

Sense of Humour and its Style Among Prospective Teachers

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G. Ponselvakumar

The Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed to be University), India

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0890-7099>

C. Kaleeswaran

PRG Matriculation Higher Secondary School, India

Abstract

Sense of humour can be a valuable asset for teachers in various ways. For starters, it can aid in creating a positive and enjoyable environment for learning, which can promote student engagement and motivation. Teachers who use humour in the classroom can help to break down barriers and foster a sense of community among students and teachers. This, in turn, can lead to improved relationships and a more positive classroom climate. Therefore sense of humour is an essential trait for a teacher to manage the classroom successfully. Further the humour style followed by the teacher will also impact the environment of classroom, positive style of humour will lead to positive effects while negative humour style will lead to negative effects. This study has attempted to assess the level of sense of humour and the style of humour among the prospective teachers with special reference to selected independent variables. The present study uses simple random sampling technique to select 70 prospective teachers belonging to two year B.Ed programme and Four-year integrated programme as samples. The study shows that prospective teachers have above average level of Sense of Humour and majority of them were following affiliative style of humour.

Keywords: Prospective Teachers, Sense of Humour, Humour Styles, Integrated Teacher Training Programme

Introduction

The role of teachers is very essential in building the future world, since they are the one who lays the foundation for the future pillars of any nation, the student community. Teachers were the first role model for any student; therefore it is very much needed for a teacher to possess good qualities along with effective teaching. For being an effective teacher building a good relationship with student and establishing a rapport is very much needed. Communication and interaction between teachers and students are the most potential activity that provides the opportunity to create an exciting atmosphere in the classroom. Failure of communication in the class results in an unsuccessful process of teaching (Tunnisa et al., 2019). Martin (2010) reveals that humor is a creative teaching technique that places demands on the skill and art of educators. Humour is a tool which helps the teacher to establish a positive and friendly rapport with their students. It creates a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment where students feel comfortable and connected. A lighthearted and humorous approach can foster positive teacher-student relationships and enhance communication and trust.

A sense of humour is a trait of personality that allows a person to understand, create, and appreciate amusement for the purpose of enjoyment and laughter (Dhiman & Kumar, 2021). Humour is defined in the context of teaching and learning by Wanzer et al. (2006, p. 182) as “anything that the teacher and/or students find funny or amusing.” Not

only for making people laugh humour can also be used to enhance the student's classroom learning activities ([Bakar & Kumar, 2019](#)).

One of the essential qualities of a teacher is his or her sense of humour, which he or she transmits to the student (by calling to humour) along with trust, comfort, relaxation, benevolence, and a positive outlook on life. If the teacher knows how to use quality humour, it can provide students with enjoyable experiences ([Jeder, 2015](#)). Because of its physiological and psychological benefits humour is very important says [Shatz & Coil, 2008](#). While humour can help students understand concepts and lesson content, it can also capture and maintain attention and motivation, which helps students to mentally engage with the course material. As a teaching strategy, humor is an "educational lubricant that can make learning more engaging, enjoyable, and memorable" ([Shatz & Coil, 2008](#), p. 106). Martin and colleagues classified humour into four types: affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating, and explained that affiliative and self-enhancing humour styles seemed adaptive because they promote overall wellness, whereas aggressive and self-defeating humour styles were maladaptive because they do not ([Dhiman & Chandel, 2014](#)).

Statement of the Problem

Pre-service teacher training is a crucial part for the future teachers where they can learn, apply and nourish themselves for becoming an effective teacher. The quality of the prospective teachers will decide the quality of the students who were all going to be the future resources of a nation. Sense of humour is one such powerful tool which can help the teachers to maintain a good atmosphere for effective teaching and learning. A number of research studies have found a positive relationship between teachers' use of humour and student learning ([Wanzer & Frymier, 1999](#)). When teachers are able to use humour to defuse tension or to address sensitive topics, they can help students feel more comfortable and open to

discussion. This can be especially important when dealing with controversial or challenging topics. [Brown and Tomlin \(1996\)](#), says that whenever students were asked to list out the personality traits for an good teachers always they have mentioned 'sense of humour'. Overall, sense of humour can be an important factor in creating a positive and effective learning environment, promoting student engagement and motivation, diffusing tense situations, and supporting teacher well-being. Prospective teachers were the future teachers who were undergoing the training programme to become a teacher, therefore it is essential for them to have the trait sense of humour for their successful professional development as well as for the betterment of teaching learning process. Therefor the study aims to find the level of sense of humour among the prospective teachers who were going to handle the suture students. Hence the present study.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the level of sense of humour among the prospective teachers
- To find out the humour style among the prospective teachers
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the level of sense of humour based on selected independent variables like course studying, Family type and locality

Analysis

Variable	N	Empirical Average	Theoretical Average
Sense of Humour	70	36.32	30

Table 1 show that the empirical average of sense of humour among the prospective teachers was found to be 36.2 whereas the theoretical average is 30. This shows that the prospective teachers have above average level of Sense of Humour.

Table 2 Statistical Measures and Result of Test of Significance of Difference between the Mean Score of Mental Health among Prospective Teachers with Reference to Selected Variables

Variable	Sub-Category	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Significance at 0.05 Level
Family Type	Joint Family	50	36.880	4.17788	2.072	significant
	Nuclear Family	20	34.9500	3.21959		
Locality	Rural	38	36.3421	4.06219	0.31	Not significant
	Urban	32	36.3125	3.99546		
Course	B.Ed	47	36.6596	3.80090	0.940	Not significant
	B.Sc.B.Ed	23	35.6522	4.39637		

The t value 2.072 in the above table-2 is greater than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is a significant difference among humour level of pre-service teachers from joint family and nuclear family. Further it shows that pre-service teachers from joint family have higher level of humour than those from nuclear family.

The table 2 shows that the t value 0.31 and 0.940 is lesser than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is no significant difference among the humour level of pre-service teachers based on their locality and course studying.

4. The prospective teachers have the Affiliative Humour and Self-Enhancing Humour as the highest average.

Discussion & Conclusion

The objective of the study is to identify the level of sense of humour among the prospective teachers and to find is there any significant difference among the sense of humour based on the selected independent variables like family type, locality and course studying. Further it aims to identify the type of humour styles followed by the prospective teachers. The result of the findings shows that pre-service teachers have above average level of Sense of Humour, which seems to be a good sign. As [Martin \(2010\)](#) says the positive social interactions in the classroom can be facilitate by teacher's humour ([St-Amand et al., 2023](#)). Teachers' humor makes it easier for students to learn difficult course content ([Abdulmajeed & Hameed, 2017](#); [Özdemir, 2017](#)). Further it shows that the independent variables like locality and course studying has no significant influence on the sense of humour among the prospective teachers. Whereas the family type significantly influence the sense of humour, prospective teachers from joint family has higher level of sense of humour while compared with prospective teachers from nuclear family. Humour, according to researchers, can either harm or strengthen social relationships between students and teachers; additionally, humour is thought to help students and teachers feel good and closer together ([Friedman & Kuipers, 2013](#); [Ho, 2016](#)).

Further the study shows that the prospective teachers have the highest average (26.7) for affiliative humour which can increase the interpersonal harmony and attractiveness. According to [Cheung &](#)

Table 3 Descriptive analysis results for the humor styles questionnaire

Sub Dimensions – Humour style	N	Average
Affiliative Humour	70	26.7
Self-Enhancing Humour	70	26.4
Aggressive Humour	70	22.6
Self-Defeating Humour	70	23.6

Table 3 shows that Affiliative humour (26.7) has the highest average followed by Self-Enhancing Humour (26.4) then Self-Defeating Humour (23.6) and Aggressive Humour (22.6)

Findings

1. The Prospective teachers have above average level of Sense of Humour
2. There is a significant difference among humour level of pre-service teachers from joint family and nuclear family.
3. There is no significant difference among the humour level of pre-service teachers based on their locality and course studying.

[Yue \(2012\)](#), factors like adapting to the environment and moving away from negativity and satisfaction in life were observed among people with affiliative humour. Further using positive humor types in the styles of affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor can be useful for managerial and pedagogical efficiency in schools ([Şahin, 2021](#)). The second dimension self-enhancing humour has the average of 26.4 whereas the average of aggressive humour and self-defeating humour is 22.6 and 23.6. This shows that the prospective teachers have moderate level of aggressive humour and self-defeating humour. [Tekler et al., \(2018\)](#) says that to avoid problems and hide the underlying facts individuals use these types of humour. Aggressive humour style contains the negative behaviours like humiliating and mocking others which is not accepted by our society ([Aşılıoğlu, 2021](#)). The aggressive and self-defeating humour styles were considered as negative aspects. The results of the study, clearly shows that the prospective teachers tend to have affiliative and self-enhancing humour style. These types of positive humour styles can inject a dose of excitement and enthusiasm among the students and make them to actively participate in the classroom activities. Proper environment and training programme can be provided for the prospective teachers who were having negative styles of humour like aggressive and self-defeating. The prospective teachers should ensure appropriate usage of sense of humour and positive humour styles inside the classroom for the betterment of teaching learning process.

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Author Details

G. Ponselvakumar, *The Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed to be University), India,*

Email ID: *kumar.gselva@gmail.com*

C. Kaleeswaran, *PRG Matriculation Higher Secondary School, India*