

Influence of Leaders' Humor Styles on the Employees' Job Related Affective Well-Being

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Abstract *Humor is a common dimension of human interaction. Therefore, it has an effect on working groups and organizations. The influence of humor on interpersonal relationship and behavior has been considered by various enterprises. In this work, we report that adaptive humor styles employed by leader buffers job related positive affective well-being of employees whereas maladaptive humor styles employed by leaders buffers job related negative affective well-being of employees. Our results indicate that self-enhancing humor played a key role in leadership at workplace. This helps us to acquire evidence for the self-enhancing humor enhanced job related positive affective well-being of employees. On the other hand, aggressive humor showed a positive but small effect on job related negative affective well-being of employees. The study aims to shed light on humor which can be considered as a precursor of job related affective well-being of employees.*

Key words Humor, leadership, humorous leadership, well-being, job related affective well-being

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1. Introduction

Positive emotions help individuals not only to survive but also to overcome when confronted with negative situations. Happiness is a lay frame, replete with individual meaning for each of us. It has been tended to treat happiness as psychological well-being, which also referred to as emotional well-being or subjective well-being (Diener *et al.*, 1999).

The impact of work and work environment on individual well-being is widely documented in the psychological literature (Warr, 1984, 1987). The attitudes and feelings individuals develop are in relationship between their general mood and well-being. It seems one of the factors that effects on job-related affective well-being are humor. Humor is “any communicative instance which is perceived as humorous” (Martineau, 1972, p.114). One may differentiate humor-related behaviors by the way where humor is delivered, for instance, if humor is used to humiliate one or others or to appraise oneself or other’s skills and abilities. Furthermore, sense of humor may be beneficial to mental health is by contributing to one’s ability to regulate or manage emotions, which is an essential aspect of mental health (Gross and Munoz, 1995). Numerous humor researches focused on humor’s effects personal outcomes: burnout, stress, coping and health (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2012). There is little shared understanding as to the role of humor in the workplace (Mesmer- Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2012). A number of people have suggested that a more playful work environment where humor is encouraged might help to produce a happier, healthier, less stressed, and more productive work force, engendering better social interactions among workers and managers, and fostering more creative thinking and problem solving (Morreall, 1991). Additionally, Avolio *et al.* (1999) indicated that humor was an important trait and competency of leaders. Leaders who present this attitude and behavior can change their followers and subordinates. The humorous leadership enhances well-being of employees which might buffer the impact of stressful work environment. The humorous and inspiring leadership empowers subordinates with more autonomy through interesting with their psychological and job related well-being. Building upon the model established by Martin *et al.* (2003), and in an attempt to enlight the relationship between leadership humor styles and their contribution to employee’s job related affective well-being.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Humorous Leadership at Workplace

It has frequently been suggested that a good sense of humor is an important characteristic for effective leadership along with other abilities such as; social skills, empowerment, creativity and good speaking ability. Research on leadership behavior indicates that effective leadership requires skills in general areas of: giving and seeking information, making decision, influencing people and building relationships (Yukl and Lepsinger, 1990). As an important communication skill humor can be seen beneficial for leaders and managers in organizations. According to Decker and Rotondo (2001) humor could be useful for teaching and clarifying work tasks, helping to motivate and change behavior, promoting creativity, coping with stress, and generally making interaction between manager and subordinates more positive and less tense.

Humorous leadership might not be the primary criterion for business success but it is vital for building an effective team with high performance. Conger (1989) suggested that frequent use of humor at workplace by leaders was an effective way to inspire or restore morals. Davis and Kleiner (1989) also believed that leaders could achieve three results by applying humor, that is; 1) lowered stress at work; 2) helped subordinates understand leaders' management models through the communication between them, and; 3) inspired subordinates or followers. Similarly, humorous leadership can not only effectively boost leadership effectiveness (Decker and Rotondo, 2001) but also help enterprises and organizations grow and revolutionize to improve the overall performance of their organizations (Meyer, 1997).

In fact, humorous leadership can affect subordinate's mood and psychology in a positive way while the work is performed. Cooper (2002) found that leaders' use of positive humor increased the positive affect dimension of leader-member exchange, which in turn influenced organizational citizenship behaviors (positively), and turnover intentions (negatively). Martin *et al.*, (2003) showed important associations between humor styles with well-being. These studies show that, humorous leadership have an affective influence on subordinate's perception and attitude about their job related well-being, job satisfaction and other job attitudes (e.g., commitment, citizenship).

2.2. Humor

Humor refers to "stimulus (e.g., a joke or witticism), a cognitive process, or some kind of emotional or behavioral response (Martin, 2001). Some authors focus only on humor that is intentionally produces by individuals (Cooper, 2005) while others note that humorous stimuli can be non-social and unintentional (Wyer & Collins, 1992). Numerous authors have highlighted that humor has two sides (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). Malone (1980) referred to humor as being a "double-edged sword" stressing the fact that while humor can be seen as positive, it also can be used for negative and destructive purposes.

For one to understand humor's dynamic nature, it is necessary to carry out a multi-dimensional conceptualization of humor. Researchers have recently proposed four humor styles: affiliative humor, self-enhancing humor, aggressive humor and self-defeating humor (Martin *et al.* 2003).

Affiliative Humor: People often use this type of humor tend to entertain people by saying funny things, to telling jokes or doing funny things, to facilitate relationships, to reduce interpersonal tensions and to put the atmosphere there at ease (e.g., "I enjoy making people laugh"; "I don't have to work very hard at making other people laugh- I seem to be a naturally humorous person") (Martin *et al.* 2003). Individuals who exhibit this behavior are liked by others and are usually perceived as non-threatening (Vaillant, 1977). By utilizing this style of non-hostile and affirming humor, one can lessen interpersonal tensions and aid relationship building (Martin *et al.* 2003).

Self-Enhancing Humor: This type of humor is about the humorous view of individuals to the life happenings. It refers to humor to enhance the self in a tolerant way and is the tendency to maintain a humorous outlook on life to cheer oneself up (e.g., "My humorous outlook on life keeps me from getting overly upset or depressed about things") (Kuiper *et al.* 1993). This use of humor is negatively related to negative emotions such as depression and anxiety and, more generally, to neuroticism, and positively related to openness to experience, self-esteem and psychological well-being (Martin *et al.* 2003).

Aggressive Humor: It is a type of negative humor used to control others by putting them down or through ridicule (e.g., "if someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it") (Martin *et al.*, 2003;

Meyer, 1990) Aggressive humor can be used to identify what the group accepts to be “normal” and “abnormal” behavior (Fine & De Soucey, 2005) often by demonstrated the inferiority of out groups or by derogating group members who violate norms (Meyer, 1997). This use of humor is positively related to neuroticism and particularly hostility, anger, and aggression, and negatively related to relationship satisfaction, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Martin et al. 2003).

Self-Defeating Humor: It is designed to put others at ease by showing that the producer does not take himself or herself too seriously (e.g., “I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weaknesses, blunders, or faults”) (Martin *et al.* 2003) in order to enhance relationships with others at the expense and detriment of oneself. This is a self-denying defense mechanism that tends to hide negative feelings away from problems by humor. This use of humor is positively related to neuroticism and negative emotions such as depression and anxiety, and negatively related to satisfaction, psychological well-being and self-esteem (Martin *et al.* 2003).

2.3. Job Related Affective Well-being

There are many notions related to well-being in the literature. These are pleasure, social well-being, psychological well-being, subjective well-being (Bayram *et al.*, 2004). When people evaluate their lives, it is labeled as this “subjective well-being” (Diener, 1984). One group of variables that has been connected consistently with individual well-being is the social context in organizations (Carsten *et al.* 2003).

Job related affective well-being refers to feeling about one’s job and assessing his/her emotional reaction to his/her job (Katwyk *et al.*, 2000). Job related affective well-being comprises the frequent experience of positive affects and infrequent experience of negative affects in the work environment (Diener & Larsen, 1993). Job related affective well-being can be evaluated as a job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from appraisal of one’s job or job experiences (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004). It is an affective component of the experience of psychological well-being and is distinct from components like job satisfaction because they are attitudinal and contain both affective and cognitive elements (Diener & Larsen, 1993; Warr, 1990). Job related affective well-being is explained by two dimensions (Warr, 1990). One dimension related most closely to displeasure-pleasure and encompasses depression and the negative affects of anxiety and anger. The other relates to activation and positive affect and includes arousal as well as activated pleasant affects such as enthusiasm (Daniels, 2000).

Harter, Schmidt and Keyes (2003) emphasized that well-being of employees is in the best interest of communities and organizations. According to studies conducted by Lowe and Schellenberg (2001), personal characteristics, family characteristics, corporate/organizational characteristics and work environment are proposed as antecedents of well-being. Leader is one of the indicators of work environment. Therefore, his/her ability of sense of humor would have an effect on subordinate’s job related well-being. Similarly, Johnson (2008) argues that leader’s mood was found as a powerful impact on follower positive and negative mood and their well-being.

Humorous Leadership and Job Related Affective Well-being

Combining the arguments aforementioned, it can be known that proper humor is vital for effective leadership and well-being of subordinates. The relationship between humor and positive affect has received considerable supported in literature (Cann *et al.*, 1997; Kuiper, McKenzie, & Belanger, 1995; Martin et al., 1993). Humor is frequently used as a positive mood induction in experimental studies (Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Kraiger, Billings, & Isen, 1989). Positive affect and well-being has been positively related to number of organizational and individual outcomes. For instance, Isen and Baron (1991) found that even a small shift in positive affect can impact on job satisfaction and task perception and, can influence prosocial behaviors. In addition, Burford (1987) found that teachers’ perception of principals’ sense of humor was associated with satisfaction and loyalty. Self-enhancing humor eases the leader’s acquirement of power from superiors by rising up the leader’s appeal. Affiliative humor applied by leader at workplace is likely to shorten social distance, enhance group cohesiveness and create positive work environment. Additionally, recent research determines that self-enhancing and affiliative humor was used by factor workers to make routine tasks interesting and to solidify close relationships (Holmes & Marra,

2002a). In a survey of 290 workers, Decker (1987) found that those who rated their supervisors as being high in sense of humor also reported greater job satisfaction and rated these supervisors as having generally more positive leadership characteristics as compared to participants who rated their supervisors as low in sense of humor. Self-enhancing and affiliative humor consistently related positively to individuals' physical, psychological well-being, while self-defeating and aggressive humor hold predominantly negative relationship with these various aspects of optimal functioning (Greengross & Miller, 2008). It can be highlighted that affiliative and self-enhancing humor promotes relationships and ability to cope with workplace problems. This is also related with Cooper's (2008) point of view that humor may act as defense mechanism against stress by letting individuals relax from tensions built up by job hindrances or challenges. Accordingly, it is predicted:

H1: Affiliative humor employed by leader buffers the job related positive affective well-being of employees

H2: Self-enhancing humor employed by leader buffers the job related positive affective well-being of employees

Humor employed by leader is a valuable tool to communicate and therefore, it has an impact on employees and work group's behavior. It can be used to develop leadership by securing one's power in hierarchical status. For example; teasing or mocking lower status employees is an effective method to gain behavioral compliance (Dwyer, 1991) in order to reinforce power position over employees. Aggressive humor best fits this behavior because it has power to build up leader's position in the hierarchy by showing authority over subordinates. According to Martin et al.'s study aggressive humor has a negative effect on the physical and mental health of individuals (Martin et al., 2003). Additionally, leader who appears to make fun of herself/himself in order to impress others uses self-defeating humor. Applying self-defeating humor at workplace includes going along with everyone and getting approval from others. However, when leader uses this type of humor she/he may be perceived as too amusing and not serious that is not consistent with leadership status or power.

According to Zillmann and Stocking (1976) when leader use self-defeating humor, it may decrease the confidence subordinates have in the leaders. Kazarian and Martin (2006) found that self-defeating humor correlated highly positively with anxiety, depression, hostility, aggression and psychiatric and somatic symptoms, and, negatively, with self-esteem and well-being. Because leader and member usually are involved in an interaction in which member will also have low motivational states that could be expressed by expressions such as; bored, depressed and discouraged. Accordingly, it is predicted;

H3: Aggressive humor employed by leader buffers job related negative affective well-being of employees

H4: Self-defeating humor employed by leader buffers job-related negative affective well-being of employees.

Based on the arguments pointed out, this study would extrapolate that humorous leadership at workplace would help employee's job related affective well-being in a positive and negative way. Therefore, this study takes employee's point of view and explores the contribution of humorous leadership on employee's job related affective well-being in the organization by four different humor styles.

3. Research Method

3.1. Procedure

In this study, the subjects are leaders or department heads in Turkish corporations, but the survey respondents are subordinates. In other words, the questionnaire assesses leaders from the perspective of employees. Participants of this study were in touch with convenient sampling. Questionnaire was sent via e-mail to the individuals who worked in different sectors on the condition that they were employed in an organization. In addition, the top page of the questionnaire included information about the aim of the research, the completion time of the questionnaire and the privacy policy. Assurance of the anonymity was specifically stressed in order to reduce the effects of the response bias and to increase participation (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000).

3.2. Participants

A total of 143 people who works in organizations participated in this research. Among the respondents, 55% were females and 44% were males. Most of the participants' age (42.7%) ranged from 30 to 40 years. Most of the employees (51.4%) have university degrees whereas 25.7% had master degree. In addition most of the employees (45.5%) have worked for an organization more than 12 years.

3.3. Humor Styles Questionnaire HSQ

The scale is developed by Martin *et al.* (2003) and its Turkish version is translated by Yerlikaya(2003). The HSQ is a 32-item scale that comprising four 8-items scales assessing different styles of humor: self-enhancing (e.g., "If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with humor"); affiliative (e.g., "I enjoy making people laugh"); aggressive (e.g., "if someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it"); self-defeating ("I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weakness, blunders, or faults"). 6-point Likert scale is used to indicate the degree to which respondents agree. Yerlikaya (2003) reported internal consistencies (Cronbach α) between .67 to .78 and for total .81. Test re-test correlations are between .83 and .88. In the present study, internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) for the Affiliative, Self-enhancing, Aggressive and Self-defeating scales were .76, .91, .80, .68, respectively.

3.4. Job Related Affective Well-being Scale (JAWS)

The scale is developed by Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector and Kelloway (2000). The scale's Turkish version was adapted by Bayram *et al.* (2004). The JAWS has two versions: long and short. In this study twenty-item short version was used. It evaluates affective responses and means reactions to work. Each item represents an emotion, and the participants are asked about the frequency of such feelings they experienced at work in last thirty days. The JAWS has four subscales. The subscale occurs with the interaction of two relationships: (dis)satisfaction and intensity. The subscales include group of emotions such as; satisfaction, expressed intensity; satisfaction weak intensity; dissatisfaction, weak intensity; dissatisfaction, expressed intensity. 6-point Likert scale is used to indicate the degree to which respondents agree. Bayram *et al* (2004) reported internal consistencies of subscales (Cronbach α) between .82 and .94. In the present study, internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) for job related negative affective well-being and job related positive affective well-being scales were .85, .94 respectively.

4. Analysis

Statistical program is used to investigate the relations among variables in the research model. Cronbach alpha reliability scores were calculated for each of the test used. Principal component and varimax rotation technique were adopted in the factor analyses to identify the dimensions of the variables in question. Moreover, it was considered that the test result of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was over .50, the result of Barlett's test of sphericity was significant at .05 values and that each item would be below a factor loading above .50. The relations among the variables were examined by the method of multiple regressions where the analysis related to demographic variables was examined through one-way ANOVA and t-test tests.

4.1. Results

Table 1 provides the means, standard deviations, zero-order correlations and Cronbach alphas for the variables in this study. As for the inter-correlation relationships between independent variables, the study found that correlation between items was low to moderate. Internal consistencies of the HSQ scales were moderate to good and comparable to findings of Martin *et al.* (2003). Participants scored their leaders highest on *affiliative humor* ($m = 3.27$, $sd = 1.25$) followed by *aggressive humor* ($m = 3.19$, $sd = 1.08$) and *self-enhancing humor* ($m = 3.01$, $sd = 1.05$). The lowest scores were found on *self-defeating humor* ($m = 2.55$, $sd = 1.21$). Our participants have experienced more *job related positive affective well-being* ($m = 3.17$, $sd = 0.91$) with respect to *job related negative affective well-being* ($m = 3.15$, $sd = 1.09$). However two notable differences in the correlation pattern emerged: While the original *affiliative* and *self-enhancing*

humor did not correlate negatively in the original study, whereas in Turkey sample, it is found negative relationships ($r = -.47, p < .01$). Similarly, *self-enhancing* and *self-defeating* humor were not correlated in the original study, but in this sample it is found quite remarkable association ($r = .40, p < .01$). These were different from Martin et al.'s (2003) findings. Pearson correlation analysis showed a positive significant correlation between job related positive affective well-being and self-enhancing ($r = .45, p < .01$) as well as self-defeating humor ($r = .27, p < .01$). Furthermore, as expected, job related negative affective well-being showed also positive correlation with aggressive humor ($r = .25, p < .01$) and affiliative humor ($r = .23, p < .01$) which explains the condition that when a leader increases using of aggressive and affiliative humor, job related negative affective well-being of employees increases too. Correlation analyses results show that, there is significant relationship between dependent and independent variables and there is no multicollinearity between independent variables. These result also indicate that regression analyses can be performed. According to t-test and One-way ANOVA analysis, except gender no significant result has been obtained for the control variables such as age, education and tenure of participants. According to results of the difference test performed by gender, a significant difference has been observed between men and women as regards to positive job related affective well-being scores. We found out that mean score of women ($m = 3.34$ sd. = 0.92) is higher than the mean score of men ($m = 2.97$ sd = 0.87). However, males and females did not differ on job-related negative well-being.

Table1. Means, standard deviations, correlations and reliabilities

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Self-enhancing humor	3,01	1,05	(0,91)					
Aggressive humor	3,19	1,08	-,126	(0,80)				
Affiliative humor	3,27	1,25	-,474**	,129	(0,76)			
Self-defeating humor	2,55	1,21	,404**	-,022	-,123	(0,68)		
Positive JAWS	3,17	0,91	,450**	-,262**	-,069	,276**	(0,94)	
Negative JAWS	3,15	1,09	-,230**	,255**	,239**	-,038	-,477**	(0,85)

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); JAWS - Job related affective well-being.

4.2. Humor styles and job related positive affective well-being

This study adopted the forced entrance variance approach of multiple regression analysis to explain the influence of leaders' humor styles on employees' job related positive affective well-being. Table 2 shows the regression analysis summary and the four independent variables; self-enhancing humor, aggressive humor, affiliative humor and self-defeating humor can explain 28% of variance to job related positive affective well-being of employees ($R = 0.536, R^2 = 0,287, p < 0.001, F = 13,910$). Affiliative humor did not have a significantly positive influence on job related positive affective well-being of employees ($\beta = 0.197, t = 2,399, p > 0.05$). Hypothesis 1 suggested that affiliative humor employed by leaders would buffer the job related positive affective well-being of employees. However, no interactions were found between leaders' affiliative humor style and employees' job related positive affective well-being. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported. In addition, self-enhancing humor has a significantly positive influence on job related positive affective well-being of employees ($\beta = 0.473, t = 5,306, p < 0.001$). That is, the more leaders' uses self-enhancing humor, the more likely they will have employees that experience job related positive affective well-being. Hypothesis 2 included that self-enhancing humor employed by leaders buffers the job related positive affective well-being of employees. As interactions were found, Hypothesis 2 was supported. On the contrary, aggressive humor has a significantly negative influence on job relative positive affective well-being of employees ($\beta = -0.226, t = -3,106, p < 0.05$). In other words, leaders who employ more aggressive humor styles, the more unlikely they will have employees that experience job related positive affective well-being. As it can be seen from Table 2, all of the four regression analysis models has a VIF value that were under them 10 and all of their CI values were smaller than 30. In other words, there is no multicollinearity possibility between independent variables.

Table 2. Multiple regression summary of humor styles employed by leader versus job related positive affective well-being of employee

Independent Variables	Unstandardized		Standardized Beta	t-value	Collinearity	
	Beta	SD			VIF	CI value
Intercept	1,878	,409		4,588		1,000
Self-enhancing humor	,411	,077	,473	5,306***	1,537	4,544
Aggressive humor	-,191	,062	-,226	-3,106 *	1,023	6,486
Affiliative humor	,143	,060	,197	2,399 n.s.	1,307	7,599
Self-defeating humor	,079	,060	,105	1,330 n.s.	1,204	15,628

R= .536; R2= 0,287; Adjusted R2= 0,267; F= 13,910***; ***P≤ 0.001, P* < 0,05, n.s. P > 0.05

4.3. Humor styles and job related negative affective well-being

As outlined in Table 3, the regression analysis summary and the four independent variables shows self-enhancing humor, aggressive humor, affiliative humor and self-defeating humor that can explain 12% of variance to job related negative affective well-being of employees ($R = 0.351$, $R^2 = 0,123$, $p < 0.05$, $F = 4.853$). In this regression analysis, as expected, aggressive humor has a significantly positive influence on job related negative affective well-being of employees ($\beta = 0.218$, $t = 2,701$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 3 stipulated that aggressive humor employed by leader would buffer the job related negative affective well-being of employees which was supported in the regression analysis. That is, the more leaders use aggressive humor, the more likely they will have employees that experience job related negative affective well-being. Although Hypothesis 4 included that self-defeating humor employed by leader would buffer the job related negative affective of employees, the regression analysis showed that self-defeating humor did not have a significantly positive influence on job related negative affective well-being of employees ($\beta = 0.046$, $t = 0.529$, $p > 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis 4 was rejected.

Table 3. Multiple regression summary of humor styles employed by leader versus job related negative affective well-being of employees

Independent Variables	Unstandardized		Standardized Beta	t-value	Collinearity	
	Beta	SD			VIF	CI value
Intercept	2,409	,541		4,450		1,000
Self-enhancing humor	-,158	,102	-,152	-1,542 n.s.	1,537	4,544
Aggressive humor	,220	,081	,218	2,701*	1,023	6,486
Affiliative humor	,126	,079	,145	1,589 n.s.	1,307	7,599
Self-defeating humor	,042	,079	,046	,529 n.s.	1,204	15,628

R= .351; R2= 0,123; Adjusted R2= 0,098; F= 4, 853*; ***P≤ 0.001, P* < 0,05, n.s. P > 0.05

5. Discussion

5.1. Humor types and job related affective well-being

Against the backdrop of positive psychology, the purpose of the study is to expand our knowledge on the role of leaders' or department heads' humor styles at workplace and their influence on job related affective well-being of employees. Specifically, the results pinpoint that self-enhancing humor and aggressive humor have significantly affect on employees' job related affective well-being in a positive and negative way. When leaders apply self-enhancing humor, it affects the subordinates' moods and well-being in a positive way which might be associated with higher job satisfaction and other job attitudes (e.g, positive affectivity, citizenship behavior). Judge and Ilies (2002) found the affective component of job satisfaction, and showed that momentary mood (such as that might be influenced by humor) are strong predictors of concurrent job satisfaction which is part of job related positive affective well-being. According to findings of this study, gender is also another indicator of job related positive affective well-being of employees. The results show that women experience more job related positive well-being than men. This finding is in line with those of Rystedt *et al.* (1998) who have found higher negative affectivity for men than

women. This result might be explained by different values owned by men and women. Previous studies on this topic have shown that men have more individualistic values and women have more collectivistic values as men have been socialized with individualistic values (e.g., independent, reckless etc.) and women have been socialized with values related to service or care (feminine, collectivist, affectionate for others etc.) beginning from their births (Hofstede, 1991, 1996; Gibson, 1995). In the same vein, we can argue that men have more professional interest that they can easily adapt the values of business world and give importance all negative feedbacks and interpretations than women in the workplace and therefore, they might easily perceive negative situations with respect to women employees.

On the other hand, when leaders employ aggressive humor, their effect on employees' job related negative affective well-being would increase as well. However, according to findings it can be highlighted that the negative effect of aggressive humor on employees' job related negative affective well-being was less intensive with respect to effect of self-enhancing humor on job related positive affective well-being. Furthermore, neither self-defeating humor nor affiliative humor had a significant influence on employees' job related affective well-being in this study.

This shows that self-enhancing humor employed by leader is crucial for the subordinates in order to have genuine humorous outlook in times of stress and overcome incongruencies of business life by amusing. These leaders deal with the work environment, and job characteristics in particular. This point of view builds on previous theory which states that humor may serve as a coping mechanism which help individuals to appraise and to restructure stressful situations; an assumption that has not been tested before (Abel, 2002). When a leader uses self-enhancing humor style he or she would probably have happier, healthier, less stressed employees. In a survey of 290 workers, Decker (1987) found that those who rated their supervisors as being high in sense of humor also reported greater job satisfaction. Therefore, self-enhancing humor enhance employees' job related positive affective well-being and their effectiveness to accomplish organizational goals.

5.2. Humor types and HSQ

Martin *et al.*, (2003) have differentiated four humor styles, oriented towards others or oneself and being conductive or rather harmful for one's well-being. Self-enhancing and affiliative humor styles are adaptive whereas aggressive and, self-defeating humor styles are maladaptive. Though Martin *et al.*, (2003) have not observed negative correlations between aggressive humor, affiliative humor, self-enhancing humor and self-defeating humor, in this study, there is a negative correlation between self-enhancing and affiliative humor as well as positive correlation between self-defeating and self-enhancing humor. This may be because of culture-related personality traits such as individualism and collectivism. As it is known, it has been detected in Hofstede's (2001) studies that Turkish employees have lower tendency to individualism when compared to their collectivist tendencies. Collectivism emphasizes the interdependence of individuals with respect to broader social groups. Moreover, in collectivist culture the power distance is high and hierarchical levels are specified certainly. Therefore, leaders or managers are seen as powerful and serious. Especially in tight cultures, like Turkey, where formal and unspoken rules for appropriate behavior are likely to be strong, humor might be considered inconsistent with a perception that work is "serious" (Morreal, 1991), and might be perceived as unproductive or distracting. Because affiliative humor includes telling jokes and funny stories in order to amuse and laugh with others, in tight cultures, it might also be evaluated as a "silly" humor (e.g., slapstick or vulgar humor).

Self-defeating humor might be considered differently in Western and Eastern cultures. For instance, Western cultures, where individualism prevails, people care more about competition and self performance and their definition of modesty is "reduced self-recognition" instead of "no self recognition at all" (Ho *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, in individualistic culture, they do not like to make fun of themselves for the enjoyment of others. It is perceived as a lack of self confidence. However, in Eastern cultures, where collectivism prevails, this type of humor might be considered as a modesty or lifelong learning process. In business life, when leader use self-depreciating humor, it might have the same meaning with self-enhancing humor in Eastern cultures. Some research has indicated that high status people in some contexts use light-hearted teasing humor, or even self-depreciating humor (Vinton, 1989). Moreover, Duncan and

Feisal (1989) suggest that judicious use of self-deprecating humor can smooth a manager's interactions with his or her subordinates by "letting the group know that he or she is a real person" (p.28).

6. Conclusions

In summary, this study supports the assumption that self-enhancing humor employed by leaders may play an important role in enhancing employees' job related affective well-being. We have also observed that leaders' aggressive humor in interpersonal communication have positive contribution on employees' job related negative affective well-being. Humor might have a positive role making work more enjoyable and undermine power and status. Therefore, for organizations, a proactive approach is to involve self-enhancing humor as an important criterion in the selection process of leaders and managers. In addition, according to results of this study, cultural differences might be a crucial indicator in the perception of humor. If one is interested in the role of humor at the workplace, it seems that the inclusion of culture as a crucial contextual variable would make the study more interesting and more beneficial for today's geographically scattered and locally different organizations.

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