

Humor in Families and Stress Reduction: The Mediating Role of Positive Affect

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between humor and stress in families, with positive affect as a mediating variable.

Methods and Materials: The study employed a descriptive correlational design with 409 participants selected from families in South Africa, based on the Morgan and Krejcie sample size table. Data were collected through standardized questionnaires measuring humor, stress, and positive affect. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted using SPSS-27 to explore bivariate associations among variables. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was performed in AMOS-21 to test the hypothesized mediation model. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices, including χ^2 , df, χ^2/df , GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA.

Findings: The results revealed significant correlations between the study variables. Humor was positively correlated with positive affect ($r = 0.53$, $p < .001$) and negatively correlated with stress ($r = -0.41$, $p = .001$). Stress showed a significant negative correlation with positive affect ($r = -0.47$, $p < .001$). The structural model demonstrated acceptable fit ($\chi^2(61) = 124.36$, $\chi^2/df = 2.04$, GFI = 0.93, AGFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.049). Path analysis confirmed that humor had a direct positive effect on positive affect ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < .001$) and a negative effect on stress ($\beta = -0.34$, $p = .001$). Stress negatively influenced positive affect ($\beta = -0.28$, $p < .001$). Positive affect mediated the relationship between humor and stress, with a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.09$, $p = .002$).

Conclusion: The findings highlight the protective role of humor in family contexts, showing that it reduces stress both directly and through the mediating role of positive affect. Integrating humor into family-based interventions may enhance resilience and emotional well-being.

Keywords: Humor, Stress, Positive Affect, Family Functioning, Structural Equation, South Africa.

1. Introduction

Humor has long been recognized as a central aspect of human interaction, functioning as both a communicative tool and a coping resource across diverse social contexts. Within family systems, humor serves not merely as entertainment but as an adaptive mechanism that shapes emotional climate, fosters resilience, and alleviates stress in challenging circumstances (Emery et al., 2024; Walsh, 2021). The role of humor in maintaining psychological well-being is particularly pronounced in families confronted with daily stressors, chronic conditions, and unexpected life transitions. Scholars increasingly argue that humor in the family environment should be conceptualized as both a protective factor and a mechanism through which stress reduction and positive affect are realized (Froehlich et al., 2021; Romero & Arendt, 2011).

Research on humor and stress is grounded in the recognition that stressful life circumstances can significantly impair individual functioning, parental effectiveness, and relationship quality (Hartley et al., 2016; Xu & Zheng, 2022). Stress within families is often multidimensional, arising from financial burdens, caregiving responsibilities, or health-related challenges. For instance, studies on parents of children with autism spectrum disorder show that parenting stress often spills over into marital interactions, reducing emotional availability and creating tension within the household (Hartley et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2023). Yet, humor has been consistently linked to improved emotional regulation, buffering these stress processes, and cultivating more supportive relationships (Oh & Hwang, 2019; Sharma et al., 2024). By reframing negative experiences through humor, families are able to reinterpret challenges, reduce the intensity of negative emotions, and enhance coping capacities (Rong et al., 2017).

Positive affect emerges as a critical mediator in these relationships, as humor-induced positive emotions often sustain psychological resources, promote optimism, and encourage adaptive coping (Fritz, 2025; Hampes, 2013). Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions emphasizes how positive affect broadens thought-action repertoires and builds enduring personal resources, which in turn enhances resilience and stress recovery. Humor, when embedded in daily family interactions, is one of the most accessible means of fostering positive affect (Mireault et al., 2015; Villalba et al., 2023). Recent research has extended this understanding by demonstrating that humor interventions can directly reduce cortisol levels and

mitigate the physiological consequences of stress without impairing cognitive functioning (Froehlich et al., 2021).

The multidimensional nature of humor—ranging from affiliative to self-enhancing styles—has been studied extensively in relation to both stress and well-being (Fritz, 2021; Romero & Arendt, 2011). Affiliative humor, which strengthens social bonds through shared laughter, and self-enhancing humor, which reflects an ability to maintain perspective in adversity, are particularly effective in reducing stress and enhancing positive affect (Bartzik et al., 2021; Hampes, 2013). Conversely, maladaptive humor styles, such as aggressive or self-defeating humor, can exacerbate stress and diminish psychological safety in families (Oh & Hwang, 2019; Vera et al., 2011). Studies confirm that the adaptive use of humor moderates stress and fosters well-being across diverse populations, including parents of children with disabilities, patients coping with chronic illness, and adolescents navigating family instability (Kirca et al., 2023; Yustia et al., 2021).

The role of humor in family systems has also been explored through developmental perspectives. Research on infants and young children highlights that humor is a crucial element of early socio-emotional development, where parental affect and responsiveness shape children's emerging humor competencies (Hoicka et al., 2021; Mireault et al., 2015). The Early Humor Survey (EHS), for example, provides reliable evidence that humor emerges early and reflects family-level interactions that cultivate positive affect in children (Hoicka et al., 2021). This developmental significance of humor continues into adolescence, where humor becomes a coping resource in the context of parental divorce or peer challenges, and where it strongly predicts subjective well-being (Vera et al., 2011; Yustia et al., 2021). These findings support the view that humor not only reduces stress in the moment but also builds long-term resilience by promoting enduring positive affect across family generations (Jacquin et al., 2012).

Within parental contexts, humor is often intertwined with caregiving practices. Studies suggest that parents who employ humor in interactions with their children create emotionally safe environments that mitigate the impact of stress and reinforce adaptive coping strategies (Emery et al., 2024; Joshi et al., 2022). For example, parents of children with congenital health conditions report using humor as a primary coping strategy, reducing their perceived stress and improving family cohesion (Joshi et al., 2022; Lindwall et al., 2014). Similarly, in neonatal intensive care contexts, preterm parents frequently rely on humor to manage

overwhelming stress, pointing to its value in highly challenging caregiving situations (Μαλλιαρού et al., 2021). Humor also acts as a moderator between parental stress and marital satisfaction, mediating the spillover effects that often accompany family adversity (Nahm & Park, 2017; Yu & Kim, 2015).

Recent cross-cultural studies further emphasize the universality of humor as a coping strategy. Research in Asian, European, and American contexts shows consistent evidence that humor reduces stress, enhances positive affect, and sustains family resilience, even under conditions such as pandemics or chronic illness (Kirca et al., 2023; Rong et al., 2017; Villalba et al., 2023). For instance, longitudinal comparisons of Australian and Chinese employees revealed that humor significantly buffered workplace stress, highlighting its cross-cultural relevance (Rong et al., 2017). Moreover, parents in Greece, South Korea, and Turkey have reported humor as a central coping mechanism in the face of child illness, disability, or treatment, confirming its global applicability (Gültekin & Ulutaş, 2022; Kirca et al., 2023; Nahm & Park, 2017).

The effectiveness of humor interventions has been tested in applied settings as well. Structured humor-based programs designed for healthcare professionals, parents, and organizational employees have demonstrated reductions in stress and improvements in work enjoyment, flow, and meaningfulness (Bartzik et al., 2021; Walsh, 2021). These interventions show that humor is not a trivial or secondary resource but an intentional mechanism that can be integrated into psychological, educational, and familial programs to strengthen well-being (Fritz, 2025; Leter et al., 2024). The longitudinal evidence that humor predicts pregnancy intention, parenting satisfaction, and family adaptability reinforces its role in shaping both individual and relational outcomes (Theisen et al., 2019).

In families of children with chronic health conditions, humor not only mitigates stress but also protects against depressive symptoms and fosters positive meaning-making (Lindwall et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2023). Caregiving during crises such as quarantine or global health emergencies has highlighted the unique capacity of humor to maintain psychological well-being under isolation and stress (Fritz, 2021; Villalba et al., 2023). Humor also interacts with time perspectives, where individuals who maintain a positive orientation toward past experiences while employing humor strategies tend to report greater well-being (Hampes, 2013). These findings highlight humor's multifaceted role in

reducing stress, strengthening coping mechanisms, and cultivating enduring positive affect.

Despite this extensive evidence, research is still emerging on the precise mechanisms through which humor reduces family stress and enhances positive affect. While humor clearly moderates the negative impact of stressors, empirical models that test mediation pathways remain relatively scarce (Fritz, 2025; Sharma et al., 2024). Some evidence suggests that humor influences family processes indirectly by generating positive affect, which in turn fosters resilience and strengthens adaptive coping (Leter et al., 2024; Walsh, 2021). However, the interplay between humor, stress, and positive affect within family dynamics requires further systematic investigation.

In sum, humor within families constitutes a powerful resource that alleviates stress, fosters resilience, and enhances well-being. It operates not only directly to reduce stress but also indirectly by cultivating positive affect, which mediates adaptive outcomes across developmental stages and cultural contexts (Emery et al., 2024; Hoicka et al., 2021; Romero & Arendt, 2011). By situating humor within the framework of stress-coping and positive emotion theories, the present study advances the understanding of how humor contributes to family functioning. Specifically, this research investigates the role of humor in reducing stress and its capacity to generate positive affect as a mediator in family systems.

2. Methods

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to investigate the relationship between humor, stress, and positive affect, with positive affect considered as the dependent variable. The target population consisted of families residing in South Africa. The sample size was determined according to the Morgan and Krejcie table for sample size estimation, resulting in 409 participants who were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different age groups and family structures. All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection, and ethical guidelines for human research were strictly followed.

2.2. Measures

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) is one of

the most widely used instruments for measuring affect. For the present study, the Positive Affect subscale was used, which consists of 10 items assessing the extent to which individuals experience emotions such as enthusiasm, alertness, and joy. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely), with higher scores indicating greater positive affect. The PANAS has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, including high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically above 0.85) and good convergent and discriminant validity, confirmed in numerous cross-cultural studies and clinical as well as non-clinical populations.

The Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ) created by Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, and Weir (2003) is a standard measure to assess individual differences in humor. It consists of 32 items divided into four subscales: Affiliative humor, Self-enhancing humor, Aggressive humor, and Self-defeating humor. Respondents rate items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree). Higher scores on each subscale reflect a stronger tendency to use that particular humor style. The HSQ has been widely validated, showing good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha values generally above 0.70 for each subscale) and test-retest reliability. It has also been supported by extensive evidence for construct validity in both Western and non-Western cultural settings, making it a reliable tool for family and interpersonal research.

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), developed by Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein (1983), is a well-established measure of the degree to which situations in life are appraised as stressful. The most commonly used version, the PSS-10, contains 10 items covering feelings of unpredictability, lack of control, and overload in daily life. Respondents rate the frequency of their experiences on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (very often), with higher total scores indicating higher levels of perceived stress. The PSS has demonstrated excellent psychometric properties, with Cronbach's alpha values typically above 0.80, and has been validated across different populations,

languages, and age groups. It is considered one of the most reliable and widely used tools for stress assessment in psychological and health-related research.

2.3. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Initially, descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were computed to summarize the demographic and study variables. Pearson correlation analysis was performed using SPSS version 27 to examine the bivariate associations between the dependent variable (positive affect) and the independent variables (humor and stress). Furthermore, the hypothesized structural relationships among variables were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in AMOS version 21. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices including the chi-square statistic, comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA).

3. Findings and Results

The demographic profile of the sample showed that out of 409 participants, 226 were female (55.3%) and 183 were male (44.7%). The mean age of the participants was 36.8 years ($SD = 9.42$), with 97 individuals (23.7%) aged between 20 and 29, 152 individuals (37.2%) between 30 and 39, 105 individuals (25.7%) between 40 and 49, and 55 individuals (13.4%) aged 50 or older. In terms of education, 118 participants (28.9%) reported holding a high school diploma, 167 (40.8%) had completed an undergraduate degree, 96 (23.5%) held a postgraduate degree, and 28 (6.8%) had not completed formal education. Regarding marital status, 291 participants (71.1%) were married, 74 (18.1%) were single, and 44 (10.8%) were divorced or widowed. These frequencies and percentages demonstrate a diverse sample suitable for the study objectives.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 409)

Variable	Mean	SD
Humor	4.83	0.91
Stress	2.97	0.76
Positive Affect	3.64	0.88

The descriptive analysis indicated that the mean score for humor was 4.83 (SD = 0.91), suggesting that participants generally reported moderately high levels of humor. Stress had a mean of 2.97 (SD = 0.76), reflecting moderate stress levels. Positive affect had a mean of 3.64 (SD = 0.88), indicating above-average positive affect among participants.

Prior to conducting correlation and SEM analyses, statistical assumptions were tested to ensure data suitability. The normality of the variables was examined through skewness and kurtosis indices, which fell within the acceptable range of -1.25 to +1.18 for skewness and -0.92

to +1.07 for kurtosis. Multicollinearity was assessed using variance inflation factors (VIF), with values ranging between 1.22 and 1.89, all below the threshold of 5.0, indicating no issues of multicollinearity. Homoscedasticity was checked by examining residual plots, which showed no visible patterns suggesting heteroscedasticity. Linearity was verified using scatterplots of standardized residuals, confirming linear relationships between the study variables. Together, these results indicated that the data met the assumptions necessary for Pearson correlation and SEM analyses.

Table 2

Pearson Correlations Between Variables

Variable	1	2	3
1. Humor	—		
2. Stress	-0.41** (p = .001)	—	
3. Positive Affect	0.53** (p = .000)	-0.47** (p = .000)	—

The correlation results revealed significant relationships among the variables. Humor was positively correlated with positive affect ($r = 0.53$, $p < .001$), while humor was

negatively correlated with stress ($r = -0.41$, $p = .001$). Stress was negatively correlated with positive affect ($r = -0.47$, $p < .001$). These results support the hypothesized associations.

Table 3

Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value
Chi-Square (χ^2)	124.36
Degrees of Freedom (df)	61
χ^2/df	2.04
GFI	0.93
AGFI	0.90
CFI	0.96
RMSEA	0.049
TLI	0.95

The SEM results indicated an acceptable model fit: $\chi^2(61) = 124.36$, $p < .001$, with a χ^2/df ratio of 2.04. Other indices such as GFI (0.93), AGFI (0.90), CFI (0.96), TLI (0.95), and

RMSEA (0.049) all fell within the recommended thresholds, suggesting a good model fit.

Table 4

Direct, Indirect, and Total Path Coefficients

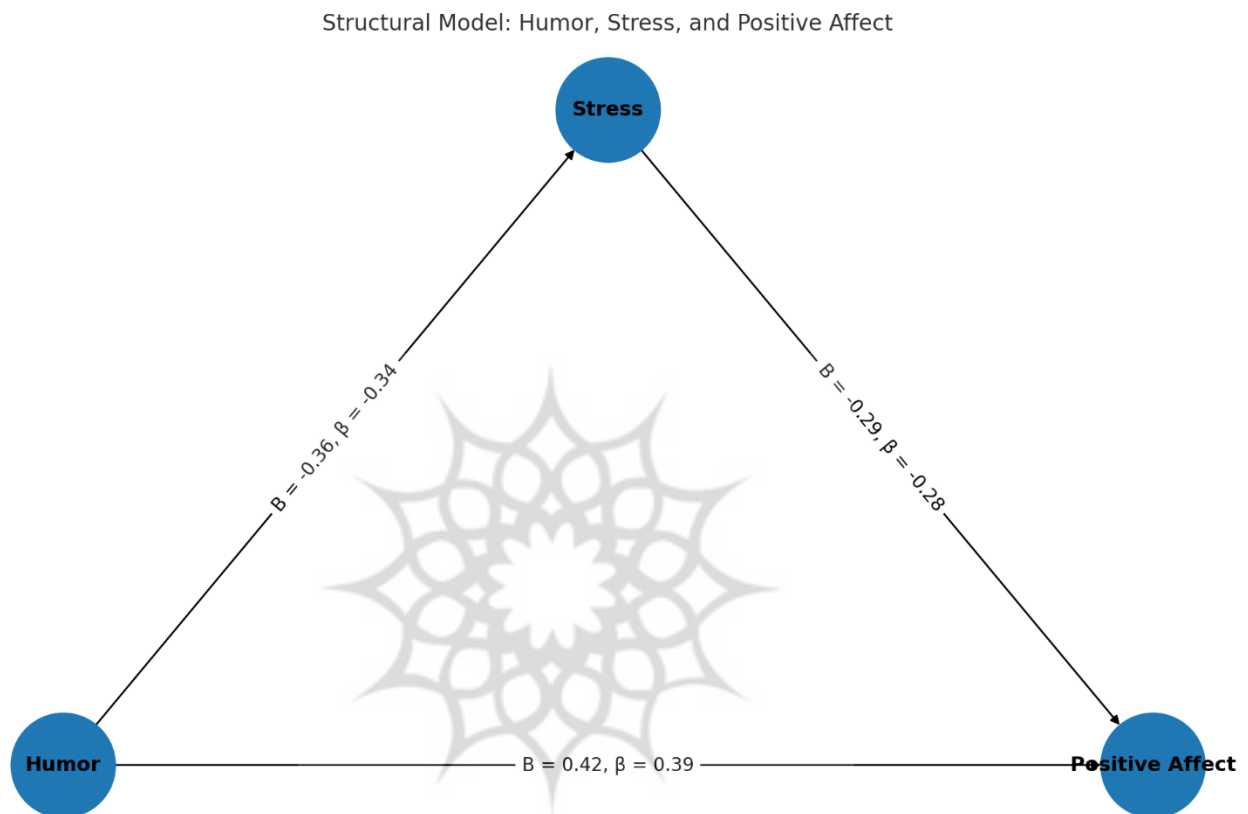
Path	b	S.E	Beta	p
Humor → Positive Affect (direct)	0.42	0.07	0.39	.000
Humor → Stress (direct)	-0.36	0.06	-0.34	.001
Stress → Positive Affect (direct)	-0.29	0.05	-0.28	.000
Humor → Positive Affect (indirect via Stress)	0.10	0.03	0.09	.002
Humor → Positive Affect (total)	0.52	—	0.48	—

The path analysis showed that humor had a significant direct positive effect on positive affect ($b = 0.42$, $\beta = 0.39$, $p < .001$) and a significant negative effect on stress ($b = -0.36$, $\beta = -0.34$, $p = .001$). Stress had a significant direct negative effect on positive affect ($b = -0.29$, $\beta = -0.28$, $p < .001$).

Additionally, humor had an indirect positive effect on positive affect through stress ($b = 0.10$, $\beta = 0.09$, $p = .002$). The total effect of humor on positive affect was 0.52, indicating a strong combined influence of direct and indirect paths.

Figure 1

Model with Beta Coefficients



4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study examined the role of humor in reducing stress within family contexts and the mediating function of positive affect in this relationship. The results confirmed that humor was positively associated with positive affect and negatively associated with stress. Moreover, positive affect emerged as a significant mediator, indicating that humor exerts its influence on stress reduction both directly and indirectly through enhancing positive emotions. These findings are consistent with theoretical frameworks that highlight humor as a coping strategy that reframes stressful experiences into less threatening interpretations, thereby fostering resilience (Romero & Arendt, 2011; Rong et al., 2017).

The strong positive relationship observed between humor and positive affect supports earlier empirical evidence that humor promotes joy, enthusiasm, and other positive emotions that broaden psychological resources (Fritz, 2025; Villalba et al., 2023). Humor functions as an emotional catalyst that transforms stressful experiences into opportunities for laughter and bonding, thus increasing positive mood states that, in turn, buffer against the harmful effects of stress (Bartzik et al., 2021). The mediation analysis revealed that positive affect accounted for a substantial portion of the humor–stress link, suggesting that humor is not merely a cognitive reframing tool but also an affective mechanism that generates immediate positive experiences (Froehlich et al., 2021; Mireault et al., 2015). These findings align with Fredrickson’s broaden-and-build theory, which

emphasizes that positive affect expands thought–action repertoires and builds long-term adaptive resources.

The negative correlation between humor and stress found in this study echoes previous work showing that humor alleviates the perception of stressors and enhances coping abilities. For example, research on parents of children with congenital adrenal hyperplasia demonstrated that humor was frequently adopted as a stress management strategy (Joshi et al., 2022). Similarly, cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy have reported that coping with humor significantly lowers perceived stress (Kirca et al., 2023). Within family dynamics, humor fosters warmth and connection, mitigating the adverse effects of stress spillover between marital interactions and parenting responsibilities (Hartley et al., 2016; Yu & Kim, 2015). The present study extends this literature by showing that humor reduces stress in families not only directly but also by increasing positive emotional experiences that make stressors appear more manageable (Nahm & Park, 2017).

The results also highlight the protective role of humor across developmental contexts. Evidence suggests that humor appears early in life and is shaped by family interactions, reinforcing the notion that it is a relational construct as much as an individual one (Hoicka et al., 2021; Mireault et al., 2015). By cultivating humor within family routines, parents encourage positive affect in children, which may, in turn, shield them from the detrimental impact of family stress. This finding resonates with developmental research indicating that humor in infancy and early childhood predicts socio-emotional competence and resilience in later years (Vera et al., 2011; Yustia et al., 2021). Furthermore, positive affect fostered through family humor can create upward spirals of well-being, reinforcing adaptive coping patterns that endure over time (Hampes, 2013; Lindwall et al., 2014).

The study's findings are also consistent with applied humor intervention research. Empirical evidence demonstrates that structured humor programs reduce stress and improve enjoyment and meaningfulness of work, highlighting humor's applicability beyond informal family contexts (Bartzik et al., 2021; Walsh, 2021). In clinical and caregiving settings, humor has been found to protect against psychological strain, promote flow experiences, and enhance coping, particularly during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Fritz, 2021; Villalba et al., 2023). The current results provide further support for the application of humor interventions within families, suggesting that encouraging humorous perspectives can yield stress

reduction through the mediating mechanism of positive affect (Emery et al., 2024).

Interestingly, our findings resonate with longitudinal studies demonstrating that humor predicts relational outcomes such as pregnancy intentions, parenting satisfaction, and overall adaptability (Theisen et al., 2019). Humor thus appears not only as a momentary coping strategy but also as a longitudinal predictor of resilience and family functioning. The inclusion of positive affect as a mediator in the current study helps clarify why these long-term associations exist. By repeatedly generating positive emotional experiences, humor creates enduring resources that sustain well-being despite ongoing stressors (Leter et al., 2024).

From a cultural perspective, the present results are consistent with studies conducted in varied contexts. For instance, humor has been shown to reduce workplace stress in both Australian and Chinese employees (Rong et al., 2017), to support parental coping in Greece (Μαλλιαρού et al., 2021), and to act as a buffer in Turkish and South Korean family contexts (Gültekin & Ulutaş, 2022; Nahm & Park, 2017). This suggests that the humor–stress–positive affect relationship is robust across cultures, lending credibility to its universal applicability. The finding that humor reduces stress through positive affect in South African families expands this cross-cultural evidence, indicating that humor may be a universal coping mechanism, though expressed differently depending on cultural norms (Romero & Arendt, 2011; Yu & Kim, 2015).

Another critical implication of the findings is that humor styles matter. Adaptive humor styles such as affiliative and self-enhancing humor are more likely to produce positive affect and reduce stress, whereas maladaptive styles may not yield the same benefits and could even exacerbate family tension (Hampes, 2013; Oh & Hwang, 2019). The present study did not differentiate between humor styles, but its results underscore the importance of considering humor quality in future research. Studies suggest that positive humor styles correlate strongly with well-being and resilience, whereas aggressive humor undermines psychological safety and interpersonal trust (Romero & Arendt, 2011; Walsh, 2021). This complexity highlights the need for nuanced interventions that encourage adaptive humor while discouraging maladaptive forms.

The mediating role of positive affect identified in this study is consistent with previous scholarship on emotional regulation. Humor helps individuals reframe stressful experiences, but the immediate increase in positive affect

provides the emotional resources needed to cope effectively (Fritz, 2025; Froehlich et al., 2021). Positive affect has been shown to moderate physiological responses to stress, such as cortisol secretion, thereby reducing the long-term health impacts of chronic stress (Froehlich et al., 2021). In family systems, positive affect enhances relationship satisfaction, parental responsiveness, and child adjustment, making it a central mechanism linking humor and resilience (Wang et al., 2023; Xu & Zheng, 2022). The current findings add empirical support to these theoretical and applied insights, reinforcing the idea that interventions aimed at stress reduction should consider strategies that explicitly cultivate positive affect.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that humor reduces stress in families both directly and indirectly by enhancing positive affect. The results align with a broad body of literature across cultural, developmental, and applied contexts, and they underscore the importance of considering humor as an intentional coping strategy within family interventions. Positive affect emerges as a critical mediator that explains why humor consistently predicts reduced stress and greater well-being.

5. Suggestions and Limitations

Although the findings provide valuable insights, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study employed a cross-sectional design, which limits causal inferences between humor, stress, and positive affect. Longitudinal studies would be necessary to establish the temporal ordering of these relationships. Second, the reliance on self-report measures may have introduced bias, particularly social desirability in reporting humor and affective experiences. Third, while the sample size was robust, participants were drawn from families in South Africa, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Additionally, the study did not account for potential moderating variables such as socioeconomic status, family structure, or humor styles, which could further refine our understanding of the relationships. Finally, the structural model did not incorporate additional family processes, such as communication or parenting behaviors, which may interact with humor and affect in shaping stress outcomes.

Future research should adopt longitudinal and experimental designs to strengthen causal inferences about the role of humor and positive affect in stress reduction. Experimental interventions, such as humor training or family-based humor workshops, could provide insights into

the effectiveness of humor as a targeted stress management strategy. Further studies should also examine the differential effects of humor styles, distinguishing between adaptive and maladaptive humor, to determine which forms of humor most effectively promote positive affect and reduce stress. Cross-cultural comparative research would be valuable to explore whether the humor–positive affect–stress pathway functions similarly in diverse sociocultural contexts. Finally, incorporating physiological measures of stress, such as cortisol levels or heart rate variability, alongside self-report data, would enhance the robustness of findings.

The results suggest that humor can be integrated into family interventions, stress management programs, and parenting workshops as a low-cost, accessible tool to promote well-being. Practitioners should encourage families to adopt adaptive humor styles that foster connection and positive affect, while avoiding humor that undermines trust or creates conflict. Educators, counselors, and healthcare providers may benefit from incorporating humor-based activities into programs aimed at reducing parental stress and enhancing family resilience. Moreover, interventions should highlight the role of positive affect as a mechanism through which humor exerts its protective influence, helping families recognize the value of laughter and joy in navigating everyday challenges.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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