

## Humor Therapy on Psychological Wellbeing of Student Nurses

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**Abstract :** *Humor is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than good humor. With a view to determine the effectiveness of humor therapy on the psychological wellbeing of the nursing students, a Pre-Experimental study with quantitative approach was undertaken on 31 nursing students. Convenient sampling technique was used in selecting the nursing students. The results showed in mean and standard deviation of Positive Effect score for the 1st and 7th day were 6.32±6.22 and 6.77±6.36 and Negative Effect score for the 1st and 7th day were 4.74±3.95 and 6.25±5.0 respectively. The findings provide evidence that Positive Effect increases and Negative Effect decreases after humor therapy. Thus it reveals that humor therapy improves the psychological wellbeing.*

**Keyword:** *Humor Therapy, Negative Effect, Positive Effect, Psychological Wellbeing, Student Nurses.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Humor is our birthright, a natural part of life that is innate and inborn. Infants begin smiling during the first weeks of life and laugh out loud within months of being born. When humor is shared, it binds people together and increases happiness and intimacy. Humor also triggers healthy physical changes in the body. Humor strengthens our immune system, boost our energy, diminishes pain, and protect you from the damaging effects of stress. Best of all, this priceless medicine is fun, free, and easy to use.<sup>1</sup>

Humor – is surely the best medicine! We probably realize the importance of laughter only when we grow out of our childhood days. With work stress on the rise, laughter therapy sessions are gaining attention worldwide. The benefits of laughter are many! However, one may not really get into the nitty-gritty of issues at a young age. The importance of laughter therapy is realized only when one loses the reason to laugh about the simplest of issues.<sup>2</sup>

Stress and anxiety are simply nature forces from the outside world affecting the individual. The individual responds to stress in ways that affect the him/her as well as their environment. The teen years often bring about an increase in perceived stress as young adults learn to cope with increasing demands and pressures. Studies have shown that excessive stress during the teen years can have a negative impact upon both physical and mental health later in life. For example, teen stress is a risk factor for the development of depression, a serious condition that carries an increased risk of suicide.<sup>3</sup>

Humor therapy is one of the best antidotes to stressful situations. When confronted with a threatening situation, animals have two choices-they can flee or fight. We humans have a third alternative i.e. to laugh. Humor in a stressful situation can change the response to the threat. Humor allows us to distance ourselves by replacing paralyzing feelings of anxiety with mirth. When we laugh, we simply cannot be worrying deeply at the same time.<sup>4</sup>

Humor offers the further benefits of, reducing stress hormones by reducing anxiety, improving circulation, producing a general sense of well-being and boosting immune function<sup>5</sup>.

Nursing profession is stressful, and nursing students also have additional pressures and uncertainties in their academic activities<sup>6</sup>.

Stress from many sources has been reported time to time by student nurses. Academic sources of stress include examinations, long hours of study, assignments and grades, lack of free time, faculty response to student need and lack of timely feedback. Clinical sources of stress include working with dying patients, interpersonal conflict with other nurses, insecurity about personal clinical competence, fear of failure, interpersonal problems with patients, work overload and concerns about nursing care given to patients.

Humor therapy is one of the best ways to release stress and feel good. Studies on Humor therapy as an adjunct to reduction of stress are very few, especially nursing studies. Hence the investigator felt that this study will enhance the utilization of humor therapy in student nurse's personal life and nursing care settings.

### 1.2 Statement of problem

A Pre- Experimental Study to assess the Effectiveness of Humor Therapy on the Psychological Wellbeing of student nurses in selected Nursing Educational Institute, Dehradun, Uttrakahand, India,2013

### 1.3 Objectives

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of humor therapy on the psychological wellbeing of the student nurses.
2. To find out the association between psychological wellbeing and the personal profile of student nurses.

### 1.4 Hypotheses

- H<sub>1</sub>:- There is a Significant difference in effect scores at various levels of humor therapy on psychological wellbeing (Positive Affect) at the level of  $p < 0.05$ .
- H<sub>2</sub>:- There is a Significant difference in effect scores at various levels of humor therapy on psychological wellbeing (Negative Affect) at the level of  $p < 0.05$ .

## II. Methodology

A pre-experimental design and quantitative approach was selected to carry out the study. The study population comprised of all the student nurses in the Educational institutes. The sample size for the study was 31 student nurses. Student nurses were selected conveniently as they fulfilled the inclusion criteria taken as sample for the study. The tool used for the study was Positive and Negative affect scale (PANAS). The scale consists of 20 items and describes different feelings and emotions. The tool comprises of two parts: Part A: Personal profile of the students, Part B: Positive and negative affect scale (PANAS). 30 minute Laughing therapy was implemented on student nurses in seven consecutive days and data was collected before and after the therapy.

## III. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### 3.1 Related to personal Profile of student Nurses

Table No.1: Personal Profile of the Student Nurses

S. No	Personal Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.1	Age in years		
	a) 21-30	15	48.38
	b) 31-40	1	3.22
	c) 41-50	13	41.93
	d) 51-60	2	6.45
1.2	Educational status		
	a) Post Basic 1 <sup>st</sup> year	9	29.03
	b) Post Basic 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	17	54.83
	c) B. Sc 4 <sup>th</sup> year	5	16.12
1.3	Marital Status		
	a) Married	15	48.38
	b) Unmarried	16	51.61
1.4	Residence		
	a) Hostel	30	96.78
	b) Day scholar	1	3.22

The data shown in table no. 1 depicts the percentage of characteristics which shows that nearly half of the student nurses (48.3 %) were between the ages of 20 and 30 years. About 54.8% of them had from Post Basic B. Sc (Nursing) 2<sup>nd</sup> year and only 16.1% of these were from B.Sc. (Nursing) 4<sup>th</sup> year. The highest percentage (51.6%) of them was unmarried and 96.7% of the student nurses were residing in a hostel.

### 3.2 The effectiveness of humor therapy on the psychological wellbeing of the student nurse.

Table-3.2.1: Mean and Standard Deviation for Positive affect effect score at various levels of humor therapy.

Positive Affect Effect Score	Mean ± SD	f Value	P Value
Day 1	6.32 ± 6.22	126.96	0.000
Day 2	4.42 ± 4.28		
Day 3	7.74 ± 6.09		
Day 4	5.94 ± 6.60		
Day 5	6.65 ± 6.04		
Day 6	6.45 ± 5.66		
Day 7	6.77 ± 6.36		

Positive affect effect score for the first day was  $6.32 \pm 6.22$ , which was increased to  $6.77 \pm 6.36$  on the 7th day. There was a significant difference at various levels of humor therapy on positive affect on student nurses at the level of  $p < 0.05$ .

Table 3.2.2: Mean and Standard Deviation for Negative affect effect score at various levels of humor therapy.

Negative Affect Effect score	Mean ± SD	f Value	P Value
Day 1	4.74 ± 3.95	129.24	0.000
Day 2	1.90 ± 8.98		
Day 3	1.55 ± 1.92		
Day 4	2.90 ± 4.79		
Day 5	3.81 ± 5.73		
Day 6	1.61 ± 2.52		
Day 7	6.29 ± 5.0		

Negative affect effect score for the first day was  $4.74 \pm 3.95$ , which was increased to  $6.29 \pm 5.0$  on the 7th day. There was a significant difference at various levels of humor therapy on student nurses at the level of  $p < .05$ .

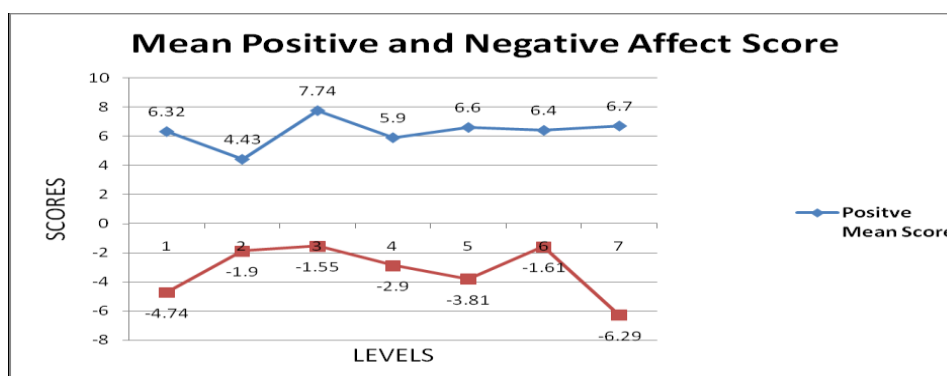


Fig no.1: Mean Difference in effect score at various levels of humor therapy

The mean and standard deviation of Positive affect effect score for the first day was  $6.32 \pm 6.22$ , which was increased to  $6.77 \pm 6.36$  on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. There was significant difference at various levels of humor therapy on positive affect. Hence, it can be interpreted that the null hypothesis was statistically rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

Negative affect effect score for the first day was  $-4.74 \pm 3.95$ , which was decreased to  $-6.29 \pm 5.0$  on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. There was significant difference at various levels of humor therapy. Hence, it can be interpreted that the null hypothesis was statistically rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Humor therapy is very effective in maintaining the psychological wellbeing of student nurses. It improves positive mood and reduces the negative feelings in student nurses day to day activities. However these are only short term effects. Humor therapy also helps to improve overall attitude, reduce stress/tension, promote relaxation, improve sleep, enhance quality of life, strengthen social bonds and relationships, and produce a general sense of well-being.

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