inclusion of emotional skills training in educational programs to improve resilience and mental health among students.

Keywords: *Adaptive and Maladaptive Humour Style, Emotional Intelligence, Coping Mechanism, Psychology Students*

Humour style

It has long been understood that humour, a multifaceted and intricate concept that goes beyond simple amusement or laughter, is a fundamental aspect of human connection. Humour is increasingly being examined in psychology literature as a style a comparatively consistent manner in which people express and employ humour in a variety of contexts rather than merely as a characteristic or activity. The term "humour style" refers to a person's distinctive use of humour in everyday situations, such as when relating to people, controlling emotions, or managing stress (Martin et al., 2003). By bridging the gap between personality and coping, humour style as a construct illuminates the ways humour can impact mental health, interpersonal interactions, and emotional regulation in both adaptive and maladaptive ways (Kazarian & Martin, 2006). According to research, humour's psychological effects

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vary greatly depending on how it is conveyed and interpreted, suggesting that it is not always positive. As a result, humour styles can be divided into four main categories: affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating (2.5), depending on their purpose (interpersonal vs. intrapersonal) and effects (adaptive vs. maladaptive) (Martin et al., 2003). By building relationships, lowering social tension, and encouraging group cohesion.

- **Affiliative humour**; A flexible and engaging approach enhances social connections. Kuiper, Grimshaw, Leite, and Kirsh (2004) indicate that there is a positive relationship with social competence, empathy, and psychological well-being. Individuals who possess elevated levels of affiliative humour are often seen as friendly, approachable, and emotionally perceptive.
- **Self Enhancing humour**; An adaptive intrapersonal style known as self-enhancing humour entails keeping a lighthearted attitude even under trying or stressful circumstances. It has been linked to high levels of resilience, positive affect, and self-efficacy and serves as a buffer against psychological discomfort (Martin, 2007). This type of person frequently uses humour as a cognitive technique to reframe difficulties and preserve emotional equilibrium.
- **Aggressive humour**: Aggressive humour represents a maladaptive interpersonal form characterised by sarcasm, ridicule, or hostile jokes directed at others. While it may be socially tolerated or even encouraged in certain contexts, it can lead to interpersonal conflict and is negatively correlated with agreeableness and emotional stability (Martin et al., 2003). It reflects a potential use of humour as a tool for dominance or control.
- **Self Defeating humour**: Making oneself the object of jokes or using humour to cover up genuine emotions are examples of self-defeating humour, a maladaptive intrapersonal style. According to Martin (2007), this approach is associated with depressed symptoms, excessive anxiety, and low self-esteem. It frequently implies underlying insecurity and a propensity to use humour as an emotional cover, even though it may be viewed as amusing or modest.

Since humour styles are related to concepts like emotional intelligence, coping strategies, mental health outcomes, they are particularly important to understand in the field of psychology. Humour styles may also be a reflection of deeper psychological patterns pertaining to personality traits and emotional processing in the context of student populations, especially psychology students.

Humour style in Indian context

Indian society has long relied heavily on humour, which has influenced social relationships, coping mechanisms, and even defiance of authority in addition to providing enjoyment. In Indian culture, humour is frequently ingrained in language, customs, and social mores, with various forms that showcase the nation's diversity. Affiliative humour, in which people utilise jokes or light-hearted banter to fortify social ties, is one of the most prevalent types of humour in India. This is demonstrated by the way Indian families frequently crack jokes at get-togethers and by the way humour is employed in casual discussions to ease tension. It promotes emotional support and a sense of unity, particularly in close-knit communities and joint families. Self-enhancing humour is also evident, especially in the way people chuckle at their own difficulties or make clever comments to stay upbeat. For example, the popular phrase "Chalta hai" (It's okay) is frequently used with a joke or a smile, illustrating the

Indian propensity to remain upbeat even in the face of hardship. On the other hand, political cartoons, stand-up comedy, and satire programs all feature forceful humour, despite the fact that it is not as widely accepted in traditional Indian contexts. Through sarcasm or irony, this type of humour is used to reveal systemic weaknesses, challenge authority, and critique social standards. However, such humour may be viewed as disrespectful in conservative contexts, particularly if it crosses religious or cultural lines. Self-defeating humour is particularly common among individuals from marginalised communities or those in hierarchical settings, such as workplaces or academic institutions. Here, people may make fun of themselves to gain acceptance or avoid conflict, often at the expense of their self-esteem. In Indian classrooms or offices, for instance, junior members may use such humour to avoid confrontation or lighten the mood in front of seniors. Another factor that shapes humour use among psychology students in India is their exposure to clinical realities and emotionally challenging content, which often pushes them to develop unique coping mechanisms. In many psychology programmes, students encounter case studies involving trauma, mental illness, abuse, or criminal behaviour. In such settings, humour can emerge as a protective mechanism, particularly self-enhancing humour, to prevent emotional overload and maintain psychological distance. For example, while discussing disturbing clinical cases during group supervision or internships, students may use subtle, context-appropriate humour to release emotional tension. This allows them to stay composed without becoming emotionally numb or overwhelmed, showing how humour serves a regulatory function in emotionally intense environments. And Cultural influences also shape humour expression in Indian psychology students. In collectivist societies like India, maintaining harmony and avoiding direct confrontation is often prioritized. As a result, affiliative humour becomes a preferred style, especially in classroom settings where students are encouraged to collaborate and support one another. Jokes and humourous anecdotes are frequently shared to reduce hierarchy between professors and students, making the learning environment more approachable and less intimidating. Moreover, with the rise of digital learning and increased exposure to Western psychology content, there has been a growing influence of dark or sarcastic humour, especially on social media platforms where psychology students often post memes about their field. While this could be interpreted as aggressive or self-defeating humour, in many cases, it serves a shared coping strategy that fosters a sense of belonging and mutual understanding among peers who are going through similar academic pressures. Additionally, the use of humour can reflect underlying gender norms and social expectations. In Indian academic settings, male students may be more likely to use assertive or sarcastic humour to maintain a socially dominant or confident image, especially in group settings. On the other hand, female students may lean more toward affiliative humour to build connections and maintain peer harmony. These choices may not always reflect emotional intelligence levels directly but can be shaped by societal expectations about how men and women “should” express emotions or relate to others.Finally, as future mental health professionals, psychology students often begin to develop an intentional use of humour not only for their own emotional regulation but also to build rapport with clients. Through practical training and reflective coursework, they gradually learn when humour is therapeutic and when it might be harmful or invalidating, highlighting the developmental journey of humour use throughout their education.

Emotional intelligence

It pertains to the ability to identify, comprehend, manage, and impact one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others. It is essential for making decisions, building relationships, and enhancing overall well-being. Emotional intelligence (EI) relates to social and emotional

skills, while intelligence quotient (IQ) measures cognitive abilities. Emotional intelligence (EI) has garnered attention from researchers and psychologists aiming to explore its influence on leadership, communication, mental health, and a range of personal and professional situations.

Daniel Goleman's model of emotional intelligence stands out as one of the most commonly used frameworks, even with the diverse interpretations offered by various theorists. He recognised five essential elements of emotional intelligence.

1. Self-knowledge Self-awareness denotes the capacity to identify and comprehend one's own feelings. It entails acknowledging the impact of emotions on cognition and conduct. Individuals possessing elevated self-awareness can impartially assess their feelings, hence improving decision-making and emotional regulation.
2. Self-Control: The capacity to inhibit impulsive emotions and behaviours is referred to as self-regulation. Individuals with strong self-regulation can adapt to changing circumstances, manage stress effectively, and avoid impulsive, emotion-driven decisions. This ability is fundamental to resilience and emotional equilibrium.
3. Motivation: In the realm of emotional intelligence, motivation extends beyond external incentives. It encompasses an intrinsic motivation to attain objectives, endure obstacles, and sustain an optimistic outlook. Individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to exhibit self-motivation, facilitating sustained focus and determination in their endeavours.
4. Empathy denotes the ability to understand and connect with the feelings of others. It fosters profound connections among individuals, encouraging the cultivation of robust partnerships. Empathetic individuals may recognise and suitably react to the emotions of others, hence improving their efficacy in leadership and teamwork.
5. Social Skills: Social skills encompass the capacity to engage and communicate effectively with others. It encompasses conflict resolution, persuasion, cooperation, and teamwork. Individuals possessing robust social skills establish and sustain healthy relationships, which are crucial in both personal and professional contexts.

Frameworks for Emotional Intelligence

Various models of (EI) have been developed, each presenting a unique perspective on its significance and functionality.

1. **Mayer and Salovey's Ability Model (1997)** Among the first to suggest a model of emotional intelligence (EI), Mayer and Salovey defined it as a type of intelligence limited to the capacity to handle emotional data. Their approach consists in four basic abilities.
   - **Perceiving Emotions**: Emotions can be identified in oneself and others through the analysis of body language, and tone of voice, and facial expressions. Utilising emotions to enhance cognitive processes such as creativity and problem-solving.
   - **Understanding Emotions**: The capacity to understand the temporal dynamics of emotions and to comprehend the subtleties of emotional language.
   - **Managing Emotions**: Regulating personal and others' emotions to promote social cohesion and individual growth.

2. **Daniel Goleman's Mixed Model from (1995)** Goleman's system covers emotional intelligence, social skills, and personality qualities. The five factors already covered self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills form natural

constituents of his theory. Goleman underlined especially in team management and leadership the need of emotional intelligence (EI) for success in the workplace. According to the Mixed Model, coupled with natural ability, emotional intelligence (EI) comprises social skills and taught behaviours that can be developed via experience and training. Goleman argues that those with emotional intelligence shine in the workplace because they can control their emotions and create close relationships.

3. **Petrides and Furnham's (2001) trait model:** Instead of viewing emotional intelligence as a cognitive skill, the attribute EI model views it as a personality attribute. It centres on how a person views their own emotional intelligence, including resilience, self-assurance, and stress tolerance. Self-report questionnaires are used to measure this model, which is associated with general personality qualities, especially those found in the Big Five Personality framework. The Trait Model places more emphasis on subjective assessments of emotional competence than the Ability Model, which sees emotional intelligence as a talent that can be tested scientifically. In personality psychology, this model is frequently used to investigate how emotional characteristics affect behaviour and overall well-being.

***How emotional intelligence is used in leadership context**:*

Leadership, which has conventionally been identified with qualities of authority, vision, and decision-making ability, has undergone much change in recent decades. Today's globalized, dynamic, and emotionally charged work environments, however, place the focus more on a more human-oriented leadership style, with emotional awareness and interpersonal effectiveness ranking equally important. Emotional intelligence (EI) One idea that captures these qualities is being able to see, understand, control, and use emotions both inside oneself and in others.

Emotional intelligence, first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and later made well-known by Goleman (1995), refers to a group of emotional and social abilities that affect how people handle relationships, manage emotions, and make personal choices that lead to desirable outcomes. As applied to leadership, these skills become essential because leaders are continually involved in interactions that demand empathy, emotional management, conflict, and motivational communication. An emotionally intelligent leader is not just self-aware and able to control their emotional reactions, but also sensitive to the emotional needs of their subordinates. Emotionally intelligent leaders are likely to create trust, promote cooperation, and develop adaptive teams that are able to weather challenges. Further, emotionally intelligent leadership has been associated with improved employee satisfaction, better performance outcomes, and healthier organizational cultures. Considering the growing significance of emotional skills in organizational behavior, it is critical to explore the contribution of emotional intelligence in leadership. The topic is also crucial considering the psychological and behavioral issues that present-day leaders confront, such as high stress, managing diversity, communication across distance, and moral decision-making. Discussing emotional intelligence from the context of leadership is also consonant with the larger discussion around transformational and servant leadership theories, which value empathy, people building, and people-focused tactics.

Emotional intelligence in the Indian context;

Emotional intelligence is the capacity of one to recognise and control both their own and others' emotions.Given that relationships and emotions are integral to Indian culture,

emotional intelligence is esteemed in that nation. Individuals in India often maintain strong emotional connections with their family, friends, and colleagues, and are often more emotionally expressive. Consequently, cultivating and maintaining robust relationships necessitates a significant level of emotional intelligence. Relational attributes like as loyalty, deference to authority, and emotional connections are often entrenched in leadership within Indian firms, especially traditional and family-owned businesses. In this context, interpersonal sensitivity, the ability to navigate hierarchical relationships with finesse, and the emphasis on maintaining group cohesion are all closely linked to emotional intelligence. Leaders often need to exhibit traits closely linked to elevated emotional intelligence, like compassion, inclusion, and emotional awareness. Moreover, Indian philosophical traditions, such as yoga, Vedanta, and Buddhism, have long emphasised the need of self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy as fundamental elements of emotional intelligence. The Bhagavad Gita, for example, discusses emotional balance, the importance of refraining from impulsive reactions, and the necessity of deliberate action, all of which align with modern concepts of emotional intelligence. Nevertheless, there is often minimal open discourse regarding emotions, particularly adverse ones such as depression, anxiety, or anger, within Indian familial and educational frameworks. Cultural norms may encourage emotional resilience in women or restrict overt emotional expression, especially in men. Individuals who struggle to understand or articulate their feelings may encounter emotional repression or misunderstanding, highlighting the importance of cultivating emotional intelligence through educational and psychological interventions. Recent Indian psychological studies have identified emotional intelligence as a crucial factor in relationship satisfaction, stress management, mental wellness, and academic success. In India, emotional intelligence is becoming seen as an essential skill for managing contemporary life due to the transformations in social structures and family dynamics caused by urbanisation, globalisation, and technological progress.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Zahra, M., Kee, D. M. H., & Usman, M. 2020; The study looks at how a happy and interesting attitude could enable students control of their emotions, inspire, strengthen bonds, and grasp the emotions of others. Measuring emotional intelligence and humour respectively, the self-reported Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale and Multi-Dimensional Sense of Humour Scale Relationship between the variables was investigated using descriptive statistics and correlation and regression analysis. Strong humour is clearly positively connected with emotional intelligence, according to the studies. Many facets of emotional intelligence were favourably linked with the production, performance, and societal usage of humour. The tiny sample size of three institutions' students could restrict the results of the study. Future studies should use bigger and more varied populations to confirm these connections given this restriction.

Xing, R. (2023). PhD thesis: University students' humour, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being: A mixed methods study. Glasgow University conducted a mixed-methods study on how humour influences university students' EI and mental health. The study evaluated how humour affects EI and well-being. EI is associated with adaptive humour and negatively with maladaptive humour, according to a comprehensive review. attribute EI, which views EI as a personality attribute, linked more with humour styles than ability EI, which views EI as a cognitive talent. Trait and ability EI was most positively connected with self-enhancing humour, which helps people cope. Quantitative partial least squares structural equation modelling with 536 students indicated that self-enhancing

humour mediated trait EI and positive affect. Self-defeating humour mediated trait EI, negative affect, anxiety, and melancholy. Trait EI and anxiety were modulated by socially enhancing affiliative humour. We interviewed 16 diverse adolescents semi-structured to examine humor's mental health effects. Thematic analysis revealed psychological well-being, humour, and self-management. Humour is often employed instinctively to deal in real life, research shows. Humour styles affect EI and psychological well-being, supporting the Affective Mediation Model and offering solutions.

Tümkaya, S., Hamarta.2008: This study aimed to find whether academics' emotional intelligence (EI) predictions their humour styles and life contentment as well as whether EI, humour styles, and life satisfaction show significant change depending on academic level. Data were obtained using a Personal Information Form, the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, the Humour Style Scale, and the Life Satisfaction Scale. Comprising 362 academics from various departments at □çukurova and Selçuk University, the study sample included 134 women and 228 men. Among statistical tests were multiple regression analysis, the Tukey test, the Kruskal-Wallis H test, the Mann-Whitney U test, and one-way ANOVA. The results showed that emotional intelligence varied greatly among academic levels in the subscales of interpersonal interaction skills, flexibility, and stress management, but not in personal talents or general psychological well-being. Regarding humour styles, research assistants showed much higher degrees of aggressiveness than lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. Comparatively to research assistants, lecturers, assistant professors, and associate professors, academics claimed much higher degrees of life satisfaction. Moreover, results revealed that the emotional intelligence of academics is a main factor influencing their general life satisfaction as well as their humour styles.

Dewi, Z. L. 2025 Emphasising the importance of adaptive humour in social adjustment, this study looks at the relationship between humour styles and emotional intelligence (EI) in first-year college students. Academic success depends on both emotional and social intelligence, which need an awareness of their interaction with humour use. Using the Indonesian adaptations of the Humour Styles Questionnaire (HSQ) and the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), the study conducted a quantitative research approach surveying 131 male and female first-year college students in Indonesia. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between general emotional intelligence and both affiliative and self-enhancing humour, implying that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to use humour to improve social ties and advance personal well-being. Overall emotional intelligence (EI) and both aggressive and self-defeating humour showed a clear negative link, meaning that students with lower EI are more prone to use humour in ways that might be bad for others or themselves. Improved emotional intelligence helps students to control their emotions effectively and respond appropriately to many social situations, therefore fostering the use of adaptive humour. On the other hand, low emotional intelligence limits students' ability to control their emotions, which leads to reliance on unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Melenets, L: 2022 This paper investigates how, in advanced training courses, humour in education raises instructors' emotional intelligence. The study included Wilcoxon signed-rank test, Student's t-test, Emotional Intelligence Test, Feelings and Emotional Vocabulary. Emotional awareness and interpersonal emotional intelligence are favourably associated at Emotional Awareness (understanding others' emotions) (, Managing Others' Emotions

Understanding Emotions Emotion Management , Interpersonal Emotional Intelligence (EI) (the overall EI score) the Interpersonal Aspect of EI Managing One's Own Emotions and Managing Others's Emotions (understanding others's emotions, total emotion management), control of expression , comprehending emotions , and emotional management . The studies verified that laughter increases teachers' emotional intelligence. Comparatively to conventional learning, advanced instruction with humour enhanced all emotional intelligence markers. To raise teachers' professional competencies, future studies should concentrate on self-directed learning and advanced soft skill training courses.

Ghorbani et al. (2022); This study noted as a rather unexplored field of research the growing relevance of creativity among teenagers. It sought to investigate, using humour as a mediator, the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity. Using a correlational research approach, the study comprised 314 middle-class and high school students from Abbas Abad City, chosen by convenience sampling. Using standardised measures, creativity, emotional intelligence, and humour were evaluated; structural equation modelling was then utilised to examine data. The findings showed that whilst humour mediated the association between emotional intelligence and creativity, emotional intelligence and humour both directly affected creativity. These results highlight the possible importance of including comedy into treatments meant to develop teenagers' emotional intelligence and creativity.

Karatamoglou, Wee, and Palacios 2014 This study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and humour, therefore addressing constraints in earlier studies that missed personality factors, social desirability, and the difference in humour styles and appreciation. Researchers created the Audio-Visual Humour Appreciation Measure (AVHAM), which evaluates participants' responses to video clips in order to close this disparity. Three interrelated dimensions—aggressive humour, children's humour, and animal-related humor—were found by factor analysis supporting the validity of the scale. Though not for humour appreciation, the AVHAM showed incremental predictive validity for self-reported EI and humour styles as well as convergent validity using current humour style measures. The study emphasises the conceptual and empirical differences between humour types and appreciation as well as the special part emotional intelligence plays in influencing reactions connected to humour.

Schutte et al. (2002) Investigated the theoretical and empirical relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and emotional well-being. Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to recognise, manage, and understand emotions, whereas emotional well-being includes aspects such as a predominantly positive mood and enhanced self-esteem. The studies conducted by the researchers revealed a significant correlation between elevated emotional intelligence and both a propensity for positive mood and enhanced self-esteem. In a third study, it was found that individuals with higher emotional intelligence reported more positive mood states and improved state self-esteem. This study also investigated the impact of emotional intelligence on individuals' emotional regulation. Participants exhibiting higher emotional intelligence demonstrated reduced declines in positive mood and self-esteem after a negative mood induction via the Velten technique, and exhibited greater enhancements in mood, though not in self-esteem, following a positive mood induction. The researchers contextualised these findings within the existing literature on emotional intelligence and highlighted the necessity for further investigation in this domain.

Yip, J. A., & Martin, R. A. 2006. This study examined the relationships among humour styles, trait cheerfulness, social competence, and an emotional intelligence (EI) ability test in a sample of 111 college students. Self-enhancing humour and trait cheerfulness positively correlated with emotional management abilities, whereas trait bad mood negatively correlated. Aggressive and self-defeating humour exhibited an inverse correlation with the capacity to accurately evaluate emotions. Negative humour styles and trait ill mood exhibited an inverse relationship with social competence, whereas positive humour styles and trait cheerfulness demonstrated a positive correlation with various aspects of social competence. Finally, several categories of social competence exhibited a positive correlation with the emotional management aspect of emotional intelligence.

Di Fabio, A., Gori, A., & Svicher, A. (n.d.). Using a sample of 462 Italian employees, this study investigated the relationships between the four humour styles—affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating—measured by the Humour Styles Questionnaire (HSQ), and ten personality traits evaluated through the Big Five Questionnaire (BFQ) using network analysis. The stability of the network structure, bridge nodes, and centrality indices dominated the study. Showing a positive correlation, results revealed self-enhancing humour and emotional regulation as the most fundamental factors. By contrast, self-defeating humour was likewise rather common but inversely correlated with emotional regulation. Key bridge nodes turned out to be aggressive humour as well as particular personality attributes like dynamism, control of emotions, and dominance. With the exception of aggressive humour and emotional control, most humour forms and personality traits revealed favourable associations overall. These results underline the need of encouraging self-enhancing humour and tackling self-defeating humour in therapeutic settings as well as the possibility of using aggressive humour to guide tactics for improving the interaction between personality factors and humour styles by means of bridge nodes.

Plessen, C. Y., Franken, F. R., Ster, C., Schmid (2002) Though many research have found relationships between personality factors and humour styles—particularly those that affect health, as measured by the Humour Styles Questionnaire—a comprehensive meta-analysis had not been conducted until recently. By means of a random-effects meta-analysis, this study offers a thorough and methodical overview of the body of evidence together with evaluating possible moderators of impact size variability. With an overall sample size of 11,791 people, 24 studies from 13 countries were found via a thorough literature analysis. Results showed that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness were favourably correlated with health-promoting humour styles; neuroticism showed a negative link. On the other hand, humorous forms that endanger health exhibited a negative link with agreeableness and conscientiousness and a positive correlation with neuroticism. With moderator variables accounting for only a fraction of the large degree of variance observed across studies—I^2 between 41% and 96%— The results showed generalisability across gender, sample type, and continent and revealed resilience against elements including publication bias, individual research quality, and measurement error. The writers advise that later studies should give under-priority top importance represented regions, explore additional moderators to address heterogeneity, and examine longitudinal developments throughout the lifespan.

Gakhar, D., & Singh, A. K. 2024. This study examined how humour styles affect emotional intelligence and self-esteem in 116 people. Participants took the Humour Styles Questionnaire (HSQ), Rosenberg Self and Esteem Scale, and EI Scale to examine these

factors. All indicators were self-reported. The correlation study showed that humour styles that emphasise social bonding and positivity increased emotional intelligence and self-esteem. Hostile or self-deprecating humour styles were negatively connected with these psychological qualities. Cultural background, stress responses, and interpersonal dynamics may complicate these connections, hence the authors advise against taking causal inferences. The study emphasises the importance of humour types in psychological research and suggests ways to improve adaptive humour, self-esteem, and emotional intelligence.

Eype, E. S., & L., L. 2024. This study examined how humour styles affect emotional intelligence in young individuals. The sample included 241 people—109 men and 132 women. Affiliative humour positively correlated with all emotional intelligence measures. All dimensions of emotional intelligence correlated positively with self-enhancing humour. Aggressive humour negatively linked with all emotional intelligence variables except self-management. Males used angry humour more than females.

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Gauri & Kanwar M. (2022); Based on the knowledge that humour improves physical, social, and psychological well-being, this study investigates the relationship between humour, emotional intelligence, and life satisfaction (Lee et al., 2020). Usually eliciting laughter, humour is experienced through several expressions including jokes or verbal errors and usually increases serotonin and happy feelings. According to the theory, people who have a developed sense of humour show greater emotional intelligence and are therefore more suited to handle the difficulties of life. The study comprised 100 university students, half men and half women, aged 18 to 25 years. While independent t-tests examined humour styles across sexes, Pearson correlation analysis was performed to evaluate the link between humour kinds, emotional intelligence, and optimism. The results challenge accepted wisdom in the literature by revealing fresh understanding of the complex function of humour.

Xu, X., Marcon, M., (2015): This study looked at how varieties of humour, self-esteem, and humour perception related in India. We evaluated a sample of 102 Indian university students using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Humour Styles Questionnaire. Participants were asked to evaluate their own sense of humour as well as the value of comedy. The results show that, in comparison to maladaptive forms, such aggressive and self-defeating humour, Indian university students show a greater propensity towards adaptive humour types, namely affiliative and self-enhancing humour particularly. The results showed that Indian students using more flexible humour styles had higher self-esteem. Important insights for possible interventions come from the styles of humour, self-esteem, and humour perception. Given its exclusive concentration on university students, this study should be evaluated with great scepticism.

METHODOLOGY

Rationale of the Study

The increasing academic, emotional, and social challenges encountered by psychology students require an analysis of their coping strategies and emotional well-being. In recent years, humour has emerged as a significant psychological resource that can either enhance or hinder emotional functioning, depending on its style. Psychological resilience and emotional well-being correspond with adaptive humour styles including affiliative and self-enhancing humour. On the other hand, maladaptive humour styles that is, violent and self-defeating humor are sometimes linked to poor emotional control and social conflicts. Maintaining mental health and controlling stress depend on the ability to recognise, control,

and efficiently use emotions, so emotional intelligence (EI) is characterised as Understanding the link between emotional intelligence and humour styles helps psychology students studying emotional behaviour and required to show emotional competency to have insightful analysis of their coping mechanisms. While earlier studies have looked at emotional intelligence and humour independently, little research has focused on the direct effects of humour styles on emotional intelligence within this population. This study looks at how changing degrees of emotional intelligence in psychology students relate to adaptive and maladaptive humour styles. This study seeks to elucidate the relationship between humour, a usually used but sometimes disregarded psychological instrument, and its consequences on emotional control and general well-being. The results might guide curriculum designers, teachers, and mental health professionals creating thorough well-being initiatives including healthy humour as a component of emotional skill development in children. In the field of psychology, this study is highly relevant both practically and academically in encouraging good psychological functioning in emerging people.

Research Planning

This research utilises a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design. This method effectively elucidates the relationship between variables at a given point in time without modifying any variables. This study investigates the relationships between types of humour (adaptive and maladaptive) and emotional intelligence as a coping strategy. A correlational method is employed to objectively evaluate the extent of their interrelation. A descriptive component is included to clarify the prevalence and distribution of humour types and emotional intelligence in the study population. This dual methodology enhances the investigation's explanatory and exploratory capacities.

Objective of study

1. To know the frequency of good and bad humour styles among psychology students.
2. To evaluate the degrees of emotional intelligence in psychology students.
3. To ascertain the relationship between humour types and emotional intelligence as strategies for coping.
4. To investigate the potential positive Relationship between adaptable humour styles and elevated Ei.
5. To examine the correlation between maladaptive humour styles and diminished emotional intelligence**.**

Hypotheses

- **H1:** There is a great positive correlation between adaptive humour styles and emotional intelligence among psychology students.
- **H2:** There is a good negative relationship between maladaptive humour styles and emotional intelligence.
- **H3:** Ei significantly predicts the use of adaptive humour styles as a coping mechanism.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

The study targets undergraduate and postgraduate psychology students from various colleges and institutions across India. The sample size includes 110 participants. A purposeful sampling strategy was utilised, ensuring the inclusion of students currently studying psychology, given their expertise in emotional and cognitive concepts. Participants were

required to be enrolled in a full-time psychology program and to be aged between 18 and 30 years.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Current enrolment in a psychology undergraduate or postgraduate program
- Age range between 18 and 30 years

Exclusion Criteria:

- Students from non-psychology backgrounds
- Individuals with self-reported psychological disorders (to reduce potential confounds)
- Incomplete responses

Measures of study:

The following psychological test was employed in this study:

1. **The Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ) – Martin et al., 2003**

The HSQ comprises 32 items that assess four distinct styles of humour.

- Afiliative (adaptive)
- Self-enhancingg (adaptive)
- Aggressivee behaviour (maladaptive)
- maladaptive behaviour

On a 7-point Likert scale, participants rate issues with 1 for total disagreement and 7 for entire agreement. Higher marks show more use of the related kind of comedy. While aggressive and self-defeating forms are labelled as maladaptive, this research identifies affiliative and self-enhancing humour kinds as adaptive. Cronbach's alpha values for each of the subscales range from 0.77 to 0.81, therefore indicating strong internal consistency.

2. **The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) – Schutte et al., 1998.**

Designed by K. V. Petrides for the examination of emotional self-perceptions, the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) is a complete self-assessment tool. There are 153 items on the full questionnaire; but, for this study the shortened version (TEIQue-SF) consists of 30 items taken from the whole edition. These objects show the 15 aspects of trait emotional intelligence and generate a consistent worldwide trait EI value. Participants answer on a 7-point Likert scale; 1 denotes complete disagreement and 7 marks complete agreement. Built on the trait model of emotional intelligence, the TEIQue stresses emotional self-efficacy above ability-based achievement. It has four main components:

- Well being
- Self-regulation
- Emotionality
- Social interaction

This instrument is relevant to the current study as it evaluates an individual's emotional functioning in typical environments, closely aligning with real-world coping mechanisms. The TEIQue-SF exhibits high internal consistency, with global trait emotional intelligence often yielding Cronbach’s alpha values exceeding 0.85, thereby confirming its reliability as a tool for research on emotional intelligence among student populations.

Procedure:

Two months' worth of research was undertaken. Before data collecting started, ethical clearance came from the pertinent institutional ethics committee. To enable wide geographical representation and accessibility, participants were gathered using both in-person and online tools like Google Forms. Every participant acquired informed permission. An summary of the goal of the study, guarantees of respondent confidentiality, and underlines the voluntary character of participation was given. Participants were told to answer honestly, knowing there were no right or wrong responses. Anonymised data were kept safely. Completing the questionnaire took generally between 15 and 20 minutes. The final dataset omitted all incomplete answers.

Statistical analysis:

Analysis of statistical data the statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 22. The subsequent analyses were conducted:

- Correlational Analysis
- Regression Analysis.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Showing Mean, and Standard Deviation, Skewness, and Kurtosis (N = 110)

Variable	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	126.07	15.695	-0.176	0.578
Self-defeating Humour	25.04	7.409	-0.093	-0.411
Affiliative Humour	41.55	7.835	-0.035	-0.925
Self-enhancing Humour	37.00	7.896	-0.095	0.838
Aggressive Humour	28.16	6.131	-0.020	-0.561

Table 1. This table presents the central tendencies and variability in the dataset. All variables fall within acceptable ranges for normal distribution, as indicated by skewness and kurtosis values. The mean score of EI was 126.07 (SD = 15.695), suggesting moderate to high emotional intelligence levels among the participants.

Correlational Analysis

Table 2: Pearson relationship Between Humour Styles and Ei (N = 110)

Variable	Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Sig. (1-tailed)
Self-defeating Humour	-0.035	.357
Affiliative Humour	0.537**	.000
Self-improving Humour	0.551**	.000
Agresive Humour	-0.196*	.020

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 level*

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 level*

Table 2. Between affiliative humour and EI (r =.537, p <.01) the correlation matrix shows notable positive associations; between self-enhancing humour and EI, r =.551, p <.01. EI (r = –.196, p <.05) showed a negative connection with violent humour. Self-defeating humour and EI showed no appreciable connection (r = –.035, p >.05). EI

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Table 3: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
0.677	0.458	0.437	11.773

The regression model explained 45.8% of the variance in emotional intelligence, which was statistically significant ($F(4, 105) = 22.181$, $p < .001$).

Table 4: Coefficients of Regression Analysis

Predictor	B	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	82.915		9.891	.000
Self-defeating Humour	-0.025	-0.012	-0.135	.893
Affiliative Humour	0.711	0.355	4.383	.000
Self-enhancing Humour	0.810	0.407	4.896	.000
Aggressive Humour	-0.558	-0.218	-2.554	.012

Table 4: performs shows Explaining 45.8% of the variance in emotional intelligence (R^2 =.458), the regression model was significant ($F(4, 105) = 22.181$, $p <.001$). EI was particularly predicted by affiliative humour (β =.355, p <.001) and self-enhancing humour (β =.407, p <.001). Aggressive humour adversely predicted EI (β = –.218, p =.012). Not much of a predictor was self-defeating humour (β = –.012, p =.893).

DISCUSSION

This study examined, among psychology students, the association between emotional intelligence (EI) and humour styles more especially, adaptive (affiliative and self-enhancing) and maladaptive (aggressive and self-defeating). The results supported all three hypotheses: EI was a major predictor of the use of adaptive humour styles; maladaptive humour styles showed a negative correlation; and adaptive humour styles showed a strong positive association with emotional intelligence (EI). Particularly violent humour showed a negative correlation. The results are consistent with earlier studies showing that people with high emotional intelligence efficiently control their emotional states, therefore allowing the successful use of humour in demanding or socially problematic circumstances (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Martin et al., 2003). Especially self-enhancing humour, adaptive humour shows emotional endurance and helps people to keep a happy attitude in the face of hardship. Trained in emotional awareness, empathy, and introspection, psychology students seem to use these abilities through affiliative and self-enhancing humour, therefore promoting good personal relationships and improving mental health. The results confirm Hampes' (2001) studies showing a strong link between enhanced self-enhancing humour and better empathy and emotional control, two fundamental components of emotional intelligence (EI). The theory that emotionally intelligent people choose comedy that promotes social ties, therefore reflecting their interpersonal skills, is supported by the positive correlation between affiliative humour and emotional intelligence. Emphasising the need of comedy in improving psychological resistance to stress, Cann and Collette (2014) reported a similar relationship. Based on the present studies, violent humour has a notable inverse association with emotional intelligence (EI), meaning that students with higher E-values are less likely to participate in comedy that denigrates or damages others. This implies that those with emotional intelligence are more conscious of the emotional states of others and deliberately avoid comedy that can be harmful or disruptive in society. This is consistent with the results of Schutte et al. (1998), who maintained that emotional

intelligence improves pro-social conduct and helps to reduce negative emotions including sarcasm or animosity. Unlike earlier studies by Kuiper et al. (2004) and Vernon et al. (2009), which indicated a strong negative association, the relationship between self-defeating humour and emotional intelligence was found to be small and non-significant. Cultural variations in humour perception and emotional expression help to explain this diversity. Self-deprecating humour in Indian cultural settings may serve as a sign of humility or a means of promoting social cohesiveness rather than always reflecting low self-esteem or inadequate emotional control. Particularly in academic settings that give modesty and self-awareness top priority, psychology students could view self-defeating humour as socially acceptable or even positive. Furthermore, some people might not completely understand the maladaptive features of self-defeating humour, which results in underreporting of how bad it affects their emotional state. With self-enhancing humour showing the highest beta coefficient, the regression analysis carried out in this study found that both affiliative and self-enhancing humour are significant predictors of emotional intelligence (EI), accounting for over 46% of the variance in EI scores. This implies that psychological adaptability depends on good emotional intelligence since it helps one to keep humour and optimism in trying circumstances. The results confirm the transactional model of stress and coping put forth by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which holds that those with high emotional intelligence are more adept at evaluating stressors and choosing coping mechanisms, such humour, that lower emotional pain and improve well-being. This is consistent with Bar-On's (1997) paradigm, which from a developmental standpoint notes humour as a necessary element of the interpersonal and stress management subscales of emotional-social intelligence. For psychology students, who sometimes deal with academic pressure, emotional work, and peer interactions, the results are pertinent. For these people, comedy serves as a vital emotional release as well as a preventive tool against emotional tiredness or burnout. There are clear practical ramifications for this work: including emotional intelligence training and humour awareness into courses can enable students to create better coping mechanisms, increase emotional resilience, and strengthen relationships. In peer mentorship and counselling environments, workshops and interventions centred on adaptive humour may be especially successful in helping students reframe stress through self-enhancing humour while avoiding socially destructive forms such violent humour. Moreover, knowing how comedy styles mirror a person's emotional terrain would help teachers and psychologists find at-risk children. Dependency too much on maladaptive humour forms could point to underlying psychological conflict or maladjustment. The study has natural limitations notwithstanding these significant results. Self-report surveys could have caused answer biases like social desirability and erroneous self-assessment, therefore compromising the validity of the results. Self-enhancement biases may have caused participants to reduce their usage of maladaptive humour styles or overestimate their emotional intelligence. Second, the cross-sectional design restricts causal inferences; whereas emotional intelligence predicts comedy style usage in our study, the reverse may also be true, or other mediating variables could simultaneously influence both domains. A longitudinal approach might help to better understand how emotional intelligence and humour interact over time. Thirdly, the sample consisted just of psychology students from a certain academic background, therefore possibly limiting the generalisability of the results. Psychology students' cultural and developmental backgrounds could help them to be more sensitive to introspection and emotional processing than students from other fields, a quality absent in some of them. Though not specifically addressed in this study, contextual elements including cultural norms, gender roles, and linguistic subtleties clearly affect the expression and understanding of humour. Future studies should look at these traits, maybe using mixed-

methodologies combining quantitative data with in-depth interviews or diary studies to find how students use humour in real emotional settings. More complex knowledge could also come from looking at the moderating effects on the association between emotional intelligence and humour styles of gender, academic stress, social support, and personality factors. Researchers can look at how digital natives' humour styles and emotional processing interact with digital communication—including memes and funny social media posts. This study adds to the body of knowledge already in use in Indian psychological research by orienting humour forms within the context of emotional functioning, especially in a demographic driven in knowledge of human behaviour. The present work shows that whilst maladaptive forms, especially aggressive humour, show a negative association, adaptive humour styles are favourably connected with emotional intelligence. Moreover, among psychology students, emotional intelligence is a major predictor of the use of constructive humour as a coping mechanism. The results help to clarify emotional-regulation techniques for young people and have pragmatic consequences for enhancing student mental health, encouraging resilience, and advancing emotionally intelligent communication in both personal and professional environments. The worldwide problem of mental health problems among teenagers calls for the combination of emotional intelligence and humour education as a possible approach to provide young people the necessary tools to negotiate emotionally taxing events.

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence and humour styles—more especially, adaptive (affiliative and self-enhancing) and maladaptive (aggressive and self-defeating)—were investigated in this study among psychology students, so highlighting their roles as coping mechanisms in both academic and emotional settings. This study made use of accepted theoretical models, namely the humour styles model produced by Martin et al. (2003) and the emotional intelligence model put forward by Salovey and Mayer (1990). The results of the research gave the suggested hypothesis great empirical support. Whereas maladaptive humour styles, especially violent humour, exhibit a negative link, adaptive humour forms a notable positive correlation with emotional intelligence. Moreover, emotional intelligence has been found to be a major factor influencing adaptive humour styles, therefore underscoring its vital role in psychological adaptation and good coping. Higher emotional intelligence psychology students seem to be more prone to use comedy in a positive and socially conscious way. While concurrently improving interpersonal relationships and fostering a good academic atmosphere, affiliative and self-enhancing humour help to properly handle difficult circumstances. On the other hand, those with reduced emotional intelligence could be more likely to employ maladaptive humour techniques, therefore compromising their own well-being and social contacts. The link between emotional intelligence and self-defeating humour emphasises the cultural and contextual subtleties that could affect the way one views and uses humour. Particularly in the framework of the Indian academic setting, which is sometimes disregarded in international study, the results provide significant additions to the increasing corpus of knowledge on emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms. There are significant pragmatic consequences from this study. This emphasises the need of including humor-based treatments and emotional intelligence training into student development initiatives inside academic institutions. Engaging in this exercise helps pupils develop emotional resilience, enhance adaptive coping mechanisms, and lower psychological stress. Workshops on peer communication, emotional management, and humour awareness can help students greatly advance their abilities in academic performance and personal growth. The study has limits even with its benefits. Using self-report

questionnaires could have brought prejudices like erroneous self-perceptions and social desirability. Restricted to psychology students, the sample reduces the generalisability of the results to other fields. The cross-sectional design restricts causal inference drawing capability. Longitudinal and experimental approaches should be used in future studies to investigate the dynamic interaction between emotional intelligence and humour styles throughout time in several cultural and educational settings. The study comes to the conclusion that the way one uses humour as a coping method is much influenced by emotional intelligence. Whereas maladaptive styles show an adverse association and may indicate emotional dysregulation, adaptive humour styles correlate favourably with increased emotional intelligence and serve as protective strategies in emotionally demanding environments. This dissertation clarifies the dynamics among psychology students, so providing a foundation for more study and useful application in emotional well-being, counselling, and education.

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Conflict of Interest

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