

## MANAGING PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS WITH SITUATIONAL HUMOUR IN YOUNG ADULTS

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### ABSTRACT

*About 600 million people, more than half India's population, are under 25 years old and it is the most valuable segment of the population. But nowadays, stress, anxiety, and depression are so very prevalent among young adults and costly to every individual. Mental health screening is often an important initial strategy, but the resultant data are often unknown or difficult to interpret. This study examined the effect of situational humor as a coping strategy for psychological distress such as depression, stress, and anxiety among young adults. Participants were 100 young adults of Delhi and NCR, 21 to 25 year olds. The Situational Humour Response Questionnaire and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale were used to conduct the research. A significant gender difference was found on depression scale at 0.05 levels but there was no significant gender difference on the stress, anxiety and situational humour scales. A significant negative correlation was found between psychological distress (depression, anxiety and stress) and situational humour at 0.01 levels. The impact of situational humor was found to be higher on stress as compared to depression and anxiety. Taken together, these findings suggest that situational humor may be an effective form of distress management. Hence, humor can be seen as an adaptive coping strategy as it has different adaptive consequences.*

**KEYWORDS:** Anxiety, Depression, Situational Humour, Stress, Young Adults

### INTRODUCTION

In our day to day life, we face different problems which can be agonizing. It is unimaginably distressing to be torn and waver in finding solutions to these different problems. In extreme cases, it can lead to the debilitation of will and can also lead to disruptive sleep patterns or loss of sleep. For as long as our thoughts and feelings intrusively collide with each other, running riot inside our tormented head, anyway, we will be left hopelessly ambiguous and it will always be difficult to come to an effective solution to our problems (Seltzer, 2015).

The feeling of anger and anguish always leave us in a confused state of mind. The sole reason behind this is due to the turmoil between our positive and negative emotions. Coping with this situation becomes difficult and seems impossible to settle for a solution. Experiencing psychological distress is a common occurrence even when individuals are highly functional. Individuals face psychological distress in the form of feeling intense sadness or worry accompanied by irritable mood. The reason misleading individuals about their difficulties are firstly lack of knowledge about mental health and problems related to it. Mental health issues related to psychological distress do not have a particular paradigm, some maybe temporary and conjectural while others may develop from genetic issues and can continue to deteriorate in time if

left unattended. In another way, under any distressing situation, an individual should try to minimize the threatening areas by addressing the major problems associated with it.

“Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with anxiety usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness or a rapid heartbeat.” – (APA, 2017). Anxiety stem from a combination of changes in brain functioning along with environmental threatens and can be also caused by genetic factors.

Stress is another result of psychological conflict. Stress can be both positive and negative. Positive stressors can be like a marriage, having childbirth, etc and negative stressors can be like the death of closed ones, divorce, etc. negative stressors not only causes anxiety but a high level of distress. Prolonged exposure to negative stressors leads to the high amount of sadness, hopelessness, and depression as stress releases hormones like cortisol, excess release of which can disrupt the entire functioning of the body (Morgan and King, 1993).

Depression is not a momentary feeling rather a severe and a prolonged feeling of pessimism and downheartedness (APA, 2017). Distressing life events gradually lead to depression. One of the major causes of depression can be prolonged exposure to stress other than that it can also be attributed to genetic, biological, environmental and other psychosocial factors. People with unsuccessful coping strategies can also face depression. Consumption of recreational drugs to stimulate stressfull occurrence can also cause depression (McGill, 2017). “Depression is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how an individual feel thinks and act. Depression causes feelings of sadness and/or loss of interest in activities once enjoyed. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease a person’s ability to function personally or occupationally.” – (APA, 2017).

Humour, on the other hand, plays an important role in the reduction of stress and anxiety. Humor means being amused in a positive way; it simply means comedy or funniness, like watching funny movies, reading funny books, laughing on funny jokes. Humor distracts, relaxes, heals an individual and reframes our thought process. A relaxed mind can take a better decision than a restless mind (M. Clarke, 2017).

“Gentlemen, why don’t you laugh? With the fearful strain that is upon me day and night, if I did not laugh I should die, and you need this medicine as much as I do.” ~ Abraham Lincoln, during the Civil war.

In the face of stressful situation fun or humor is a more effective strategy than pertentiousness (Allen, 2011). According to Martin Seligman humor is also associated with the well-being of the individual. The psychological research of humor might bring progress in the understanding of the language and gesture of humor. Studies find that individuals who discuss voluntarily experienced amusement and laughter when discussing a deceased spouse showed better emotional assimilation in the years following their spouse’s death (Keltner, 2008). Laughter decreases cortisol levels and boosts the immune system. The mechanism behind this is that laughter helps the lymphatic system in cleansing the human body. The biophysical study has shown that belly laughter helps the lymphatic vessels to speed up the flow up to 10-15 times its normal rate of flow. The increased flow of lymphatic fluid means more lymph is passing through the lymph nodes leading to better immunity. This activity immediately engages the parasympathetic nervous system which gives the signal to all blood vessels to slow down, thus producing endorphins, “feel good hormones” that signal the stress hormones, i.e., cortisol to cool hence reducing anxiety and stress (S. Gendry, 2000).

## **Review of the Literature**

Szabo (2017) studied the acute effects of humor and exercise on mood and anxiety. Thirty-nine university students were tested at weekly intervals watching humorous, stand-up comedy and watching the documentary video. Both humor and exercise had an equally positive effect on psychological distress and positive well-being. Humour exerted greater anxiety-lowering effect than exercise.

Folkman (2013) studied on stress, appraisal and coping. Stress has been defined traditionally either as a stimulus, often referred to as a stressor, that happens to the person such as a laboratory shock or loss of a job or as a response characterized by physiological arousal and negative affect, especially anxiety.

Crawford & Caltabiano (2011) studied on the promotion of emotional well-being through the use of humor. According to the hypothesis, humor helps in improving emotional well-being by increasing self-efficacy, optimistic thinking while decreasing pessimistic thoughts, recognition of stress, depression, anxiety, and stress. Results showed that humor showed a significant increase in emotional wellness.

Samson & Gross (2010) studied humor as emotion regulation along with the differential consequences of negative versus positive humor. Humor is often seen and as an adaptive coping strategy. Different types of humor have different consequences. The study predicted that positive humor would be more effective at regulating negative emotions than negative humour. The results suggested that positive humor may be an effective form of emotion regulation.

Bryant & Comisky et al (2009) studied on teachers' humour in the college classroom. The use of humor by the teacher in the college classroom was examined through a systematic content analysis of sample presentation from university classes. In addition to an assessment of frequency with which humour was employed, characteristics of the type of humor used by college teachers were examined. The study discovered several patterns of humor usage.

Ruch (2009) studied on the empirical findings on age-related changes and its contribution to satisfaction with life. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire on humor as character strength and satisfaction with life scale and the orientation to happiness scale. The study concluded that humor serves as an important component throughout the lifespan within a framework of positive psychology.

Cann & Etzel (2008) studied remembering and anticipating stressors. The study said that positive personality mediates the relationship with a sense of humor. The result claimed that proper use of humor may support the selected positive personality qualities, which contribute to the less extreme construal of stressors.

Cooper & Katona et al (2008) did a longitudinal study investigating the impact of coping on psychological morbidity in caregivers of people with dementia. The hypothesis said that the relationship between caregiver's burden, anxiety and depression is mediated by coping style. The results suggested that a psychological intervention package emphasize emotion-focused coping may be a rational approach to reduce anxiety in dementia caregivers.

Compas & Boyer (2006) studied on Latent variable analysis of coping, anxiety/depression, and somatic symptoms in adolescents with chronic pain. Structural equation modeling using latent variables revealed that secondary control engagement coping predicted lower levels of anxiety/depression symptoms and somatic complaints, and disengagement coping was related to higher levels of anxiety/depression and somatic complaints. Implications for understanding child and adolescent coping with pain are highlighted.

Moran (2006) studied on humor as a coping strategy with stress. the study does not show evidence on humor as a social work profession. Using humor in social situation forms a different perception to resolve problems and cope with a stressful situation and reduces the effect of stress.

Woods (2006) studied on coping at school through humor. Interest has been focused on identifying and describing the various types and analyzing the ways in which they represent the resolution of tension or contradictions set up when social constraints meet personal intention. In this exposition, some attention has been given to humor as a means of communication and self-expression which is common to many teachers and pupil strategies.

Azim et al (2005) studied on sex differences in brain activation elicited by humor. The results indicate sex-specific differences in neural response to the humor with implications for sex-based disparities in the integration of cognition and emotion.

Boyle & Joss-Reid (2004) conducted a psychometric investigation on the relationship of humor to health. The hypothesis was that humor would be positive associated with health, individuals with a greater sense of humor would have better health than those with a lower sense of humor. The findings supported the view that humor is positive associated with health.

Sanders (2004) studied on controllable laughter and management of sex work through humour. The study contributes to the sociology of work by analyzing the nature and prevalence of humour as a coping strategy in the sex industry. In conjunction with describing six different types of humor observed in the female sex industry, this study establishes humour as a form of “emotion work” (Hochschild, 1979). In the case of sex workers, humor contributes to a range of defense mechanism that is necessary to protect personal and emotional well-being.

Kennedy & Duff et al (2003) did a pilot study that evaluated brief group-based psychological intervention aimed at improving psychological adjustment, self-perception and enhancing adaptive coping following spinal cord injury. A significant correlation was also found between self-perception, anxiety, and depression over time. Intervention group participants showed a significant reduction in depression and anxiety compared to the matched controls the intervention. The results concluded that the findings of the pilot study with the help of coping effectiveness training intervention facilitated significant improvement in psychological adjustment to spinal cord injury. Participants found shared discussion and problem solving to be particularly helpful.

Abel (2002) studied humor, stress and coping strategies. The study was about a sense of humor as a coping strategy for stress. The results showed supporting evidence of the fact that the sense of humor helps in restructuring a stressful situation in a positive way.

Connor-Smith & Compas (2002) studied on vulnerability to social stress. Stressful event plays an important role in the formation of symptoms of depression and anxiety, individuals are not equally sensitive to stress. Both primary and secondly control engagement coping buffered the link between sociotropy in anxiety, depression whereas disengagement coping augments the relationship. Implications for social cognitive models of vulnerability to stress are highlighted.

Lightsey & husley (2002) studied on Impulsivity, coping, stress and problem gambling among university students. The authors investigated whether coping styles moderated the relationship between (a) impulsivity and stress and (b) stress and gambling behavior and tested whether impulsive persons who use avoidant or emotion-focused coping under high-

stress conditions are most likely to gamble. For higher task coping and lower emotion-focused coping, impulsiveness had a weaker relationship to gambling. Additionally, among non-impulsive men, emotion-focused coping in high-stress conditions was most likely to result in gambling.

Hoeksema (2001) studied on the gender difference in depression. It was seen that women are twice likely as men to experience depression. The research describes how gender differences in stress experience and stress reactivity may interact to create women's greater vulnerability to depression.

Healy & McKay (2000) studied nursing stress; the effects of coping strategies and job satisfaction in a sample of Australian nurses. The study examined relationships between nursing work-related stressors and coping strategies, and their impact upon nurses' levels of job satisfaction and mood disturbances. The use of avoidance coping and the perception of work overload was found to be significant predictors of mood disturbance. No evidence was found to indicate that the humor has a moderating effect on the stress-mood relationship but there was support for the influence of job satisfaction upon this relation.

Soderstorm & Doblier (2000) studied on the relationship of hardiness, coping strategies and perceived symptoms of illness. Proposal of a conceptual model based on research supporting the relationship between symptoms of illness and determinants of hardiness, coping strategies and perceived stress. the final model was a good fit for the data and no gender effects were found. Implications for the relationship of hardiness, coping strategies and perceived stress to health are discussed.

Holahan & Moos (1996) studied on Coping, stress resistance, and growth, conceptualizing adaptive functioning. The study analysed the coping process, emphasizing the relevance of coping research to understanding adaptive functioning more generally / begin by considering general conceptualizations of coping, and present an integrative conceptual approach / describe the relation between different coping strategies and adaptive functioning / present 2 models of adaptive functioning—reflecting both stress resistance and crisis growth—that depend on coping as a central mechanism / highlight key issues that refine our general understanding of coping and adaptation.

Martin & Kuiper et al (1993) studies humor as a coping strategy for stress accompanied by self-concept and psychological well-being. The research was about the relationship between humor, stress, psychological well-being and self-concept. The hypothesis of the study is that stress can be stabilized with the help of humor whereas individuals experiencing a high level of humour show less negative affect for distressful circumstances than individuals experiencing a low level of humor. It also sees a positive relation between humour and self-concept and psychological well-being which focus on the cognitive appraisal specifically examining the intensifying effect of humor by measuring positive mood states in response to various life events. The study reflects results that conclude that humor is associated with a more positive self-concept, a positive and self-protective cognitive appraisal when faced with stress and better positive response when exposed to positive and negative life events.

### **Rationale of the Study**

After analyzing the review of literature major gap was found in the research area about the effect of situational humour on anxiety and depression. There are evidence that show the effects of humour on stress. Situational humor works as an effective coping strategy for stress but there is no evidence which puts forward the reduction of the feeling of anxiety

and depression with the help of situational humor as a coping strategy. However, this is where the research gap is found and to fill this research gap the researcher has taken these areas in the present study which are less studied.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Aim**

To study the impact of situational humor on psychological distress (stress, anxiety, and depression) in young adults

### **Objectives**

- To assess the level of psychological distress in young males and females
- To assess the level of Situational Humour in young males and females
- To assess the relationship between situational humor and psychological distress (stress, anxiety, and depression) in young adults
- To assess the impact of situational humour on psychological distress (depression, anxiety and stress) in young adults

### **Hypothesis**

- There will be a significant gender difference in the level of psychological distress in young males and females.
- There will be a significant gender difference in the level of Situational Humour in young males and females.
- There will be a significant relationship between situational humor and psychological distress (stress, anxiety, and depression) in young adults.
- There will be a significant impact of situational humor on psychological distress (depression, anxiety, and stress) in young adults.

### **Sample**

The study was conducted on 100 young adults (50 males and 50 females) between the age of 21 to 29. Randomization technique has been used to select the sample from Delhi, NCR. Psychological Distress (depression, anxiety, and stress) is the dependent variable and Situational Humor is the independent variable in this study.

## Tools Used

**Table 1**

Sl. No.	Name of the Tool	Author and Year	No. of Items	Reliability and Validity
1.	Situational Humour Response Questionnaire (Shrq)	Rod A. Martin Herbert M. Lefcourt (1984)	21 Items	0.7-0.85(R)
2.	Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (Dass)	S.H. Lovibond & P.F. Lovibond (1995)	42 Items	(Validity) D-0.91 A-0.84s-0.63 D-0.74 A- 40% And 55% Overlap Of Variance S-0.90 (Reliability)

## Description of Tools

- The Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SHRQ) by Rod A. Martin and Herbert M. Lefcourt (1984) has 21 items. The SHRQ measures the level to which individuals laugh and smile in a wide variety of situations. It defines the prevalence with which individuals show levity in a wide variety of life events. Reliability coefficients are reported in the 0.70s and the validity studies revealed significant correlation.
- Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS) by S.H. Lovibond and P.F. Lovibond (1995) have 42 items. DASS is a measure of mental health focusing on the three traits of depression, anxiety, and stress. It is used to measure the negative emotional state of an individual. Each of the three scales contains 14 items, divided into subscales of 2 to 5 items with similar content. The depression scale assesses dysphoria, hopelessness, devaluation of life, lack of interest and involvement, etc. The anxiety scale assesses situational anxiety and subjective experience of anxious situations. The stress scale assesses the amount of stress an individual is experiencing along with its symptoms of nervous arousals, irritation, agitation, impatience, etc. the entire experience of an individual for the last 7 days is recorded with the help of DASS.

## Procedure of Data Collection

The researchers personally distributed the questionnaire by meeting each of the respondents. Adequate time was given to each of the respondents for filling the questionnaire. The queries of the respondents were answered by the researchers

## Analysis of Results

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis**

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.
SHRQ	100	63.22	12.32
Depression	100	3.36	5.51
Anxiety	100	7.4	9.69
Stress	100	12.8	10.64

From the above table, it can be seen that the mean and standard deviation of SHRQ is (63.22) and (12.22) respectively. The mean for depression scale, anxiety scale, and stress scale are (3.36), (7.4) and (12.8) respectively. The standard deviation for depression scale, anxiety scale, and stress scale is (5.51), (9.69) and (10.64) respectively.

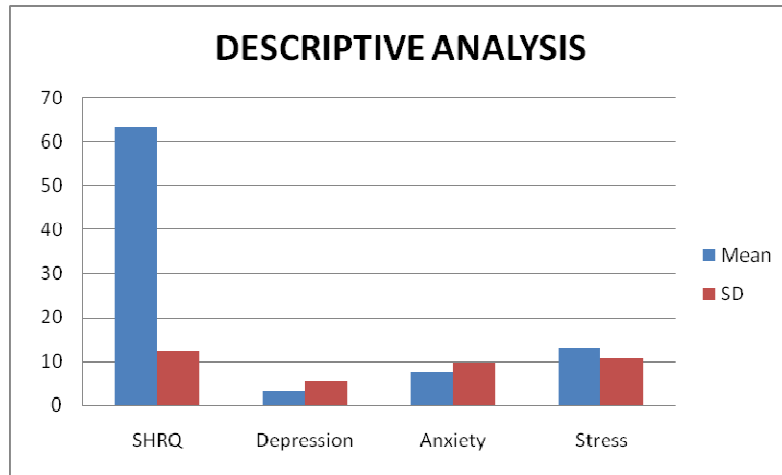


Figure 1

Table 3: Gender Difference on Depression Scale

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	T	Sig (2 Tailed)
Male	50	1.74	2.75	-3.061	0.003*
Female	50	4.98	6.96		

\*significant at 0.05 level

The above table reflects the scores of gender difference in the depression scale which has a mean of (1.74) and (4.98) in males and females respectively.

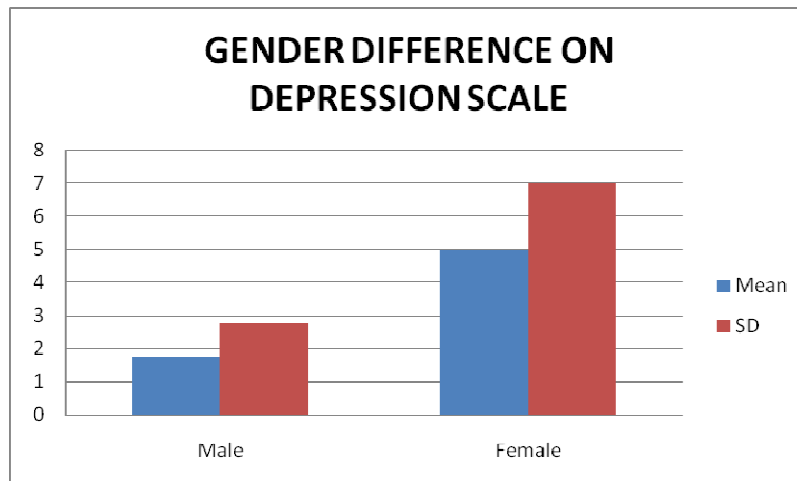


Figure 2

Table 4: Gender Difference on Anxiety Scale

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	T	Sig (2 Tailed)
Male	50	7.38	11.33	-0.021	0.984
Female	50	7.42	7.83		



The above table reflects the score of gender difference in the anxiety scale which has a mean of (7.38) and (7.42) in males and females respectively.

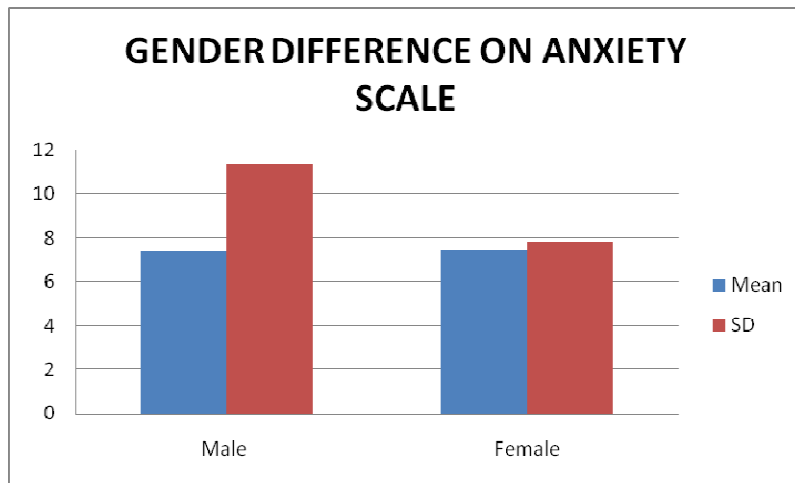


Figure 3

Table 5: Gender Difference on Stress Scale

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	T	Sig (2 Tailed)
Male	50	11.78	11.56	-0.958	0.340
Female	50	13.82	9.64		

The above table reflects the score of gender difference in the stress scale which has a mean of (11.78) and (13.82) in male and female respectively.

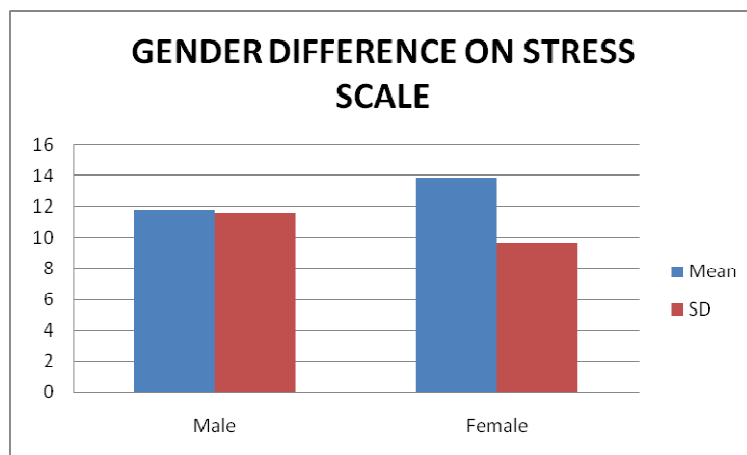


Figure 4

Table 3: Gender Difference on Shrq

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t	sig (2 tailed)
Male	50	64.20	8.64	0.793	0.429
Female	50	62.24	15.18		

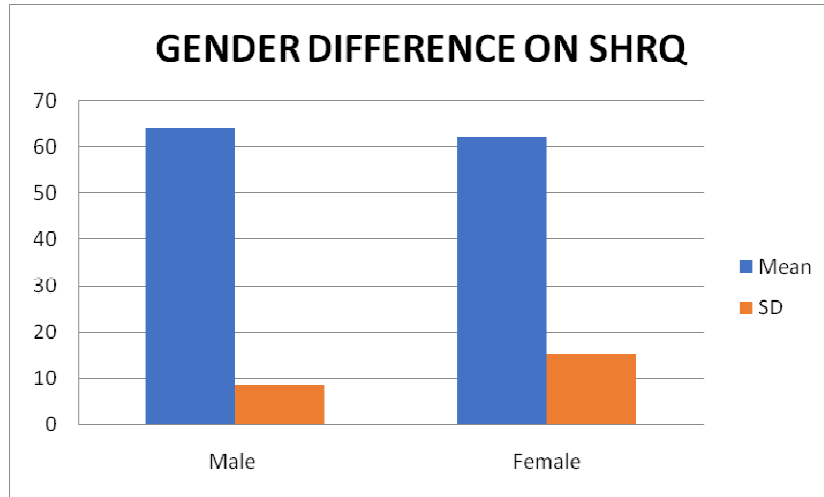


Figure 5

Table 4: Correlation among Variable

Variable	Correlation	P Value
SHRQ & Depression	-0.467**	0.000
SHRQ & Anxiety	-0.658**	0.000
SHRQ & Stress	-0.699**	0.000

\*\*correlation is significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows the correlation between variables. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. The table indicates that situational humor has a negative correlation with depression anxiety and stress.

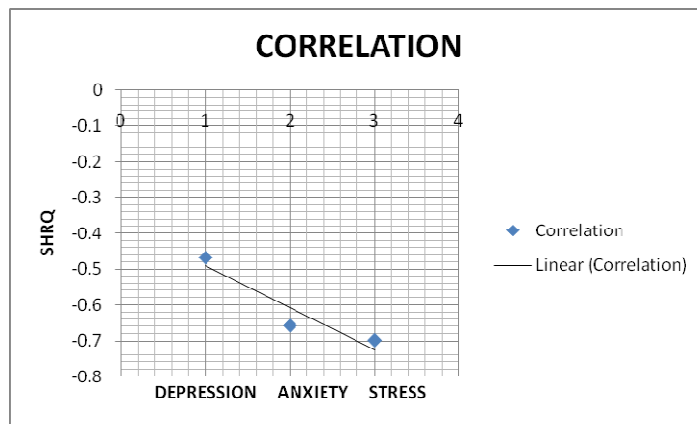


Figure 6

Table 5: SHRQ as A Predictor of Depression Scale

Predictor Variable	B	SEB	Beta	T	Sig	R	R Square	F
SHRQ	-0.209	0.040	-0.467	-5.228	0.000	0.467	0.218	27.329

From the above table, it can be seen that the predictor variable is SHRQ. The B value is (-0.209), standard error is (0.040), Beta value is (-0.467) indicating that the coefficient is negative, the t value is (-5.228), R-value is (0.467), R square value is (0.218) indicating the variability of the response data around the mean and the F value is (27.329).

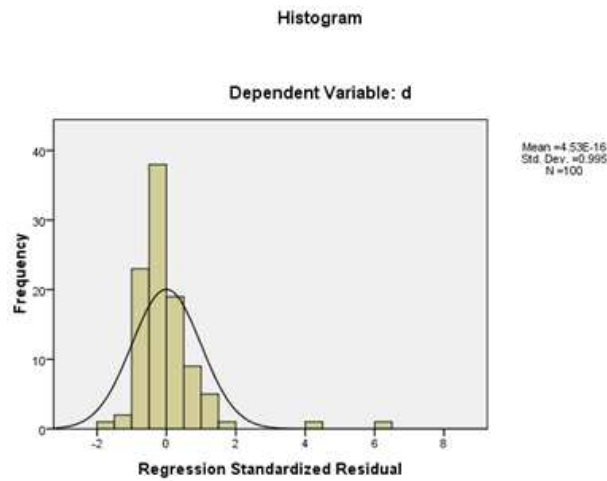


Figure 7

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

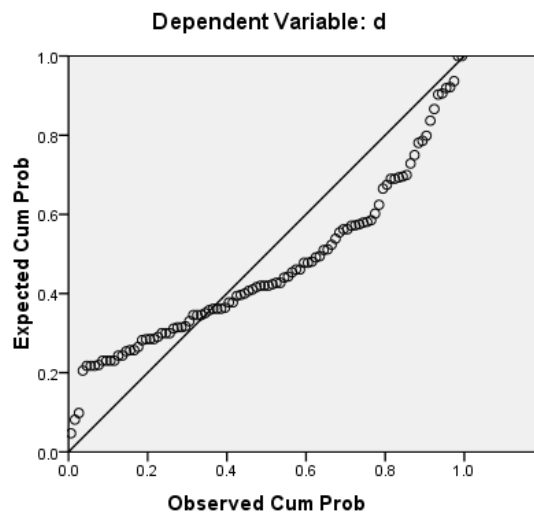


Figure 8

Table 6: SHRQ as a Predictor of Anxiety Scale

Predictor	Variable	B	SEB	Beta	t	sig	R	R square	F
SHRQ	-0.517	0.060	-0.658	-8.653	0.000	0.658	0.433	74.867	

From the above table, it can be seen that the predictor variable is SHRQ. The B value is (-0.517), standard error is (0.060), Beta value is (-0.658) indicating that the coefficient is negative, the t value is (-8.653), R-value is (0.658), R square value is (0.433) indicating the variability of the response data around the mean and the F value is (74.867).

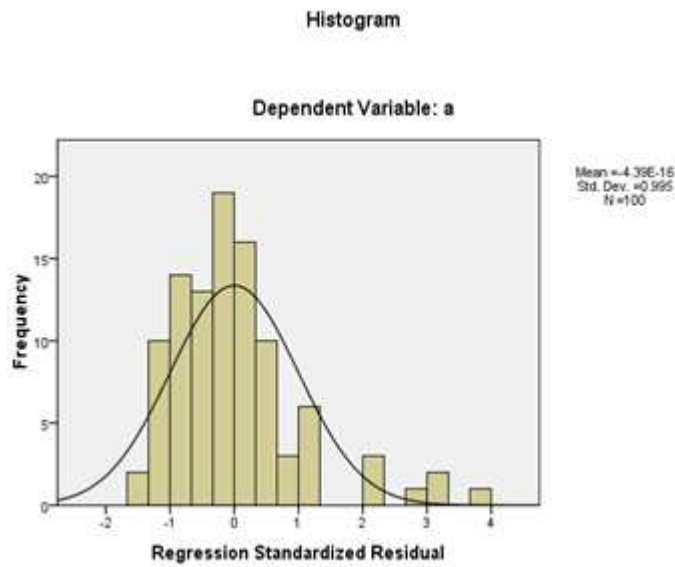


Figure 9

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

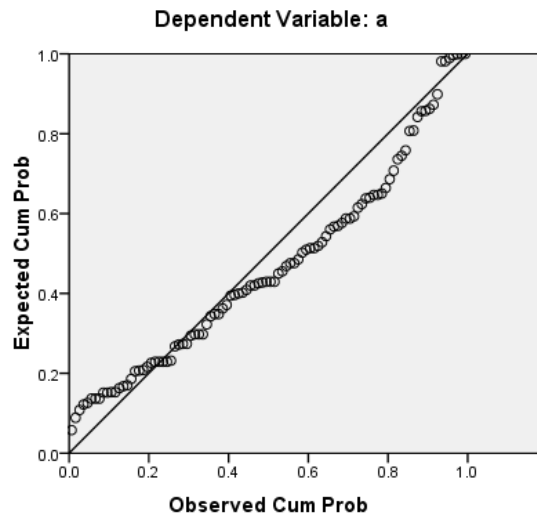
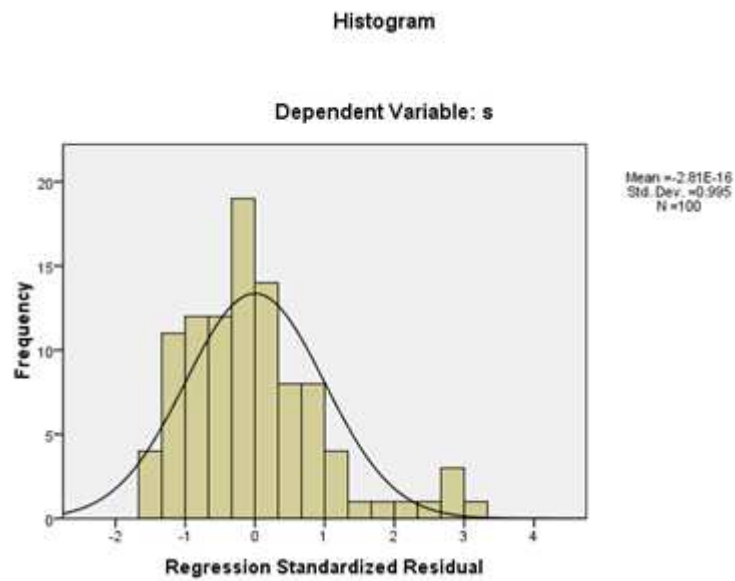


Figure 10

Table 7: SHRQ as a Predictor of Stress Scale

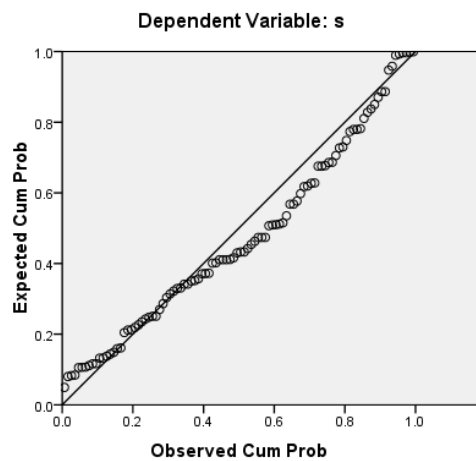
Predictor Variable	B	SEB	Beta	t	sig	R	R square	F
SHRQ	-0.603	0.062	-0.699	-9.676	0.000	0.699	0.489	93.617

From the above table, it can be seen that the predictor variable is SHRQ. The B value is (-0.603), standard error is (0.062), Beta value is (-0.699) indicating that the coefficient is negative, the t value is (-9.676), R-value is (0.699), R square value is (0.489) indicating the variability of the response data around the mean and the F value is (93.617).



**Figure 11**

**Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual**



**Figure 12**

**DISCUSSIONS**

The present study mainly focuses on the influence of situational humor on stress, anxiety, and depression. It can be concluded that confrontation to situational humor reduces stress, anxiety, and depression and also helps in withstanding stressful and deframing situation more effectively than usual. In future, the study directs towards the effectiveness of ‘humor’ in our day to day life as humor works as a stress buster limiting distressing effects of negative stimulators like stress, anxiety, and depression. This study focuses on the beneficial input of situational humour in reduction of stress, anxiety, and depression. Hence this is one of the reasons why effective coping strategies like situational humor should be used in the reduction of stress, anxiety and depression and also it is helpful nature of withstanding distressful and problematic situations effectively

The descriptive analysis of the study indicates an above average level of situational humor among young adults. It also indicates a normal level of depression, anxiety, and stress among young adults (Table 1). Females have a significantly higher score on depression scale than males. Table 2.2 shows no significant difference in the level of anxiety in males and females. Table 2.3 also shows an insignificant difference in the level of stress in males and females. From the reviews, it can be seen that women are twice likely as men to experience depression (Hoeksema, 2001).

From Table 3 it can be seen that there is a slight difference between the mean of the scores of male and females. Since the mean of males is higher than the mean of females on SHRQ it can be inferred that males have a higher level of situational humor in comparison to females but the difference is not significant as the p-value  $0.429 > 0.05$ . From the reviews, it can be seen that there is a sex difference in brain activation elicited by humor (Azim et al, 2005).

From Table 4 it can be seen that situational humor has a significant relationship with depression, anxiety, and stress at 0.01 level. It can also be seen that the relationship between situational humor and depression, anxiety and stress is negative therefore stating the fact that situational humor has an inversely proportional relationship with depression, anxiety, and stress. Hence the third hypothesis is justified. From the reviews, it can be seen humor can induce positive psychological changes and has a positive effect on psychological distress and positive well-being (Szabo, 2017).

To assess situational humor as a predictor of psychological distress (depression, anxiety, and stress) in young adults. From table 5.1 it can be seen that R square value shows 46.7% of the variance in the data of depression level. The p-value indicates that both intercept and variable are highly significant at 0.01 level as p-value  $< 0.01$ . Therefore there is a significant amount of variance in the outcome variable i.e. depression. The Beta value is negative indicating that for every 1 unit of the predictor variable i.e. situational humor the outcome variable i.e. depression level decreases by the Beta coefficient value i.e. 0.46 units. Table 5.2 indicates R square value which shows 65.8% of the variance in the data of anxiety level. The p-value indicates that both intercept and variable are highly significant at 0.01 level as p-value  $< 0.01$ . Therefore there is a significant amount of variance in the anxiety variable. The Beta value is negative indicating that for every 1 unit of situational humor, anxiety level decreases by 0.65 units. Table 5.3 indicates R square value which shows 69.9% of the variance in the stress level. The p-value indicates that both situational humor and stress are highly significant at 0.01 level as p-value  $< 0.01$ . Therefore there is a significant amount of variance in stress variable. The beta value is negative indicating that for every 1 unit of situational humor, stress level decreases by 0.69 units. From the reviews, it can be seen that humour served as a moderator of stress (Nezu, 1988).

### **Implications of the Research**

- The research can significantly contribute to society with respect to adjustment; develop coping skills and behavior modification among youth.
- The findings can help to create consciousness towards holistic well being of the youth in particular and the society in general.

### Limitations

- Due to the shortage of time, the research work could not be extended to study more demographic details.
- Sample size could have been increased to improve the effectiveness of the study.

### CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to see the relationship between situational humor and psychological distress. There is an above average level of situational humor and normal level of depression, anxiety and stress in young adults. It was inferred from the study that there is a significant gender difference in the level of psychological distress (depression, anxiety, and stress). The results showed a significant gender difference in the level of depression at 0.01 level with females having a higher level of depression than males. There was no significant gender difference in the anxiety and stress level in young adults. The result of situational humor depicts insignificant gender difference and there is a significant relationship between situational humor and psychological distress in young adults. The results showed highly significant relationship between situational humour and depression, anxiety and stress at 0.01level. The impact of situational humour is higher on stress as compared to depression and anxiety. Therefore it can be seen that with an increased level of situational humor the level of depression, anxiety, and stress decreases as situational humor and psychological distress (depression, anxiety, and stress) are inversely related

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