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## Humor sense, distress tolerance and social adjustment

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### Abstract

The main purpose of the current research was to determine the relationship between sense of humor and distress tolerance with social adjustment in high school students of Bojnourd. A sample of 400 female students, based on were selected by multistage random sampling and completed the questionnaires of social adjustment (Weissman & Bothwell, 1976), distress tolerance (Simons & Gaher, 2005) and multiple humor sense scale (Thorson & Powell, 1993). Data were analyzed using correlational coefficient and stepwise multiple regression. Results revealed that 6 variable (social use and creativity, coping use, attitude towards funny people, Tolerance, Absorption and regulation) were significant predictors of social adjustment. The altogether variables explained for 31% of social adjustment variance. Hence between humor and distress tolerance with social adjustment in students signification correlated. However results subsidiary hypothesis revealed that correlation between humor and social adjustment and distress tolerance and social adjustment positive and significant. The hypothesis was confirmed.

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## **1. Introduction**

Socialization is the process that creates the fundamental link between individual and society which may gradually build up the complex structure of different aspects such as benchmarks for development of social skills, how can manage to interact with others in the community and social adjustment (Ranney & Troop-Gordon, 2012). It is a consequence of the fact that humans are social beings who always to withstand the level of tensions between individual and adjustment factors to arrive social values behind community. "Social adjustment" is defined as the process refers to the behavior changes or personal convictions as a result of real or imagined pressure from a person or a group of people (Zvolensky, Bernstein & Vujanovic, 2011).

Adjustment means that one's needs and wishes well-matched to physical, social and psychological demands which is actually life originated from others. Adjustment is the most certain way of adoption an object with ultimate purpose through creation of it. Adjustment is a process which is possible to be more or less conscious that based on the human adopt with natural environment, social and culture of life. This adoption requires behavior changes to achieve agreement and creating harmony in the relationships with others. In sociology, this term is somewhat ambiguous. Social adjustment can be applied as a social harmony and benefits of group life advantages (Yalug, Selekler, Erdogan, Kutlu, Dundar, Ankarali & Aker, 2010)

Most experts believe that positive self-esteem is as a major factor in socio-emotional adjustment. Psychologists and sociologists such as William James and George Herbert Mead were among the first people which focused the importance of Self-respect. After years Freud's final such as Adler, Horney, as well as Rogers and Fromm explicated in researches on and reviews of self-concept (Simons & Gaher, 2005).

Arwine and Lawrence (2010) expressed that skills needed by the people who think first then act in order to face with challenges and stressful situations in the resilience behavior. So behavioral interventions that aim to impress thought processes

that could be an essential step involving skills and abilities of adjustment (Iglesias-Rey et al., 2012).

Kalil (2003) expressed that the tolerance act as a protective factor upon risk conditions to reduce or correct the damage of risk factors, increasing capacities to cope or adapt to stress, enhancing processes which go on in families and can also improve sense of self-sufficiency and self-esteem. Tolerance holds that the qualities of individual adaptation results which can flourish give an adequately facilitating environment. But it should be noted that man is not the victim of his environment and can be trained to increase their capacity of building resilience by learning some skills. People are able to overcome the negative environmental problems, if they prepare to change stress, unpleasant events, and problems reactions. (Quebbeman & Rozell, 2012).

Kuiper, Grimshaw, Leite and Kirsh (2004) believes that sense of humor leads to the release of endorphins and relieves muscular tension, thus having an effect on pain on both a mental and physical levels including positive effects such as please, adjustment to physical disability, joy of life; consider personal protection to cope with diseases such as cancer and suicide prevention. Humor relieves stress and anxiety and help to overcome conflicts, disagreements, and the tiny aggravations that can build up over time and wreck even the strongest of relationships (Martin, 2003). So as a result of reducing social distance allows ones to share their thoughts and feelings (Long & Graesser, 2004). Finally, we can say that humor is a strong predictive of interpersonal attraction (Lefcourt, 2001; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray & Weir, 2003).

## **2. Method**

This study was based on correlation research.

### *2.1. Participants*

The population studied consisted of female public secondary schools of second time in Bojnourd from 2014-2015 of education years. The sample size was estimated to 5000 students and but the sample size on the basis of Morgan's formula table was about 357. However, to cover loss to follow up, we

recruited 400 students. Method was through multistage random sampling it means that from all 25 public secondary schools of second time in Bojnourd, 5 schools were selected and from each 5 schools 4 classes of 20 students.

## 2.2. Measurement

### 2.2.1. Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS)

Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS) (Thorson & Powell, 1993) contained 24 statements to an overall sense of humor score. Factor analysis of the MSHS indicated four principal factors: (1) humor creativity and uses of humor for social purposes, (2) uses of coping humor, (3) appreciation of humorous people, and (4) appreciation of humor. The sub-scale scores were computed by adding the individual item scores on the set of items as follows: subscales of (1) humor creativity and uses of humor for social purposes, subscales of (2) uses of coping humor, subscales of (3) appreciation of humorous people, and subscales of (4) appreciation of humor.

### 2.2.2. Distress Tolerance Scale (DTS):

Simons and Gaher (2005) developed a promising self-report measure entitled the Distress Tolerance Scale (DTS). The DTS was specifically aimed at measuring the perceived capacity to tolerate distress from a multidimensional framework. Subscales included: emotional distress tolerance, assimilation, assessment and adjustment of efforts to relieve distress.

### 2.2.3. Adjustment inventory scale (SAS)

Adjustment inventory scale (SAS; Weissman & Bothwell, 1976) was designed as an outcome measurement to evaluate conflict assessment. It has since used in studying a border range of patients and healthy respondents. The scale assessed interpersonal effectiveness in various types of relationships, covering feeling, satisfaction, friction, and performance. Both the interview and self-report versions contained 42 questions covering instrumental and affective qualities in role performance, in six areas of role functioning: work

(as employee, housewife, or students, question 1-18) social leisure activities (questions 19-29) relationship with extended family (questions 30-37) and roles as spouse (questions 38-46) parent (questions 47-50) and member of the family unit (questions 51-54). The method provides alternative questions on work relationship for students, housewives, and employed people, so the scale included a total of 54 questions, of which responders answered 42.

## 2.3. Procedure

After obtaining residence permit form the Department of Education and gave feedback of questionnaire form took them 90 minutes. Questionnaires were anonymously and coded framework. Data collected from questionnaires were analyzed of using SPSS software.

## 3. Results

Provided descriptive evidence on the prevalence of humor indexes and sub-components indicted that the highest and the lowest means in the sub-components of humor respectively, were: Attitudes towards people of humor (24.04), "Creativity and Community" of humor (12.06). The lowest score on "Creativity and Community" of humor was 15 and the highest score on attitudes towards people of humor was 57. Distress tolerance indexes and sub-components indicted that the highest and the lowest in the sub-components of distress tolerance respectively, were: assessment (18.07) and absorption (8.78). The lowest score on regulation was (3), and the highest score on the assessment was (27). Provided descriptive evidence on the prevalence adjustment indexes and sub-components indicted that the highest and the lowest mean in the sub-components of humor respectively, were: work (7.7) and parent (1.57). The lowest score on the parent was (0), and the highest score on work was (13).

The mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum social adjustment score respectively were (3.370, 21.15, 12, and 31).

**Table1.** Results of stepwise regression analysis of social adjustment in terms of humor and distress tolerance

Model	Predictors	F	Sig	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adjusted
1	humor	91.68	0.001	0.43	0.31	0.30
2	use of coping	104.61	0.001	0.48	0.43	0.36
3	attitude toward the humor	91.45	0.001	0.50	0.41	0.40
4	distress tolerance	78.25	0.001	0.52	0.51	0.50
5	assessment	48.18	0.001	0.55	0.53	0.51
6	regulation	51.26	0.001	0.59	0.54	0.53

Dependent variables: social adjustment. Predictor variables: humor, use of coping, attitude toward the humor, distress tolerance, assessment and regulation

Model 1 indicates that 31% of the variance observed in social adjustment through humor (R<sup>2</sup>=0.31). Model 2(coping), model 3(attitude toward the humor), model 4(distress tolerance), model 4 (assessment), model 6(regulation) respectively Added 3, 7, 10, 2 and 1 percent the previous variance. The six models together describe 54% of the total variance of social adjustment (R<sup>2</sup>=0.54)

**Table2.** Regression coefficients of predictor variables in regression analysis of social adjustment

Model	Predictors	Beta	t	P
1	Humor	0.32	6.83	0.002
2	Coping	0.24	2.87	0.004
3	Attitudes toward humor	0.13	5.21	0.003
4	Distress tolerance	0.24	4.63	0.004
5	Assessment	0.15	2.87	0.001
6	Regulation	0.31	5.54	0.003

Dependent variables: social adjustment. Predictor variables: humor, use of coping, attitude toward the humor, distress tolerance, assessment and regulation.

In Table 2, the amounts of beta, B, t and the level of significance were presented. Beta standardized (beta weight) in columns of beta coefficients assessed the contributions variables in regression equation. So, self-enhancing humor was also associated with increasing size of social adjustment up to 0.32. In addition, an increase of one unit of coping, attitudes towards with humor, distress tolerance, assessment and regulation as respectively sizes: 0.24 and 0.13 and 0.24 and 0.15 and 0.31 made to increase social adjustment variable.

**Table3.** Correlation between the variables and sub-variables of humor and social adjustment

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Creative	-				
2. Use of social	0.41**	-			
3. Attitude towards humor people	0.33**	0.76**	-		
4. Attitude towards humor	0.43**	0.22**	0.36**	-	
5. Social adjustment	0.39**	0.19**	0.44**	0.22**	-

\*\* P ≤ 0.01 \* P ≤ 0.05

Results of Table 3 showed the correlation between the variables and sub-variables of humor and social adjustment with a value of 0.39 was significant and positive. This meant that self-enhancing humor was directionally linked to the self-enhancement on adjustment outcomes. As results of table 3 there were significant positive

correlation between the sub-variables of humor and social adjustment among students.

**Table 4.** The correlation between the variables and sub-variables, distress tolerance and social adjustment he final

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Tolerance distress	-					
2. Tolerance	0.35**	-				
3. Absorption	0.31**	0.43**	-			
4. Assessment	0.36**	0.23**	0.43**	-		
5. Regulation	0.54**	0.15**	0.37**	0.15**	-	
6. Social adjustment	0.42**	0.23**	0.43**	0.15**	0.45**	-

\*\*P<0.01; \*P<0.05

Results of table 4 showed the correlation between the variables and sub-variables of distress tolerance and social adjustment with a value of 0.42 was significant and positive ( $p < 0.01$ ).

#### 4. Conclusion

Communication skills (Clipa & Iorga, 2013) were associated with the low levels of social adjustment. Student's behaviors during high tolerance distress and humor:

Hasn't enough ability to make good and effective interpersonal relationships; Inability to perform social responsibilities; decision making during unstable approaches; couldn't manage the conflict; Face great stress, anxiety of life's struggles and circumstances; Hardly to express their feeling and needs; Unable to achieve their goals; Because of Poor social relationships and obligations would probably not be as an effective and useful members of their social; Emotions conducted them to render themselves a useless member on the public groups; Caused of symptom low concentration ability; Non active participation because of the unclear and insufficient speech; Lower self-efficacy, meet obstacles and can't overcome problems; Take problem themselves away; Seek for an opportunity to escape problems; Poor social adjustment; "Control emotions" because of the lack of religious beliefs; Worried, isolated and loosed affective abilities to develop social relationships in the community; Sudden aggressive responses.18- Reported severe headache at the end of a hard day; Outbreak of anger; Lack of awareness and understanding; lack self-respect and misalignment-excited; Lack of ability to reorganize cooperative

relationships in suddenly changing situations and fostered by incorrect behavior patterns and flawed thinking; Resistance against on impulse or deny their own impulses; Lack of ability to withstand adverse events and stressful situations; Not sufficiently high society temerity; Lack of ability to express their own questions and ambiguities (Khosravi, Zarabiha & Nemati, 2011).

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