

Sense of Humor as a Predictor of Teacher's Social Competence

Tri Na'imah*

Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto
trinaimah@ump.ac.id

Arum Liyan Suwandi

Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto

Fatin Rohmah Nur Wahidah

Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto

Abstract. Teachers' social competencies are important to study because one indicator of teacher performance is success in communication and social interaction. Kindergarten teachers need special interaction styles because the subject of the students is children under-five ages. This article is the result of research on the influence of a sense of humour on the social competence of teachers. The research instrument was in the form of a sense of humour scale ($\alpha=0.932$) and social competency scale ($\alpha=0.919$) and was filled by 116 Kindergarten teachers in Cilacap Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. Hypothesis testing used product-moment correlation analysis techniques. The results showed that $r_{count} > r_{table}$ ($0.257 > 0.195$) with a significance value of 0.005 ($p < 0.05$). It means that the hypothesis was accepted, which stated there was a significant relationship between a sense of humour and social competence of the teacher. The result of the determinant coefficient analysis obtained was R^2 of 0.756. It means that a sense of humour made an effective contribution of 75.6% to social competence. Kindergarten teachers need to have social competence because teaching and educating work is always related to interactions with students and fellow teachers. A sense of humour makes teachers more relaxed and comfortable in doing their professional assignments.

Keywords: *sense of humour, social competence, teacher*

INTRODUCTION

In an educational organization, human resources are essential components that need to be considered to achieve organizational goals. The teacher plays an important role in the administration of education because it becomes the motor of curriculum realization in the learning process. Therefore in Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 concerning *Standard of Indonesian National Education*, article 28, teachers are

required to have pedagogical competence, personal competence, professional competence, and social competence [1].

In carrying out their professional duties, the teacher is involved in social interactions with fellow teachers, students, parents, and the community. For this reason, teachers must have social competence, namely, the ability to create and maintain social relations by managing themselves and their environment [2]. This issue of social competence is important to study because it can be used as a basis for developing teacher competencies. Several studies have found that teacher work is a tiring job [3], even considered a profession that has a high risk of stress [4]. Teachers who have high pressure will influence tasks related to social interaction.

Social competence is the ability to achieve personal goals in social interaction by maintaining a positive relationship with others [5]. Dimensions of social competence can be seen in the Table 1. Some of these dimensions were developed by researchers with a variety of research subjects, namely students from regular schools and special education [6], teachers [7], students [8], high school students [2]. The subject of this research is the teacher.

The dimension used to develop measuring instruments is a synthesis of some of these dimensions by adjusting to the characteristics of teacher work, namely: 1) Assertive behaviour that is initiative behavior, such as asking others first about information, introducing themselves and respond to other people's actions; 2) Cooperative behavior, that is the behavior of the teacher helping others, sharing about a matter, complying with school rules; 3) Empathy is the teacher's behavior that shows attention and respects the feelings of others from the perspective of others; 4) Responsibility, namely behavior that shows the ability of teachers to communicate with people and respect the work of others; 5) Self-control is the behavior that arises when a conflict situation, such as being able to respond to things that disturb the view properly. Several studies have shown that social competence is influenced by several variables, such as bad behaviour of friends,

harmony, problem-solving [9], sense of humour and emotional intelligence [8], sense of humour [10], emotional awareness, emotional expression and social support [11], emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence [7].

A sense of humour is also proven to be related to emotional intelligence so that it contributes to the quality of relationships [8]. In carrying out their duties as educators, teachers always use the communication process to students. Therefore teachers must have the emotional intelligence to increase the effectiveness of social relations. Teachers can use humour as part of the teaching and learning process because to develop aspects of cognition, affection and psychomotor early childhood requires a fun learning approach.

Some experts say that a sense of humour is a positive personality trait characterized by optimism, self-acceptance, self-confidence, and independence. People who have a sense of humour have self-defence mechanisms in overcoming difficult situations in their lives [12]. Thus, a sense of humour can be conceptualized as a habitual behaviour pattern/tendency to laugh, tell jokes and entertain others, the ability to make humour, cheerful habits, responses to certain humorous materials, a positive attitude towards humour and funny people), coping strategies with a humour perspective [13]. Thus, teachers who have a sense of humour are characterized by the nature of laughter and can make others laugh, have a positive attitude in facing difficult situations, and can maintain positive relationships with others.

To develop a sense of humour measuring instrument, some researchers describe several dimensions of sense of humour as in Table 2.

Table 1. Dimensions of Social Competence

No.	Dimensions	Researcher
1	- Adaptive behaviour - Social Skills - Acceptance of friends [1]	Frank M. Cresham dan Daniel I. Reschly
2.	- Be inclusive, act objectively, and not discriminate because of considerations of gender, religion, race, physical condition, family background, and socioeconomic status - Communicate effectively, empathically, and politely with fellow educators, education personnel, parents, and the community - Adapting to assignments - Communicate with the professional community itself and other professions verbally and in writing or other forms [2]	Citro W. Puluhulawa
3.	- Initiating relationships - Personal disclosure - Negative assertion - Emotional support - Conflict management [3]	Jeremy A. Yip dan Rod A. Martin
4.	- Cooperating skills - Empathy - Impulsivity - Disruptiveness [4]	Leena Holopainen Kristiina Lappalainen , Niina Junttila Hannu Savolainen

Table 2. Dimensions of Sense of Humor

No.	Dimensions	Researcher
1	Affiliative Self-enhancing Aggressive Self-defeating [3]	Jeremy A. Yip Rod A. Martin
2.	Humour social Adaptive humour Negation to Use Humor Attitude toward Humor Appreciation of Humor [5]	Helena José Pedro Parreira James A. Thorson Debra Allwardt
	Humour production Coping with humour Attitude toward humour humorous people Humour appreciation [6][5]	James A. Thorson F.C. Powell Ivan Sarmany-Schuller William P. Hamps

The dimension of sense of humour in this study is a synthesis of the dimensions that have been developed by Helena José et, al. [14] and James A. Thorson et, al. [15]. These dimensions are: 1) Humor Production is the ability of teachers to find ideas or ideas of humour in creating humorous material in each learning process. ; 2) Copying With Humor, the teacher's ability to use humour to overcome emotional problems and stressful situations; 3) Humor Appreciation is the ability of teachers to appreciate every funny event, for example from the behaviour of others and the teacher's appreciation of everything that is funny. ; 4) Attitude Toward Humor is a tendency to smile or laugh in every funny situation.

The description makes it clear that the sense of humour can be applied in learning because it is thought to strengthen social interaction between teachers and students. The subjects in this study were early childhood education teachers who in carrying out their professional assignments always interacted with children. Sense of humour is very necessary for the learning process to reduce student anxiety, increase motivation, and student interest in learning and strengthen social relationships. Early childhood education teachers need to have a sense of humour to improve social competence so that teachers can work professionally. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to determine the effect of sense of humour on the social competence of kindergarten teacher

METHOD

This research is a quantitative correlational approach. Population sampling was used in this study, with a total of 116 Early Childhood Education teachers in South Cilacap, Central Java, Indonesia. The characteristics of the research sample are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Characteristics of Research Samples

No.	Criteria	N	%
1.	Education		
	a. Undergraduate	39	33,6%
	b. 3-year diploma	12	10,3%
	c. 2-year diploma	1	0,9%
	d. 1-year diploma	2	1,7%
	e. Senior High School	59	50,9%
	f. Junior High school	3	2,6%
2.	Gender		
	a. Female	113	97,4%
	b. Male	3	2,6 %

Data collection uses social competency scale instruments and sense of humour scale. The dimension of social competence is based on the opinions of Frank M. Gresham and Daniel I. Reschly [6], Citro W. Puluhalawa [7], Jeremy A. Yip and Rod A. Martin [8] and Leena Holopainen et, all [2]. The social competency scale compiled consists of assertive behavioural dimensions (9 items), cooperative behaviour (7 items), empathy (10 items), responsibilities (8 items) and self-control (7 items). The reliability coefficient of the social competency scale is $\alpha = 0.932$.

The dimensions of the sense of humour scale are based on the opinions of Jeremy A. Yip and Rod A. Martin [8], Helena José, et al [14], and James A. Thorson [15] [14]. The sense of humour scale is based on the dimensions of humour production (10 items), copying with humour (13 items), humour application (8 items) and attitude toward humour (8 items). The reliability coefficient of the sense of humour scale is $\alpha = 0.919$.

The data analysis statistical technique used in this study is the product moment correlation technique because this study consists of two variables, namely social competence and a sense of humour.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Hypothesis testing used in this study is the correlation test analysis to determine the relationship between sense of humour with social competence. The results of the product moment correlation analysis showed a correlation value of 0.257 with p of 0.005 ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that $p < 0.05$ so that it is concluded that there is a positive and very significant relationship between sense of humour with social competence. The result of the determinant coefficient analysis is R^2 of 0.756. This value implies that in this study, sense of humour made an effective contribution of 75.6% to social competence, while 25.4% was contributed by other factors not examined.

This research proves that the sense of humour is related to the social competence of early childhood education teachers. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that sense of humour and social competence have significant positive correlation [10]. Although previous research by Gaur was conducted on higher secondary students, while this study was conducted on teachers, both showed consistent results. People who use humour to deal with stress related to the enjoyment of their social life and their feelings of complexity with others. People who use humour to deal with their problems, prefer to ease the burden on others and can provide support for others in a more comfortable and funny form, specifically related to everyday small problems. It also gives a positive impression on hers by having greater joy and confidence in daily interactions.

Many results of previous researches have assumed that a sense of humour is an asset for both physical and psychological well-being. People who have a greater sense of humour, possess a number of other positive characteristics, like being optimistic, higher self-confidence, self-acceptance, and a sense of autonomy. They also believed more capable of coping with stress more effectively, of enjoying better physical health, of experiencing less negative emotions, to have better and healthier relationships with others [10].

Humour plays an important role in interpersonal relationships, as an effort to enhance positive interactions, facilitating self-disclosure and social probing, defusing tension and conflict, saving face, and so on [8]. One of the biggest advantages, if someone has a sense of humour, is that it can improve social relationships and reduce stress. Sense of humour makes one more relaxed and makes others around him more comfortable [16].

Humour is important for a teacher to have because the teacher should be able to become an agent of social change that is a driving factor in social life in the classroom. The teacher does not have an obligation to educate students but must develop the personality of students. Sense of humour involves cognitive and emotional elements that are implied in interpersonal contexts [13]. Therefore teachers who have a sense of humour can imply it to improve the quality of social relationships with students and with fellow teachers and leaders. Teachers who are able to manage their emotions are proven to be able to improve social competence [7].

Teachers experience stress because in addition to teaching and educating, teachers are also responsible for administrative tasks and disciplining students [17]. Humour is also an aspect for teachers to reduce work stress by fostering a spirit of togetherness and maintaining cooperation with friends [18].

The results of data analysis found a determinant

coefficient $R^2 = 0.756$. This value implies that in this study, a sense of humour made an effective contribution of 75.6% to the social competence of teachers, while 25.4% was contributed by other factors. These results indicate that the sense of humour has an important role in improving the social competence of early childhood education teachers. Teacher's social competence will be seen in how teachers can competently get along politely with the community around the workplace and the environment in which they live and also the ability of teachers to foster relationships and cooperation, both with students at school, principals, fellow teachers, fellow professionals, parents of students, and the community environment [7].

The findings of the present study have important educational implications for teachers and also planners or policymakers. As we have found a significant positive correlation between sense of humour and social competence of the teacher, we can promote the social competence of teachers by introducing such as types of humour or humour style, that can be given to students while teaching process. The type of humour refers to humour that gives beneficial to relationships and emotional well-being (affiliative and self-enhancing humour), not humour that potentially detrimental (aggressive and self-defeating humour) [8]. Teachers can use humour as part of the teaching and learning process to support fun learning approach in the classroom while with students. Besides, humour plays a germane role as a coping mechanism on the initial personal-emotional adjustment of teacher and reduce the stress of the teacher while teaching students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the sense of humour is related to the social competence of early childhood education teachers. Early childhood education teachers need to have social competence because the work of teaching and educating is always related to interactions with students and fellow teachers. Sense of humour makes teachers more relaxed and comfortable in carrying out their professional tasks, thus increasing his professionalism as an educator. This study has limitations because it only involves two variables, and there is no study of demographic aspects. Further research is needed to develop the results of this study.

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