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Humor Daily Events and Well-Being: The Role of Gelotophobia and Psychological Work Climate

Ana Junça Silva, António Caetano and Rita Rueff Lopes

Abstract

This study aims to: (1) analyze the relationship between humor-daily events and well-being; (2) test the mediating role of positive affect in this relationship; (3) analyze the moderating role of gelotophobia between humor-daily events and positive affect, and; (4) explore the moderating role of psychological climate between positive affect and well-being. To test these goals, we conducted a quasi-experimental study with 93 participants. We used regressions and bootstrapping analyses to test the moderated mediation model. The relationship between the humor-daily events and well-being was mediated by positive affect and this relation was moderated by psychological work, such that this relationship was stronger when a positive psychological work climate was identified. Gelotophobia did not moderate the relationship between humor daily-events and positive affect, however, it significantly and negatively predicted positive affect. This paper adds considerable evidence of the relationship between humor-related daily events and its impact on well-being. Psychological work climate strengthens the association between positive affect and well-being, after humor daily events.

Keywords: gelotophobia, humor-daily events, psychological work climate, affect, moderated mediation

1. Introduction

Research on positive affect in organizations supports that humor is an important factor at work, due to its positive effects on several outcomes, like creativity and stress reduction [1]. However, humor can be a positive or negative event generating diverse outcomes at work. When a humor event is negative, it refers to a hostile use of humor, in which the self is enhanced at the expense of denigrating, disparaging, excessively teasing, or ridiculing others [2]. When it is positive, it refers to the tendency to tell jokes or engage in spontaneous witty banter to create amusement, lessen interpersonal tension, and facilitate relationship.

Despite its relevance, there is a lack of research exploring the conditions that might affect the influence of humor on workers' well-being. For instance, gelotophobia, defined as the fear of being laughed at [3], may influence the relationship between humor events and subsequent affective reactions. This effect may occur because gelotophobes may perceive humor events in an idiosyncratic manner.

Gelotophobes may be more sensitive to humor and perceive humor events as a form of humiliation or joke in front of others, even in situations in which humor may not be intended to be harmful. In line with this observation, it is likely that gelotophobia moderates the relationship between humor daily events and affective reactions.

In addition, the context in which these situations occur may also influence individuals' reactions. For example, several studies have demonstrated that psychological work climate is crucial for individuals' well-being [4]. Psychological work climate may provide social and psychological resources, such as, support from colleagues/supervisor, for individuals at work. Hence, the more positive is the work climate, the greater the well-being of employees [5]. Therefore, it is likely that psychological work climate influences the affective reactions of individuals to humor events and, consequently, their well-being.

Based on these assumptions, the present study seeks to examine the association between humor daily events and well-being in a sample of workers by examining the potential mediating effect of positive affect between this relationship. We also intend to explore the potential moderating effect of gelotophobia between humor daily events and positive affect, and the potential moderating effect of psychological work climate between positive affect and well-being. So, this study addresses the relevance of work-related humor on well-being and explores the moderating role of an individual characteristic and a contextual one on that relationship.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Humor daily events and well-being

The humor-health hypothesis states that humor enhances individuals' functioning [6]. Diverse studies have shown that humor is positively associated to individuals' physical, psychological, and social well-being [7].

There are four different humor styles [6]. Accordingly, humor results from the interaction of the humors' target (oriented toward others or oriented toward oneself) with its effects (being conductive or detrimental) on well-being. Therefore, the authors suggested two positive humor styles (self-enhancing humor and affiliative humor), and two negatives ones (self-defeating humor and aggressive humor). Self-enhancing humor is directed to oneself and it is defined as the tendency to be amused by the incongruences of life and to have a genuine humorous outlook. Affiliative humor is directed to others and it is defined as the tendency to amuse others and create empathy [6]. Self-enhancing and affiliative humor have been consistently related positively to individuals' physical, psychological and social well-being, while self-defeating and aggressive humor have been shown to be negatively related with several aspects of optimal functioning [8].

Humor is an indicator of emotional intelligence, as emotional management ability has been demonstrated to be positively correlated with self-enhancing humor, and negatively correlated with trait bad mood [6]. In addition, the ability to accurately perceive emotions has been negatively related to aggressive and self-defeating humor. Consistently, it has been demonstrated that emotional intelligence predicted both affiliative and self-enhancing humor [8].

Humor can be conceptualized as an individual characteristic and as a discrete event. It is "any event shared by an agent (e.g., an employee) with another individual (a target) that is intended to be amusing to the target and that the target perceives as an intentional act" [9] (pp. 766–767). Humor produces affect and cognitions in the individual, group, or organization [10]. Underlying these assumptions, we highlight the discrete and affective nature of humor.

The Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) [11] proposes that disposing of resources is rewarding and adds to psychological and physical well-being, both by increasing resilience and by contributing to employees' potential to successfully control and influence the environment [12]. In addition, the theory also suggests that individuals strive to protect, maintain, and increase their own resources. Diverse authors have defined humor as a personal resource and have related it to employee well-being [13]. Based on these assumptions, we argue that humor events may be related to some elements associated to happiness, such as well-being. Therefore, we hypothesized that:

H1: Humor events are associated with well-being.

2.2 Humor daily events, positive affect, and well-being

The affective events theory proposes that work events stimulate affective reactions [14]. These affective reactions will influence work-related behaviors and well-being. Humor as an event may be considered as positive or negative, depending upon the triggered affective reaction. For example, an individual may amuse bosses or colleagues by making a joke before starting a meeting. It can be considered as a positive humor event. Positive humor events trigger positive affect (e.g., joy) refer to the tendency to tell jokes or engage in spontaneous witty banter to create amusement, lessen interpersonal tension, and facilitate relationship. On the other hand, humor may also be negative. For instance, a boss may make poor jokes at the expense of subordinates. Thus, negative humor events are referred to hostile uses of humor, in which the self is enhanced at the expense of denigrating, disparaging, excessively teasing, or ridiculing others [15].

Once positive humor events relate to positive affect, they may broaden individuals' thought-action repertoire. According to the broaden and build theory [16], positive affect improves creativity, novelty and actions, which may, in turn, stimulate individuals' durable resources regarding well-being and other aspects of optimal functioning [16]. Because positive humor events may rise creative ways of dealing with challenges and increase social bonding through the stimulation of positive affect [17], it may boost individuals' well-being. On the other hand, negative humor events may have the opposite effect, by impairing individuals' well-being through negative affect. This is consistent with Cooper's suggestion [17] that humor events may act as a defense mechanism against stress by letting individuals relax from tensions built up by daily hassles. In sum, we hypothesized:

H2: The relationship between humor events and well-being is mediated by positive affect (see **Figure 1**).

2.3 The moderating role of gelotophobia

Based on clinical case studies, the concept of gelotophobia served to describe the pathological fear of appearing to others as a ridiculous object [18]. Therefore,

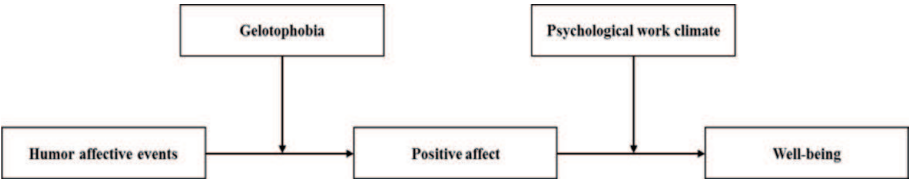


Figure 1.
A moderated mediation theoretical model: Gelotophobia moderates the relationship between humor events and positive affect, and psychological work climate moderates the mediated relationship between humor events and well-being through positive affect.

gelotophobia has been defined as a subclinical form of social anxiety, as the fear of being laughed at and implies differences in humor reception [19]. Although initially introduced as a clinical phenomenon related to social phobia, there is evidence that gelotophobia may be conceptualized as an individual variable that also applies to normal, non-clinical samples [20]. Experiencing humor, either positive or negative, influence individual's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors [20]. Recently, some studies have demonstrated that there is indeed an enduring fear of being laughed at [21]. This fear embraces a paranoid sensitivity to the humor of others, may raise exaggerated responses to humor events, or going along with social withdrawal. This may also be accompanied by the belief that one is indeed ridiculous [22].

Gelotophobia has been conceptualized as a continuum, ranging from no fear to feeling a strong fear of being laughed at [20]. Individuals who are positioned at the highest end of this continuum fear or anticipate being shamed by the ridicule of others. Therefore, they may react fearfully even to positive humor events. These reactions function as self-protection and coping strategies.

Every day, employees face diverse (positive and negative) humor events. The fear of being laughed at may impair feelings and cognitions to humor events, once gelotophobes believe that they actually are ridiculous objects and, therefore, the laughter of others who constantly screen them for ridiculous cues may appear as justified. In addition, gelotophobes misattribute even innocent humor events (not directed at or not meant to hurt them) as demeaning assaults. Based on these assumptions, we hypothesized that:

H3: Gelotophobia moderates the relationship between humor daily-events and positive affect, such that, gelotophobia weakens this relationship.

2.4 The moderating role of psychological work climate

Several studies have shown associations between psychological work climate and individual work outcomes. For example, it was demonstrated that psychological climate was associated with job satisfaction [23]. It was also showed that psychological work climate was positively related to employee satisfaction, engagement, and other work-related attitudes [24].

In recent years, diverse studies have shown that the psychological work climate can influence employee well-being [25]. Psychological work climate may provide social and psychological resources, such as, support from colleagues or supervisors, for individuals at work.

Based on these findings, it is likely that psychological work climate moderates the affective reactions of individuals to humor events and, consequently, their well-being. Thus, we hypothesized that:

H4: Psychological work climate moderates the relationship between positive affect and well-being, such that, positive climate strengthens the relationship.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

Ninety-three individuals (64 women, 29 men; mean age = 24.76 years, SD = 9.05 years) participated in this study. 52% of the participants recalled a pleasant humor event and 48% an unpleasant one.

3.2 Procedures

In this study, we gathered data in two different phases with an interval of one month between them. We measured the level of gelotophobia and we asked participants to recall a humor event. Participants filled out a survey on both phases.

At the start of the first phase, participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study. At this stage, participants responded to demographic questions and to the scale of gelotophobia. On the second phase, we randomly assigned the participants into one of the two conditions: recalling a humor event occurred in organizational context which had provoked pleasant affect or recalling a humor event occurred in organizational context which had provoked unpleasant affect. They also answered to a measure of well-being and work climate.

3.3 Measures

Humor events recall. We randomly assigned the participants into one of the two conditions: (1) pleasant condition: recalling and reconstruct a humor event which had provoked pleasant affect; (2) unpleasant condition: recalling and reconstruct a humor event which had provoked unpleasant emotions. Participants were instructed to recall a recent humor event in organizational settings. They were also asked to describe the episode in a detailed way.

Well-being. Individuals responded to the satisfaction with life scale (SWLS [26]). This is a 5-item scale that measures global life satisfaction. Answers to each item are given on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). An example item is “the conditions of my life are excellent”. In this study, the internal consistency reliability was .78.

Affect. We used the multi-affect indicator [27]. The scale includes 16 items, in which eight measure positive affect (e.g., enthusiastic, joyful), and the other eight items measure negative affect (e.g., nervous, tense). Participants were asked to assess the degree to which they experienced those feelings after the described humor event, using a 7-point Likert scale (1 -not at all; 7 – extremely). The Cronbach’s α for the negative affect subscale was .90, and for the positive affect subscale was .85.

Gelotophobia. Participants answered to the GELOPH<15> [28]. It is a 15-item measure for the subjective assessment of gelotophobia. All the items are positively worded. Individuals answer to each item on a 4-point Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree; 4 – strongly agree). An item example is “When others laugh in my presence, I get suspicious”. In this study, the scale presented a good internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$).

Work psychological climate. We used two items from the scale of psychological climate of cooperation and warmth [29]. Participants answered on a 7-point Likert scale to the items “At work, there is a nice atmosphere”, and “I have a nice time with my colleagues”. Inter item correlation was .65.

3.4 Data analysis

We started our analysis by verifying whether the manipulation was effective. Then, we explored the descriptive statistics and correlations with the variables under study. After that we tested our hypothesis. To test the first and the second hypotheses, regarding the direct effect of humor affective events on well-being, and the mediating role of positive affect in this relationship we used bootstrap

analysis (based on 5.000 bootstrapped samples using bias corrected and accelerated 95% confidence intervals (CIs) [30]. This analysis calculated the direct paths between the variables, in the form of regression weights, and the significance of the indirect path, which is the reduction of the relation between humor affective events and well-being, when positive affect is included in the model. The indirect effect is significant when the 95% CI does not include 0. We z-transformed the variables to compare the variable effect sizes. To test the moderated mediation model (hypotheses 3 and 4), we used PROCESS macro [31]. This macro is relevant as it allows evaluating whether a specific mediation effect is contingent upon the level of a moderating variable by providing coefficients for both the mediator, and the dependent variable models. It also allows to probe whether the mediation exists at specified levels of the moderator.

4. Results

An unpleasant humor event was reported by 48% of the participants and a pleasant one was reported by 52%. After describing the humor event, participants identified how good/bad they had felt in the recalled experience. The answers were given on 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 – “very bad” to 7 – “very good”. Results from a between-subjects one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed significant differences between the conditions: $F_{(1, 90)} = 211.65$; $p = .000$; $\eta^2 = .70$. Participants, in the pleasant condition, reported feeling significantly better ($M = 5.64$; $SD = 1.19$) than did those in the unpleasant condition ($M = 2.36$; $SD = 0.94$). Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables are showed in **Table 1**.

4.1 Hypothesis testing

4.1.1 Hypothesis 1

As expected, humor events, gelotophobia, positive affect, psychological work climate and well-being presented moderate to strong correlations with each other. Only, psychological work climate presented a non-significant association with humor events. Therefore, our first hypothesis was supported, as humor events presented a positive and significant correlation with well-being ($r = .19$, $p < .05$).

4.1.2 Hypothesis 2: the mediating effect of positive affect between humor affective events and well-being

To test the second hypothesis, regarding the mediating role of positive affect in the relationship between humor events and well-being, we tested the indirect effect, via bootstrap analysis. We found evidence for the indirect effect of humor events on well-being via positive affect (.26, 95% CI [.04, .57]). The overall model was significant ($F_{(2, 87)} = 10.46$, $p < .01$) and explained 25% of the variance in well-being.

4.1.3 Hypothesis 3: the moderating effect of gelotophobia

To test the third hypothesis, regarding the moderating effect of gelotophobia on the relationship between humor events and positive affect, we used the PROCESS macro, model 7 [31]. Results are presented in **Table 2**. The interaction term was not significant ($\beta = -.04$, $p > .05$). However, when analyzing its direct effect on positive affect, results showed a significant direct path ($\beta = -.95$, $p < .01$), suggesting that gelotophobia does not interact with humor events, but it influences positive affect

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Humor Events	—	—	1				
2. Gelotophobia	2.14	.60	-.15*	1			
3. Positive affect	3.99	1.17	.32**	-.54**	1		
4. Psychological work climate	5.80	1.16	.Ns	-.38**	.41**	1	
5. Well-being	4.75	1.14	.19*	-.40**	.50**	.51**	1

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Table 1.
Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables.

Predictor	Hypothesis 3					
	β	SE	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
Humor events	.58**	.21	2.75	.00	.16	1.00
Gelotophobia	-.95**	.22	-4.23	.00	-1.37	-.74
Humor events x Gelotophobia	-.04	.31	-.13	.89	-.67	.59
R ²	.35			.000		

Gelotophobia	Conditional effects at gelotophobia + - 1 SD					
	$(a_1 + a_3W) b_1$	SE	z	p	LLCI	ULCI
- 1.00	.61	.23	2.58	.01	.14	1.07
0	.58	.21	2.75	.00	.16	1.00
+ 1.00	.55	.33	1.69	.09	-.09	1.21

Notes. The conditional indirect effect is calculated $(a_1 + a_3W) b_1$ where a_1 is the path from humor events to positive affect, a_3 is the path from the interaction of humor events and gelotophobia to positive affect, W is gelotophobia, and b_1 is the path from positive affect to well-being. SD standard deviation, SE standard error.

Table 2.
Moderated mediation analysis for hypothesis 3.

directly. Specifically, individuals with low levels gelotophobia reported more positive affect ($M = 4.57$; $SD = .95$), than individuals with high levels of gelotophobia ($M = 3.60$; $SD = 1.15$), regardless of the condition in which they have been assigned (pleasant or unpleasant). Plus, these differences were significant ($t_{(1, 88)} = 4.27$, $p < .01$). Thus, the third hypothesis was not supported.

4.1.4 Hypothesis 4: the moderating effect of psychological work climate

Table 3 shows the output for the moderating role of psychological work climate. The interaction term for the model testing the moderating effect of psychological work climate on the relationship between positive affect and well-being, was significant ($\beta = -.13$, $p < .05$). The negative sign implies that the indirect effect is larger for those who reported lower levels of positive affect, than for those who reported higher levels. This significant interaction supports the indirect effect of positive affect at different levels of the moderator (psychological work climate). [31] suggest verifying the results with bootstrapped standard errors, used to create 95% CIs. Thus, results showed the existence of conditional indirect effects at the mean, and one SD below the mean, using 95% bias accelerated and corrected CIs with 5.000 bootstrapped resamples. The indirect effect at one SD below the mean (.50, 95% CI [.28, .72]),

Predictor	Hypothesis 4					
	B	SE	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
Positive affect	.33	.11	3.03	.00	.13	.55
Work climate	.28	.09	2.91	.00	.07	.45
Positive affect x Climate	−.13	.06	−2.08	.03	−.26	−.01
R ²	.38			.00		

Psychological work climate score	Conditional effects at psychological work climate + − 1 SD					
	(a ₁ + a ₃ W) b ₁	SE	z	p	LLCI	ULCI
- 1.00	0.50	.11	4.57	.00	.28	.72
0	0.36	.10	3.31	.00	.13	.55
+ 1.00	0.18	.14	1.30	.19	−.09	.46

Notes. The conditional indirect effect is calculated (a₁ + a₃W) b₁ where a₁ is the path from humor events to positive affect, a₃ is the path from the interaction of positive affect and work climate to well-being, W is work climate, and b₁ is the path from positive affect to well-being. SD standard deviation. SE standard error.

Table 3.
Moderated mediation analysis for psychological work climate moderating positive affect mediation of humor events and well-being.

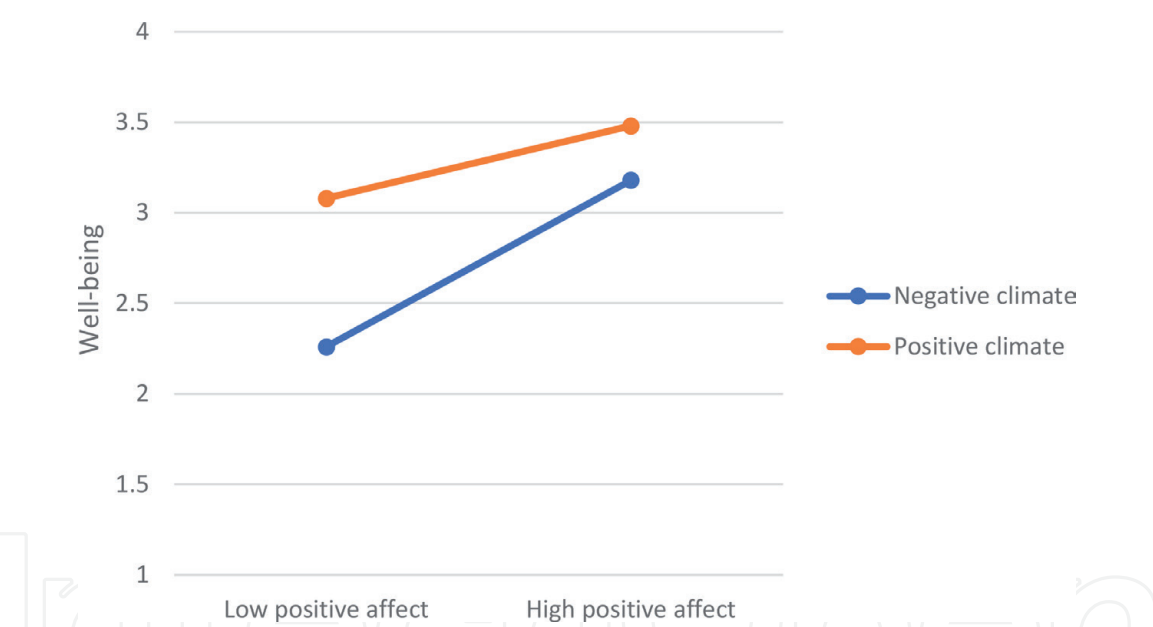


Figure 2.
The interaction of positive affect and psychological work climate on well-being.

and the mean (.36, 95% CI [.13, .55]) were significant, but the indirect effect a tone SD above the mean (.18, 95% CI [−.09, .46]) was not (**Figure 2**). The model explained 38% of the variance on well-being.

5. Discussion

The present study had four goals: (1) to test an established link relating humor events to well-being, and (2) to examine positive affect as a mediator in the relation between humor events and well-being. We also investigated (3) the degree to which gelotophobia moderates the relation between humor events and positive affect, and; (4) whether psychological work climate serves as a moderator of the link between positive affect and well-being.

There is considerable evidence of the benefits of humor for well-being. However, most of these studies have been focused on humor as an individual characteristic. There are few studies considering the role of humor events on individual's well-being.

Regarding our first hypothesis, humor events were positively related to higher levels of well-being. This is consistent with the humor-health hypothesis, which states that humor has beneficial effects for individual's optimal functioning [6]. Humor is globally recognized to be an indicator of positive mental health [7] and has been found to be related to both physical and psychological well-being [3]. However, this study goes further and specifies some conditions that may affect that relation.

Our results support our second hypothesis, regarding the mediated relationship between humor events and well-being through positive affect. These findings are in line with affective events theory [14], as the theory suggests that affective events at work stimulate affective reactions which, in turn, will influence employee's attitudes and behaviors [15]. Thus, humor events, as affective experiences, will arouse affect and, at the same time, will influence individual's well-being. Our results also demonstrated that positive affect fully mediated the link between humor events and well-being. A potential reason for the full mediation found is that positive humor events facilitate the emergence of relaxation feelings, which contributes to increased levels of positive affect and, in turn, results in higher levels of well-being. Moreover, these results also emphasize the well-established concept that positive affect is a strong predictor of individual's well-being [7]. Thus, the more positive humor events, the higher the frequency of positive affect, which may be translated in higher levels of well-being.

The findings regarding the moderating role of gelotophobia, between humor events and positive affect, were not supported. Gelotophobia did not moderate the relationship between humor events and positive affect. This was not expected, as gelotophobia emerges as an individual characteristic defined as the fear of being laughed at and appearing ridiculous to peers [20]. However, gelotophobia presented a negative direct path to positive affect. That is, individuals high in gelotophobia experienced less positive affect than individuals low in gelotophobia ($F_{(1, 89)} = 19.01, \eta^2 = .18, p < .000$). This difference was statistically significant and occurred either in individuals reporting a pleasant humor event or an unpleasant one. Therefore, regardless of the condition, gelotophobes tend to experience less positive affect, even after positive experiences. This is consistent with the notion that gelotophobes experience disproportionate negative responses to being laughed at, and have a paranoid sensitivity to anticipated ridicule [21]. It is likely that this paranoid sensitivity to ridiculous impairs gelotophobes to discriminate between unpleasant humor affective events and pleasant ones. Therefore, this paranoid sensitivity will stimulate negative affect, even after pleasant humor events [21].

In support of the fourth hypothesis, psychological work climate moderated the relationship of humor events and well-being via positive affect. This result was significant only for individuals who reported low to moderate levels of good psychological work climate. That is, individuals in poorer psychological work climates benefit more from experiencing humor events that trigger positive affect, which in turn, will translate into higher levels of well-being. A possible explanation is that those working in positive psychological work climates tend to pay less attention to positive humor events, and therefore, are less likely to experience emotional gains from the presence of positive affect. But for those in poorer work climates, positive affect aroused by humor events will have a larger impact in their well-being. People working in supportive psychological work climates already tend to feel good while working with their work colleagues/supervisors, so the effect of increased

positive affect after humor events may be negligible. From an organizational perspective, positive climates have singular characteristics. That is, it is possible that humor experiences are part of the daily routine in these working climates, making it expected events to employees, and for that reason, it will not stimulate their well-being. However, for individuals working in poorer and non-supportive work climates, experiencing positive affect, after humor events, as well as increased perceptions of work climate, may increase, substantially, their well-being. Some studies have already demonstrated that a good work climate can have a significant effect on employees' well-being [25]. It is likely that a good psychological work climate protects against the translation of the inexistence or low frequency of positive affective experiences into lesser well-being.

In sum, the findings of this study are in line with the humor-health hypothesis and suggest that humor events influence individuals' well-being. In addition, this relation is mediated by positive affect, that is humor events trigger positive affect, which will enhance individual's well-being. Moreover, this relationship between positive affect and well-being is shaped by low and moderate levels of psychological work climate. Gelotophobia did not interact significantly with humor events, however it did influence positive affect directly, such that, individuals low in gelotophobia experienced more positive affect than did those high in gelotophobia.

5.1 Limitations and future research

Despite the positive features of this study, it has some limitations. First, the small sample size means that these results should be generalized with some caution. Second, the use of self-reported measures may also have biased the data, because individuals may not always provide accurate reports. Third, we asked participants to report a pleasant/unpleasant humor event occurred in organizational context. Despite we have asked them to recall a recent event (less than one month ago), it is likely that their reports may have been influenced by memory bias. Efforts should be made to further studies, by conducting, for instance, a diary study, in order to obtain more accurate data. Moreover, because we do not have longitudinal data, we cannot assume a model of causality between the variables. Thus, future studies should gather data longitudinally.

The results of the current study open several avenues of potential research. First, we tested the affective events theory, by assuming humor events as an affective event. We also tested the model under analysis with the negative affect, however, as this part of the model was not significant, we opted by do not including it the study. This might have happened because in the study the prevalence of gelotophobes was low. Therefore, it may have biased the data. Moreover, because gelotophobia did not interact significantly with humor events, it is likely that there are other variables that may also account for these relations, and interact with gelotophobia, for instance, social anxiety, or other personality characteristics.

Future studies should also test the model with other designs, for instance, longitudinal or daily studies. By examining these relations with other designs, it will be possible to confirm the results of the present study and acknowledged it more consistently.

5.2 Practical implications

This study has several practical implications for organizational actors. First, it is important to acknowledge the relevance of humor events at work, as well as the prevalence of gelotophobes. With regard to this, managers may analyze whether their employees are high or low in gelotophobia, for instance through the measure

GELOPH<15>, and take measures accordingly. Once gelotophobes display less positive affect, it is likely that they experience more anxiety or discomfort while working, which in turn, will reduce their well-being. Thus, identifying whether individuals are gelotophobes may help to design interventions among them. For instance, modifying their perception of being ridiculous could have significant results for their sense of well-being. There are training programs and interventions aimed to promote and enhance individual's perceptions of themselves and to reduce the fear of being ridiculous at the eyes of their social peers. These training programs offer tools aimed at encouraging the maintenance of good perception of themselves in the face of humor experiences.

Employers could also offer interventions specifically focused on gelotophobes, in order to help them deal with their fear of being laughed at and, at the same time, promote positive perceptions of themselves. Moreover, psychological work climate appears to be a mechanism that may protect employees' well-being, from displaying less positive affect. Therefore, it is crucial that managers promote a good and supportive psychological work climate among their employees. For example, managers may organize social events or teambuilding activities, that may improve social and psychological bonds between workers. We believe that the emotional and social bonds that may be created among employees go a long way improving their quality of life at work. Other interventions or programs could be aimed at creating a more supportive and warmth work environment, that addresses the special needs of employees high in gelotophobia, possibly by providing access to psychological health and wellness services.

6. Conclusions

These results add to the existing literature on humor events and its impact on well-being; to date this is the first quasi-experimental study exploring the role of positive affect as mediator between humor events and well-being and analyzing the moderating role of gelotophobia and psychological work climate among these relationships. It was found that humor daily events affect well-being via affect, and that this relationship is conditional upon the levels of positive work climate, such that it is stronger when the scores of positive work climate are higher. Despite the significant direct effect of gelotophobia on well-being, it did not moderate the relationship between humor daily-events and well-being.

The present study addresses a major gap in the current positive psychology literature; whereas the correlational link between humor and well-being has been well-established, this is one of the first studies to examine some of the intricacies of this relation.

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