

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Myles D. Louderback for the Master of Science

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The purpose of this study was to examine how organizational values influence humor styles within the workplace. Researchers have shown values to be the core of organizational culture, influencing various aspects of the social and physical organizational characteristics. Humor researchers have shown how humor can be a strategic advantage in an organization, as well as a tool to accomplish organizational means. To understand how values influence humor styles in an organization, employees from a liberal organization and from a conservative organization were surveyed to see if the former would prefer more self-transcendent values and positive forms of humor, and if the latter would prefer more self-enhancement values and negative forms of humor. Significant differences were found between the two organizations in terms of values, humor preferences, and affective organizational commitment.

HOW ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE INFLUENCES THE USE OF HUMOR IN
THE WORKPLACE

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Myles D. Louderback

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

If you were to ask a person about his or her implicit thoughts of work, he or she may describe it as something not fun, boring, or dull. If asked, “Do humor and work belong together?” many people are likely to state they do not. Humor is a misunderstood tool many organizations have thrown out of their corporate culture. Due to the popularity and effects of Fredrick Taylor’s Scientific Management, people see work as a domineering iron cage (Morgan, 2006). People believe work must not to be fun. Yet people sharing this belief could not be more wrong. Humor can create a better organization, and when appropriately applied to organizational life it creates numerous strategic advantages by building better social interactions between employees. Human beings are predisposed to be social creatures. Researchers such as Abraham Maslow and David McClelland have built elaborate theories showing how individuals’ need for belongingness and affiliation motivates one’s behavior (McShane & Von Glinow, 2009). One basic human interaction that incorporates feelings of belongingness and affiliation is humor (Martin, 2006).

When observing an organization one can view it from numerous perspectives, one of which is viewing an organization as a social culture (Morgan, 2006). The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines culture as “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group” (Merriam Webster, 2011). Morgan asserted that even if organizations follow the same purpose (e.g., food service, customer service), how they look in fulfilling that purpose can be completely different. By this very definition, humor is an aspect of culture by being a part of a social group’s interactions.

In addition, just as cultures around the world tend to be diverse in their beliefs and practices, how people engage in humor around the world tends to be just as varied (Hudson, 2001). Yet, the need for social interaction and humor remains the same.

At the core of all cultures are values (Deal & Kennedy, 2000; Morgan, 2006). Values are what humans revolve their thoughts, beliefs, and practices from when creating a culture. When founding members of an organization create a company, they usually state company values, which are the ideals by which they believe their organization should live. When everyone within an organization shares similar values, it increases the cohesion and productivity of the organization (McShane & Von Glinow, 2009).

If humor is an aspect of culture, and at the heart of all cultures are values, then logically values affect humor. Following this reasoning, if two organizations possess different values, such as serving others versus serving the self, how they engage in humor should be different. In addition, the content, forms, taboo topics, and appropriate humor responses should reflect the organizational values of the members. If researchers know which organizational values foment particular styles of humor, they can promote values that lead to beneficial humor, and eliminate harmful values. In addition, certain values may be used to facilitate the use of humor within the workplace. By having an organization with more humor, an organization can reap the benefits of humor (e.g., creativity, stress relief) and rid itself of its negative image, thereby increasing organizational attractiveness to younger demographics and possibly increasing organizational commitment or satisfaction of current employees.

In this study, I will explain the importance of humor within the workplace by reviewing the research findings from the psychology and business literatures. The first

section will summarize what organizational culture is, emphasizing the importance of values in creating a culture. The second section will review research on humor. It will examine definitions of humor, benefits to using humor, and the utilization of humor within the workplace.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Culture

For this study, the definition of organizational culture comes from Jaskyte's 2010 definition stating, "organizational cultures are a set of shared values that help organizational members understand organizational functioning and thus guide their thinking and behavior" (p. 425). Deal and Kennedy (2000) stated culture is composed of five elements: the business environment, values, rites and rituals, and the cultural network. The business environment can be one of the biggest constructors in determining what the organization must do to succeed. This factor makes the business environment the "single greatest influence in shaping a corporate culture" (p. 13). In many ways, this statement is correct. The open systems model shows how an organization's external environment influences the organization through resources acquisition, rules and regulations, etc. (McShane & Von Glinow, 2009; Morgan, 2006).

Deal and Kennedy (2000) believed people are the chief resource of organizations and the best way to manage them is through the organizational culture. They advocate that organizations need to have strong cultures for two primary reasons. "A strong culture is a system of informal rules that spells out how people are to behave most of the time" (p. 15). "A strong culture enables people to feel better about what they do, so they are more likely to work harder" (p. 16).

Within the organization Deal and Kennedy (2000) defined values as "the basic concepts and beliefs of an organization: as such they form the heart of the corporate culture" (p. 14). Values let employees know what to do to succeed within the

organization. Values create all other components of the organizational culture (i.e., heroes, rituals, networks). Heroes are individuals chosen by the organization as individuals who personify the organization's values. Acting as role models, the legend of the hero is passed down to new employees, indoctrinating them into the organization's culture (Morgan, 2006). Rites and rituals are routines employees are supposed to follow. Rituals are procedures of day-to-day activities while rites are more formalized ceremonies (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). Like values and heroes, rites and rituals show employees how to act in certain circumstances. Lastly, cultural networks are the primary, but informal, means of communication within an organization. Most people know cultural networks as the office "grape vine". Many times these networks undermine the formal chain of communication within an organization, but understanding an organization's network gives access to the real organization and its true values (Morgan, 2006).

McShane and Von Glinow (2009) developed a similar list of culture's components. The most visible and artificial part of an organization's culture is its physical structure, office language, rituals and ceremonies, stories and legends. The most unseen and meaningful elements of the culture are the organization's shared values, composed of conscious beliefs and evaluations of right and wrong, and shared assumptions composed of unconscious beliefs taken for granted and implicit mental models.

Importance of Values

"Values are the bedrock of any corporate culture" (Deal & Kennedy, 2000, p. 21). Hultman (2005) stated values are psychological constructs developed by an individual(s),

and organizations get their values from the founding individual(s). “Once embraced, values play an executive role in personality and organizational culture, serving as criteria for making decisions and setting priorities” (Hultman, 2005, p. 33). Depending on the organization, values can encompass broad concepts or can define narrow topics. Both Deal and Kennedy (2000) believed the most successful organizations cultivate their organization’s stated values within their employees. Deal and Kennedy go as far as to state the main function of managers is to instill and develop organizational values within their employees.

To evaluate organization values Hultman (2005) listed four criteria. First, Hultman made the distinction between terminal values and instrumental values. Terminal values reflect the organization’s purpose, while instrumental values pertain to how employees carry out the organization’s purpose. The four criteria for evaluating organizational values effectiveness (i.e., ability to get desired results) are viability, balance, alignment, and authenticity.

Viability is the current values’ feasibility in today’s industry. Viability consists of the value’s content and value’s function. Value’s content looks at what exact values an organization chooses out of all possible values. This is important because values are not equal. Hultman discussed how many high-performing companies have values different from their less successful competitors. In addition, values do not just differ in importance but also function. Hultman discussed three functions: growth, stabilization, and defense based on Maslow’s 1968 functional categories.

Balance is the degree to which organizations emphasize various values properly. Hultman discussed two types of balances, value representation and value emphasis.

Value representation occurs when organizations equally value employees' needs for mastery (i.e., personal competence), a sense of contribution (i.e., social competence), self-respect (i.e., personal character), and acceptance (i.e., social character). Value emphasis occurs when organizations emphasize one of the four needs, while maintaining balance with the other three. Hultman discussed how values emphasis is harder to achieve than value representation because of its unbalanced nature.

Alignment is the degree to which values are compatible with one another. There are two types of alignments, intrapersonal and interpersonal. Intrapersonal is compatibility of values within a person, and interpersonal is compatibility between people, teams or organizations. It is best when values are congruent, within a person and between the person and the organization. Interpersonal alignment is similar to Morgan's (2006) discussion of espoused and actual values. Organizations openly state espoused values. While organizations may espouse values publically, they may not be the actual values the organization reinforces. There can be discrepancies between both intrapersonal and interpersonal values, either creating a type of hypocrisy. Usually it is best for organizations to have congruence between their espoused and actual values (Morgan, 2006). Morgan and Hultman (2005) agree when an organization forces values on an employee who do not share them, usually the employee will burnout.

The last Hultman (2005) value criterion is authenticity, which relates to alignment. Authenticity is the degree to which an individual or organization genuinely express and behaves according to their values. Authenticity is about providing real reasons behind actions. Having explanations allows people to justify what they are doing.

Rokeach (1979) discovered that the four British political parties significantly differ on multiple values, such as respect, beauty, salvation, family security, and national security. Values can be so powerful as to determine which college, major, or job one chooses (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). In their 2005 article, Haley and Sidanius reviewed literature on person-organization congruence and social dominance. Person-organizational congruence (i.e., person-job fit) occurs when an individual's values matches organizational values. The benefits of having high person-organizational congruence are higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and increased employee performance (Haley & Sidanius, 2005; Ponser, 2010). Haley and Sidanius (2005) then used person-organizational congruence to explain individuals' choices in joining social institutions (e.g., schools, majors, careers, or political parties) using social dominance theory as the critical value for explaining person-organizational fit.

Social dominance theory describes the "general human tendency to form and maintain group-based social hierarchies" (Haley & Sidanius, 2005, p. 189). People form hierarchies based on physical differences (e.g., ethnicity or sex) or social differences (e.g., caste, social economic status, nationality). Two distinct institutions Haley and Sidanius described were hierarchy-enhancers (i.e., advocates of hierarchies) and hierarchy-attenuators (i.e., resisters of hierarchies). Individuals' belief in equality creates these two groups. Institutions emphasizing hierarchies, such as schools and the military, not only preserve hierarchy-enhancers, but also attract individuals who hold similar hierarchical values to their organization. Whereas institutions valuing egalitarianism (i.e., opposes hierarchies) focus on benefiting non-dominant social groups, and attract people

with similar values. Examples of hierarchy-attenuator institutions include democratic organizations, such as civil rights groups.

One theory describing an organization's tendency to attract, select, and retain people with similar values or personalities as the organization is the attraction-selection-attrition theory (McShane & Von Glinow, 2009). The result of this attraction is a more homogenous organization with a stronger culture. Attraction describes potential job applicants' process of self-selection and avoidance of organizations whose values are incongruent with their own. Selection is the organizational process of hiring individuals who best fit their own organization. Organizations usually decide fit through interviews and other hiring procedures. Lastly, attrition occurs when value incongruence becomes too great for the employee to deal with that she/he leaves the organization. Many times employees freely leave their job solely due to the fact they feel they do not belong.

Employees can lack organizational commitment when their values are incongruent with organizational values (Haley & Sidanius, 2005; Hultman, 2005; Morgan, 2006). Finegan (2000) looked at the impact of organizational values on organizational commitment. Using Meyer, Allen, and Smith's 1993 commitment scale, Finegan found affective (i.e., commitment through emotional attachment) and normative commitment (i.e., commitment through the feeling of obligation) were higher when individuals perceived organizations as holding values of humanity (e.g., courtesy, consideration, cooperation) and vision (e.g., initiative, creativity, openness). Abbot, White, and Charles (2005) conducted an extension of Finegan's 2000 study and found supporting results. Not only did individuals' affective and normative commitment increase with perceived organizational values of humanity and vision, but also employees

working in welfare organizations held more affective and normative organizational commitment, leading the researchers to believe there was high person-organization fit.

Abbot et al. (2005) also conducted a second study looking at employee turnover intention. When given the choice of another job at an organization differing in values (e.g., a conservative organization), the researchers found employees in vision organizations denied the transfer to a non-vision organization. The researchers believe this shows organizations offering self-direction are valued higher than organizations offering other values. In both Abbot et al. studies, continuance commitment was not consistently related to any value, and in study two it was unrelated to turnover intention.

One popular values model is the Schwartz's 10 Values Model. Schwartz has replicated his finding in numerous studies and found 10 universal cultural values from which all cultures are constructed (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz & Sagie, 2000; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). The 10 values are self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). Schwartz developed his model based on Rokeach's 1973 motivational domains (i.e., enjoyment, security, achievement, self-directed, restrictive, prosocial, social power, and maturity) (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). When Schwartz compared the 10 values together, he discovered some correlated highly with one another (e.g., security and conformity) while others were inversely related (e.g., power and universalism). When mapped out the 10 values create a circular model (Figure 1). The model is dividable over two dimensions, other-focused vs. self-focused (i.e., self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement) and openness to change vs. conservation (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz & Sagie, 1995).

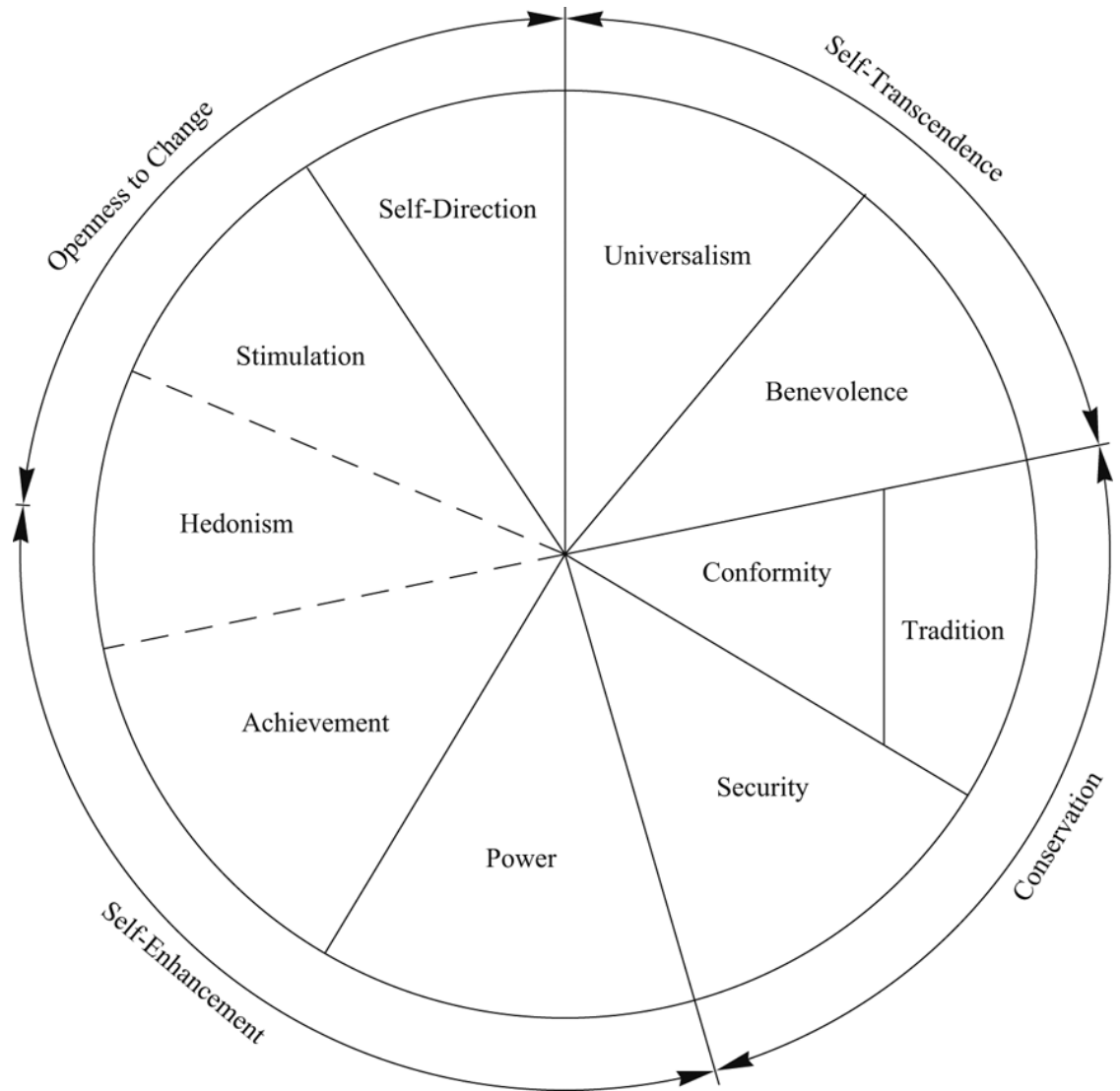


Figure 1. Schwartz Values Model

In 2010, Klausmeyer conducted a study exploring the effect values have on human resource practices. In her study, Klausmeyer used a shortened version of the Schwartz Values Model on two organizations thought to be contradictory on the self-transcendence/self-enhancement dimension. Klausmeyer considered an organization liberal if it held more self-transcendence values and conservative if it held more self-enhancement values. Her results showed employees from the liberal organization scored significantly higher on self-transcendence values (e.g., universalism and benevolence) than employees in the more conservative organization who scored higher on power and achievement.

Defining Humor

Humor is a basic human interaction (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). While some individuals complain they have no sense of humor, everyone is born with the capacity for humor. However, some need practice to develop their skills (Sathyanarayana, 2007). Though humans seem biologically predisposed to laughter, and researchers have found humor in all cultures, there has been little research on its importance in everyday life (Critchley, 2002; Vuorela, 2005). Martin (2006) stated humor today is an umbrella term for any action, seen in a generally positive and socially desirable light, electing the feeling of mirth (i.e., a positive feeling without laughter) or laughter.

Levels of humor. Raymond A. Moody Jr. defined six levels of humor (as cited in Sathyanarayana, 2007). During the first level, an individual only laughs when others within the group laugh. At the second level, an individual will laugh at his or her own jokes whether anyone else does. By the third level, an individual has a collection of jokes taken from others and retold for her/his amusement. Individuals within the next level use

their creativity to create their own jokes. Individuals in the fifth level can laugh at themselves without hastily becoming ill-tempered. At the final level individuals can use humor to its full potential by not taking themselves too seriously, being able to detach themselves from a situation or problem, see solutions in new light, laugh at their own failures, and see the world in a positive light (as cited in Sathyanarayana, 2007).

Martin (2006) divides humor's forms into three broad categories, prefabricated anecdotes called jokes, spontaneous conversational humor created intentionally through conversation to elicit mirth, and unintentional humor. Jokes are composed of a set up and a punch line. The set up creates the situational story for a listener, while the punch line shifts the story to something unexpected. Martin calls these types of jokes "canned jokes" due to the fact one can learn them and retell them.

Spontaneous conversational humor is context dependent. An example of this is when a person retells an event or story, which originally elicited humor, but the retelling does not (e.g., "I guess you had to be there"). Within itself, spontaneous conversational humor can take several forms. Long and Graesser (1988) identified 11 categories of humor: irony, satire, sarcasm, overstatement and understatement, self-deprecation, teasing, replies to rhetorical questions, clever replies to serious statements, double entendres, transformations of frozen expressions, and puns (as cited in Martin, 2006). As for the last form of humor, unintentional humor includes minor mishaps and accidents. In today's society, people label unintentional humor as slapstick or screwball comedy.

Categorization and measurement of humor. Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, and Wier (2003) divided humor into four styles: affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating with similar definitions. Affiliative is essentially non-

hostile humor used to affirm the self or others and enhances social bonds. Self-enhancing is more of a defense mechanism allowing the initiator to defend him or herself against threats by promoting a positive self-image in a non-detrimental way to others. Aggressive humor generally disregards its impact on other individuals, and can be used as a threat. Many times people using aggressive humor cannot control their impulses to say funny things that alienate others. Lastly, self-defeating humor allows the self to be the target for jokes. This type of humor tries to gain approval of a group, and is considered by the researchers as defensive denial.

Martin's et al. (2003) framework goes into more detail explaining the division between the four styles. Between the four, there are two dimensions. The first is whether humor enhances the self or others. Humor for the self not only increases one's self concept, but also can be a defense mechanism, a courage mechanism, or a stress reducer. It can also increase feelings of mastery over a situation. Humor for others causes an increase in others' feelings of well-being, reduces interaction tension, and increases social ties. Of the four, self-enhancing and self-defeating are humor for the self, while affiliative and aggressive humor are humor for others.

The second distinction of Martin et al.'s (2003) model deals with the consequences of humor, which can have either benign/benevolent consequences or detrimental/injurious effects on the self or others. Martin et al. pointed out that this dimension is not a dichotomy of good or bad, it is a continuum between benevolence and harm. As an example, a person may make a hurtful joke at another's expense, but while it hurts the target person, the joke also encourages bonding between the initiator and other observers who all laugh at the joke. Yet, there is a tendency for the four styles to fall into

mostly positive or negative categories. Self-enhancing and affiliative humor are more positive, while self-defeating and aggressive are more negative. However, as the above example illustrates, one person's aggressive humor is another's affiliative humor, the evaluation between positive and negative humor is dependent on the observer's perspective.

From their framework, Martin et al. (2003) created the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ). Their results showed significant main effects for gender. On all four scales (i.e., affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating) men scored significantly higher in humor use, especially aggressive humor. However, Martin et al. thought the differences in affiliative and self-enhancing humor were due to a larger male sample size. Yip and Martin (2006) confirmed Martin et al.'s (2003) findings that men engage in humor that is more aggressive. Decker and Rotondo (2001) also had similar findings. They concluded that positive humor is beneficial to male and female managers. Specifically, they found men use humor more frequently than women do, but women benefited the most in terms of perceived desirable leader behavior and leader effectiveness.

Humor's relationship to demographics and personality. Using the HSQ, Martin et al. (2003) was able to examine relationships of humor and other demographic information such as age. Martin et al. found age had multiple significant findings connected with humor. For affiliative humor, there was a significant main effect for both gender and age, but no significant interaction. The researchers found younger participants had significantly higher affiliative scores than older participants. The researchers believe this may be due to fewer social interactions as people age. There was no significant age

or gender effect for self-enhancing humor but a there was significant interaction. Martin et al. found older women exhibited a significantly higher level of self-enhancing humor use than younger women. Like affiliation humor, aggressive humor had significant main effects for both gender and age, but no interaction. Again, men had higher levels than women did; furthermore, younger participants had significantly higher levels of aggressive humor than older participants did. Lastly, self-defeating humor had no significant age effect.

After their initial study, Marin et al. (2003) found their HSQ had strong correlations with the Revised NEO Personality Inventory for personality, which assessed the five domains of the Five Factor Model, and the Extended Personal Attributes Questionnaire for masculinity and femininity. Extraversion correlated with affiliative humor ($r = .47, p < .001$) and self-enhancing humor ($r = .28, p < .001$). Aggressive and self-defeating humor were negatively correlated with Agreeableness ($r = -0.59, p < .001$, and $r = -0.23, p < .01$) and Conscientiousness ($r = -0.37$ and -0.34 , both p 's $< .001$). In addition, aggressive and self-defeating humor were also positively related to Neuroticism ($r = .21, p < .05$, and $r = .35, p < .001$). Self-enhancing humor was negatively correlated with Neuroticism ($r = -0.37, p < .001$). Finally Openness to Experience was related to both affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor ($r = .23, p < .01$, and $r = .27, p < .001$).

Yip and Martin (2006) found that HSQ scores relate to emotional intelligence. Their findings showed that women had higher emotional intelligence scores than men, and in the four components of emotional intelligence (i.e., emotional perception, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional understanding, and emotional management), women scored higher on every component except for emotional perception. Between the

four styles of humor and the four components of emotional intelligence, self-enhancing humor was positively correlated with emotional management ($r = .24, p < .05$). In addition, they found emotional perception to correlate negatively with aggressive and self-defeating humor ($r = -0.20, p < .05$, and $r = -0.28, p < .01$).

Romero and Cruthirds (2006) also specify five styles of humor: affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, mildly aggressive, and self-defeating. Affiliative humor's primary goal is to enhance social interactions. This style of humor can act as a lubricant, lessening tension and facilitating social interactions. Self-efficacy humor is a coping mechanism to deal with stress by trying to retain a positive outlook. Researcher found self-enhancing humor correlates negatively with neuroticism and positively with self-esteem. The goal for self-enhancing humor is to enhance the user's image relative to others within the group. The main difference between Romero and Cruthirds' 2006 model from Martin et al.'s 2003 model is the division of aggression. An initiator uses general aggressive humor to benefit him or herself at the expense of the joke's target, similar to superiority theory. Mildly aggressive humor is similar to aggressive humor but can have positive outcome for someone other than the initiator. One positive outcome is that observing others receiving ridicule can help promote conforming behaviors and help facilitate team cohesion. Lastly, individuals using self-defeating humor ridicule themselves in an attempt to gain acceptance by the group.

Functions of Humor

Positive humor can create social and cognitive benefits such as coping with stress, cognitive flexibility, creative problem solving, efficient organization and integration of memory (Morreall, 1997). Thinking, planning, and judgment, and higher levels of social

responsibility becomes more effective when accompanied by humor. The broaden and build theory states that emotions evolved as a physiological adaptor for survival functions. Positive emotions such as humor act as a broadening agent to increase an individual's focus of attention thereby allowing more creative processing (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005).

Romero and Arendt (2011) listed three functions of humor in various situations: superiority theory, incongruity theory, and relief theory. Superiority uses humor to achieve control over people by mocking them. Incongruity theory states that humor results from non-threatening surprises and unexpected events (Morreall, 1997). Relief theory focuses on the reaction to humor, laughter, which releases tension and stress throughout the body. In humor literature there are several repeating functions of humor; some may or may not be directly applicable to workplace activities. The four possible functions of humor are summarized below.

Tension relief. Individuals in a bad situation can cope by using humor. Even the most aggressive humor has the ability to relieve tension (Martin, 2006). Martin goes as far as to say tension relief is a defining characteristic of humor. An exercise Sathyanarayana (2007) described to show the relieving power of humor is to sit in a chair and to stiffen one's entire body, gripping the arms with one's full strength. Next, after holding one's breath for a few moments breathe out one's mouth and smile from ear to ear. The individual will realize that she/he cannot keep the same stiffness through her/his body as she/he smiles.

As people age, humor becomes a valuable resource for maintaining their physical and mental health. Marziali, McDonald, and Donahue (2008) found that coping humor

positively related to social support and self-efficacy. In addition they found coping humor to be negatively related to depression and anxiety ($r = -0.37$ and -0.50 , $p < .01$)

Negative humor: Social correction. Though humor has many positive functions, it is able to create pain when not properly used. Sathyanarayana (2007) identified two forms of harmful humor, vindictive and zero awareness. Vindictive humor is intentional, coming in the forms of hurtful teasing, remarks, provocations, and insults. The result of such humor is alienation, pain, and a feeling of inferiority. Yet, vindictive humor is stoppable by agreeing not to partake in giving it. What is hard to stop is zero awareness humor. This is humor given without full understanding of a person, situation, or other information, which causes harm to the receiver. In most cases zero awareness humor is not meant to harm, but succeeds in causing it.

Hobbs (2007) advocated the use of negative humor in courtrooms. Hobbs explained judges can properly use the negative functions of humor (e.g., segregate, humiliate) as a corrective tool. Hobbs elaborated by giving anecdotes of court cases where either the plaintiff or defendant knowingly acted irresponsibly, or tried to manipulate court proceedings to her/his benefit. When the judges made their verdict, they used humor in an attempt to make a point, clarify ambiguity, or deter others from making similar misjudgments.

Reframing situation. Humor can be used to frame or reference a time or situation. In addition, by poking fun at a situation, one can see the fallacies within it, and see the possibilities of changing it. Sathyanarayana (2007) made similar arguments stating humor allows an individual to see situations in a new light, and to see more of the entire picture. Sathyanarayana wrote that seriousness is like looking at a masterpiece of

art only up close, while humor allows individuals to step away and gaze upon the entire picture.

Part of reframing the situation is creativity. It takes someone unfixed enough to look at a situation from another perspective. Lang and Lee (2010) investigated how workplace humor relates to organizational creativity. Of their functions of humor, liberating humor is similar to reframing by allowing individuals to test something's openness, accessibility, or risk, which allows a change in perspective. They found that liberating humor had a significant positive relationship with organizational creativity, while controlling humor had a significant negative relationship with organizational creativity, and stress-relieving humor had no significant relationship with organizational creativity.

Communication. Speakers can use humor in their rhetoric, like stories or rhymes, to give a speech added meaning and provide needed clarity to a message (Conger, 1991). Sathyanarayana (2007) provided examples of using humor to communicate one's criticisms instead of traditional reprimanding (Martin, 2006). With traditional reprimanding, the initiator's remarks often trigger employee defensiveness. Afterward, the employee will disregard any remark made by the initiator in his or her search for a way to defeat the accuser. With humor, the employee is less defensive, thereby making him or her more receptive to the intended meaning of the remark. Remero and Cruthirds (2006) viewed humor as a management tool to bridge the gap between social statuses. Managers can use self-defeating humor to lower the power distance between themselves and their employees, thus creating a humanizing effect for the managers.

Applications to the Workplace

Humor produces organizational outcomes such as reduced stress, enhanced leadership, increased group cohesiveness, improved communication, strong organizational culture, and increased organizational creativity (Lang & Lee, 2010; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006).

In today's world, many people view corporate organizations as boring, dull, dreadful places to work (Vitug & Kleiner, 2006). When used properly humor can be used to connect with an audience, keep listeners' attention, and maintain group focus. Many organizations struggle with low organizational commitment and high turnover. Many employees have weak social bonds to their employers. Increasing the amount of humor within the workplace could help facilitate the creation and maintenance of social bonds and, thus, foster organizational commitment (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). Romero and Cruthirds suggested that effective organizational humor consisted of "amusing communications that produce positive emotions and cognitions in the individual, group, or organization" (p. 59).

Lang and Lee (2010) categorized three uses of humor in the workplace: liberating, stress relieving, and controlling humor. Liberating humor frees individuals from past perspectives and opens them to new possibilities. In addition, liberating humor provides a means to test a topic's openness and accessibility, and to assess an issue's risk. Stress relieving humor helps to alleviate tension within the workplace. The accumulation of stress on the job can impair organizational functions such as creativity. Humor is contradictory to stress and elevates employees' effectiveness and motivational states (Lang & Lee, 2010; Morreall, 1997). Controlling humor is similar to the theory of

superiority. Superiority humor uses negativity and harsh remarks to control others' behaviors, in addition to making the initiator feel better about himself or herself.

Effective managers need many skills, such as giving and seeking information, making decisions, influencing people, and building relationships (Yukl & Lepsinger, 1990, as cited in Martin, 2006). Managers can use the humanizing effects of humor when giving presentations to their subordinates (Vitug & Kleiner, 2006). When there is a considerable discrepancy in power, many upper managers seem inhuman to lower level employees. Managers using humor can close the perceived power gap, making their message more persuadable to their employees.

Many organizations are constantly looking for ways to improve internal communication. One way humor improves organizational communication is by testing the waters with a touchy subject (Martin, 2006). Topics considered inappropriate, such as a critique of a superior, are more socially acceptable using humor. If the manager shows indicators of getting upset, the initiator only has to say he or she was joking.

Similar to testing risky topics, humor can be used to condition employees (Martin, 2006; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). Quips and other negative humorous remarks can communicate proper and improper behavior in an effective way. In addition, humor can act as a reward for appropriate behavior. Humor can be an important tool during negotiations (Martin, 2006). By using humor in negotiations, individuals are able to reframe the situation, find creative solutions, and express or receive criticism less defensively.

The Organizational Humor Model (OHM) (Figure 2) created by Romero and Cruthirds (2006) shows how managers can utilize humor to benefit an organization. To

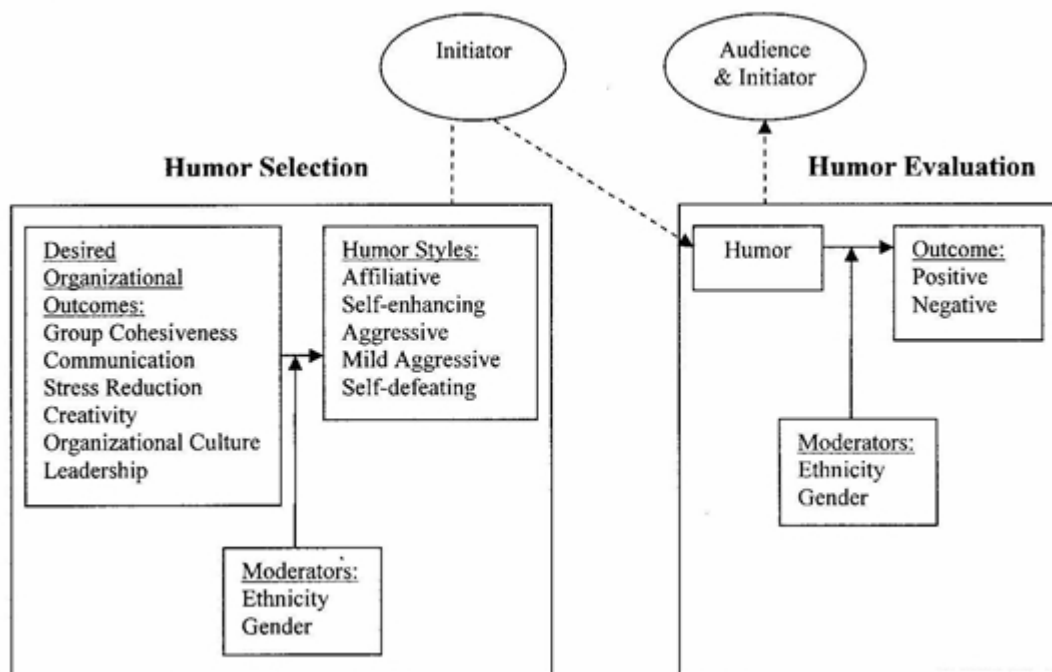


Figure 2. Organizational Humor Model

begin, an initiator selects a desired organizational outcome(s) to enhance (e.g., creativity, stress reduction, or leadership). After the desired outcome(s) have been selected, the humor style is chosen (e.g., affiliative, self-enhancing, or aggressive). The type of style chosen can occur either consciously or unconsciously and is the medium through which the message will transfer from the initiator to the audience/recipient. During the style selection process, the initiator's ethnicity and/or gender can moderate the selected style of humor. Once the initiator chooses the humor style, she/he delivers the humorous message to an audience/recipient. The last step in the model involves the audience/recipient's evaluation of the humorous message. The evaluation can be either positive or negative, and again ethnicity and gender can moderate the audience/recipient's evaluation of the message. If the message is positively evaluated, the desired organizational outcome should occur.

Romero and Cruthirds (2006) believed managers and teams could use this model to understand how ethnicity and gender affect workplace dynamics such as humor. In addition, if managers understood the relationship between desired organizational outcomes and styles of humor, they were better able to select humor styles to foster desired outcomes. Likewise, in accordance with the theme of this paper, managers can create better organizational cultures when they understand how humor plays a part of developing an open, creative, reduced stressed workplace.

In 2008, Romero and Pescosolido created another model of group effectiveness called the Group Humor Effectiveness Model (Figure 3). Their model outlines eight propositions about humor broken into three categories that create group effectiveness

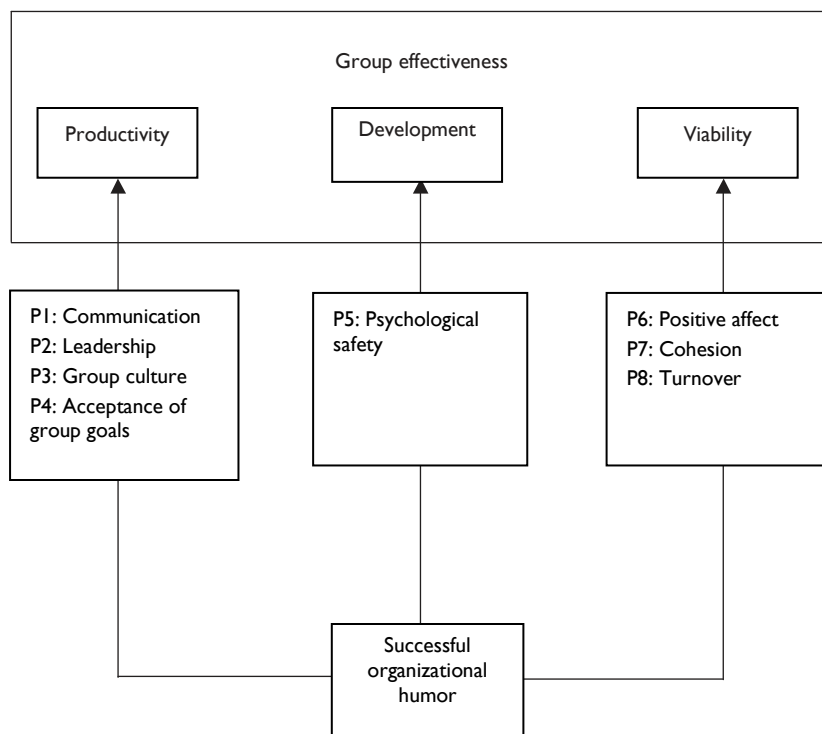


Figure 3. Group Humor Effectiveness Model (GHEM)

based on Hackman's 1986 article. Hackman stated that overall group effectiveness comes from a group's ability to be productive, to learn, and to be viable. Within productivity, Romero and Pescosolido (2008) stated four propositions. The first is that successful use of humor increases the quality and quantity of a group's communication. Secondly, leaders who successfully use humor manage group emotions better. Third, successful use of humor develops a strong performance oriented culture. Fourth, successfully using humor within a group leads to greater group consensus and acceptance of goals. The use of humor in these four ways should increase productivity.

Within the development category of group effectiveness, Romero and Pescosolido (2008) stated that the successful use of organizational humor increases members' perception of psychological safety, which results in higher levels of learning (2008). The authors use Hackman's 1986 definition of viability for the last aspect of group effectiveness. Viability is a group's ability to continue working over time; it encompasses both group cohesion and group stability. The sixth proposition states that the successful use of organizational humor creates positive affect between members. The seventh proposition states that the successful organizational humor generates group cohesion. The proposition states that the successful use of humor within groups reduces employee turnover.

In 2011, Romero and Arendt found significant relationships between Martin et al.'s 2003 HSQ and organizational outcomes (i.e., stress, satisfaction with coworkers, team cooperation, and organizational commitment). Their results showed a significant negative relationship between affiliative and self-enhancing humor to stress, but a significantly positive relationship between aggressive humor and stress. Satisfaction with

coworkers had a positive relationship with affiliative humor and a negative relationship with aggressive humor. Affiliative and self-enhancing humor positively related to team cooperation, while aggressive and self-defeating humor related negatively to team cooperation. Affiliative and self-enhancing humor positively related to organizational commitment, and aggressive humor negatively related to organizational commitment.

Culture and Humor

Critchley (2002) continually reinforced the idea that culture plays a major role in humor. Although humans may be predisposed to humor, how they engage in it, when it is appropriate, and what is considered humorous is determined by each society's cultural norms (Hudson, 2001; Martin, 2006). When analyzing humor one must take into count the context in which it took place. As mentioned, humor is a universal human trait (Critchley, 2002), but is also context-specific (Vuorela, 2005). As part of the social contract between a comedian and his or her audience, everyone must be on the same linguistic and cultural level for the joke to have its desired effect (Vuorela, 2005; Critchley, 2002). Often times it can be difficult or impossible to accurately translate a joke from one culture to another, due to the numerous cultural factors involved in what is said in the joke, and how the joke is said. Organizational researches have determined an organization's culture is an important factor when determining future organizational success and productivity (Martin, 2006). Many researchers have also stated group cohesiveness is one cultural trait that increases the likelihood of organizational success. "The overall culture, goals, and emphases of a given organization seem to be reflected in the ways individuals in the organization use humor in their interpersonal communication" (Martin, 2006, p. 365).

One study investigating the differences in humor between cultures was carried out by Kalliny, Cruthirds, and Minor (2006). They investigated differences in humor styles between the United States and Arab cultures (i.e., Egyptian and Lebanon). Using the HSQ and Martin et al.'s 2003 framework of humor, Kalliny et al. found self-defeating humor was significantly higher in the United States than in the Arab cultures. Self-defeating humor significantly correlated with self-enhancing humor in the Arab cultures, but not in the United States. As hypothesized, the United States scored significantly higher than the Arab cultures on self-enhancing humor. Like American men, Arab men used more aggressive humor than Arab women. Between the cultures, there was no significant difference between aggressive humor.

If values affect culture, and humor is a production of culture, different values should produce different forms of humor. If it were possible to determine which values create what forms of humor, one could resolve whether the organizational values are enhancing or restricting, beneficial or harmful. In addition, one may be able to verify whether certain values increase or decrease the frequency of engaging in humor. In the end, understanding humor is another facet to understanding culture. If Deal and Kennedy (2000) were right, knowing an organization's culture can lead to profits. In all, studying the relationship between organizational values and humor is a way of diagnosing maladaptive organizational values and missed opportunities from not utilizing humor or using inappropriate humor.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to explore how employees from organizations with different values use humor in the workplace. The independent variable, or in my case the

predictor variable because I will not be manipulating the independent variable, will be the type of organization for which the participants work. The participants will come from two organizations. One will have values that are more conservative and one will have values that are more liberal. As a manipulation check on each organization's values, a short measure of Schwartz' values model will be administered to the employees. The conservative organization will be expected to value self-enhancement values more and the liberal organization will be expected to value self-transcendent values more based on findings by Klausmeyer (2010).

The dependent variables, or in my case the criteria, will be how often the following four forms of humor are used in each type of workplace. The four forms of humor are affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating (Martin et al., 2003). The experimenter measured the four forms of humor using Martin et al.'s Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ). The participants were randomly selected from two organizations. For the conservative organization, I selected a for-profit manufacturing company. For the liberal organization, I selected a non-profit organization that serves the needy. As an additional dependent measure, I looked at organizational commitment using a shortened subscale of the Meyer, Allen, and Smith's 1993 survey. In all participants filled out a values, humor style, and organizational commitment survey.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. Employees from the conservative organization will lean more towards the self-enhancement end of Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension, while employees from the liberal organization will lean more towards the self-transcendence end.

This hypothesis is based off research done by Klausmeyer (2010), Schwartz and Sagie (2000), and Haley and Sidanius (2005) showing that institutions with differing values will attract and maintain connections with individuals who share similar values.

Hypothesis 2a. Employees from the conservative organization will use more self-enhancement humor than employees from the liberal organization.

Hypothesis 2b. Employees from the conservative organization will use more aggressive humor than employees from the liberal organization.

Hypothesis 2c. Employees from the liberal organization will use more affiliative humor than employees from the conservative organization.

Hypothesis 2d. Employees from the liberal organization will use more self-defeating humor than employees from the conservative organization.

These hypotheses come from a mixture of Martin et. al (2003) and the research stated in the first hypothesis. The logic is that if values affect culture, and humor is a result of culture, then organizational values should affect which humor styles are selected by the employees. I suspect the employees who work for conservative organizations, which have been found to hold more self-enhancement values (Klausmeyer, 2010), will choose to use the style of humor most appropriate for promoting the self. Following this logic, if employees choose to look out for themselves rather than their peers, they should try to lower their perceived competition's self-efficacy or self-image with aggressive humor. Employees of liberal organizations, on the other hand, are more likely to value benevolence and helping others. Thus, they would not try to harm their coworkers, but would instead promote others above them. Therefore, they would be more likely to use affiliative humor and self-defeating humor.

Hypothesis 3a. Individuals who lean more towards the self-enhancement end of Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension will use more self-enhancing humor than individuals who lean more towards the self-transcendent end.

Hypothesis 3b. Individuals who lean more towards the self-enhancement end of Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension will use more aggressive humor than individuals who lean more towards the self-transcendent end.

Hypothesis 3c. Individuals who lean more towards the self-transcendent end of Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension will use more affiliative humor than individuals who lean more towards the self-enhancement end.

Hypothesis 3d. Individuals who lean more towards the self-transcendent end of Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension will use more self-defeating humor than individuals who lean more towards the self-enhancement end.

These hypotheses are an extension of the second hypotheses, but the focus is on the individual instead of the organization. Similar logic applies for these hypotheses.

Hypothesis 4. Within each organization individuals who best conform to the organization's median on Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension will have greater affective organizational commitment.

Based from research done by Haley and Sidanisu (2005) on person-organization value fit, and Finegan's (2000) work on organizational commitment, I believe person-organization value fit on Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension can affect organizational commitment. I suspect individuals' values and affective organizational commitment to have a curvilinear relationship. Individuals closer to the

organizational value median will have higher affective organizational commitment than individuals having higher or less of the organization value.

Hypothesis 5a. Within each organization, individuals who best conform to the organization's median on self-enhancement humor will have greater affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5b. Within each organization, individuals who best conform to the organization's median on aggressive humor will have greater affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5c. Within each organization, individuals who best conform to the organization's median on affiliative humor will have greater affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5d. Within each organization, individuals who best conform to the organization's median on self-defeating humor will have greater affective organizational commitment.

Based off research mentioned in hypothesis four, and research done by Romero and Arendt (2011), I believe person-organization fit can apply not only to values but also humor style. I believe the four humor styles will have a curvilinear relationship with affective organizational commitment. Within each organization, individuals closer to the median humor for each style of humor will have more affective organizational commitment than individuals with higher or lower humor style score.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

Participants

For this study, I wanted to survey employees from a liberal organization and from a conservative organization. For the liberal organization, I choose a Midwestern state agency and for the conservative organization, I choose a Midwestern manufacturing company. I chose a state agency for my liberal organization due to its organizational purpose as a public service. I assumed that the people working there would hold more self-transcendent values. I chose a manufacturing organization as my conservative organization due to its organizational purpose of maximizing profits, which I believe fits self-enhancement values. I collected data from 43 liberal employees and data from 38 conservative employees, making a grand total of 81 participants.

The liberal organization consisted of 70% women and 30% men. One participant did not indicate his or her gender. The conservative organization consisted of 18% women and 82% men. Together there were 46% women and 54% men.

The average participant's age was 42. The average age of participants from the liberal organization was 50 with a standard deviation of 10.2, though several participants did not indicate their age. The average participant's age of the conservative organization was 35 with a standard deviation of 10.6.

On average, participants had seven years of service at their current organization. The average for the liberal organization was nine years with a standard deviation of eight. The average for the conservative organization was five years with a standard deviation of three. Several participants in both organizations did not report their years of service. The

modal position surveyed at both organizations was base line workers, making up 60 % of the total.

Measures

Values. The Schwartz Values Model (SVM) was developed by Shalom Schwartz in the late 1980s and has been used to analyze over 200 samples in 60 different countries over ten encompassing values (i.e., power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security) (Schwartz et al., 2001). The ten values are divided along two dimensions; self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement and openness to change vs. conservation. I used the same shortened version of the instrument used in Klausmeyer's 2010 study with one small change. Her version was composed of 20 items using a six-point Likert scale (1 = does not describe me, 6 = very much like me). My version added four items so that each variable would have an equal number of items, 12 items (see Appendix A).

To calculate an individual's score on the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement dimension, I subtracted the sum of his or her self-enhancement score from the sum of his or her self-transcendent score. Thus, a positive score indicated that self-transcendent values were more important to the individual, while a negative score indicated that self-enhancement values were more important to the individual.

To calculate an individual's score on the openness to change vs. conservation dimension, I subtracted the sum of his or her openness score from the sum of his or her conservation score. Thus, a positive score indicated that openness values were more important to the individual, while a negative score indicated that conservation values were more important to the individual.

I conducted a pilot test of these two dimensions with 30 undergraduates to ascertain the test-retest reliability of the dimensions. The correlation for the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement dimension was .80. The correlation for the openness to change vs. conservation dimension was .76. This indicates that both scales are fairly consistent over time. On the other hand, with my thesis participants the internal consistency of the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement dimension was .60 using coefficient alpha, and it was .70 for the openness to change vs. conservation dimension.

Humor. Martin et al. (2003) developed the Humor Style Questionnaire (HSQ) (see Appendix B) as a response to other humor surveys that did not acknowledge the negative effects of humor. After multiple pilot studies, Martin et al. came up with four forms of humor: affiliative, self-enhancing, self-defeating, and aggressive. These four forms make up two dimensions. The first dimension is enhancement of the self (i.e., self-enhancement and aggressive humor) vs. enhancement of another (i.e., affiliative and self-defeating humor). The second dimension is beneficial humor, which does not usually hurt anyone, and has mostly all positive outcomes (i.e., affiliative and self-enhancement humor) vs. harmful humor which usually causes pain, and has mostly all negative outcomes (i.e., aggressive and self-defeating humor) (Martin, et al., 2003). Research has shown this instrument related to mood surveys, the Five Factor Model, and to Agency and Communion surveys in predicted ways.

The survey is composed of 32 items total with eight items per style of humor. The survey uses a seven-point Likert scale (1 = being totally disagree and 7 = being totally agree). Eleven items were reverse scored to reduce response bias. To calculate an individual's humor style score I averaged the eight items of each scale, creating four

independent scores. Higher values for each scale indicate a greater usage of that particular style of humor, while lower scores indicate less usage of a particular style of humor. Reliabilities for the humor style scales indicated Cronbach alphas ranging from .77 to .81. In addition, test-retest reliability for the four humor scales range from .80 to .85, all significant at the .001 level (Martin, et al., 2003). With my thesis participants, a fairly strong internal consistency was found for all four scales using coefficient alpha: affiliation (.85), self-enhancement (.81), aggressive (.83), and self-defeating (.78).

Affective organizational commitment. I measured affective organizational commitment using a part of Myer et al.'s 1993 Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS) (see Appendix C). I left out the normative and continuence commitment items. The scale was composed of six items. In order to be consistent with the HSQ, I used a seven-point Likert scale (1 = being totally disagree and 7 = being totally agree). Two of the six items were reverse scored. Previous research has found the OCS to have an effective reliability between .72 - .81 (Abbot, et al., 2005; Finegan, 2000). Unfortunately, neither source identified the type of reliability. With my thesis participants, coefficient alpha was .86.

Organizational Humor Satisfaction Scale. This scale was made up of three items that measured the participants' overall satisfaction with humor within their organization (see Appendix D). The scale used the same seven-point Likert scale as the OCS and HSQ. I reverse scored one item, then averaged the three items together. A higher score indicates a higher level of participant satisfaction with the use of humor within his or her organizations, while a lower score indicates less satisfaction with the usage of humor within the participant's organization. With my thesis participants, coefficient alpha was .68.

Humor frequency items. I created two items asking about the perceived frequency of humor within the organization and immediate work group for later exploratory use (see Appendix E). The items used the same seven-point Likert scale as the organizational humor satisfaction scale, OCS, and HSQ. A higher score on either item indicates a higher frequency of humor within either the organization or immediate workgroup.

Demographics. To complete the survey packet participants completed five demographic questions: age, gender, tenure, position level, and education (see Appendix F).

Procedure

I gained approval to run my survey through previous acquaintances with each organization's human resources manager. After obtaining both organizations permission to conduct my study I obtained IRB approval prior to administering it (see Appendix G). The human resources manager from the conservative organization allowed me to sit in during their employees' lunch break. The conservation organization has three work shifts, with lunch breaks at 7:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. During those times I set up a table with my survey packets, envelopes, and pencils, and as workers came from the manufacturing floor. I asked them if they would participant in my survey and answered any questions or concerns they had about the survey.

Prior to starting the survey packets, participants were given an informational cover letter stating the purpose of the survey (see Appendix H). In addition to informing the participants about the nature of the study, the cover letter included a section emphasizing the confidentiality of the participant's data (i.e., only the researcher will

view the answers). Lastly, the cover letter stated participation in the study was voluntary, and if they wished not to participate, no punitive actions would occur. However, by choosing to complete the survey and sealing it within the manila-envelope, they were agreeing to participate and have their data analyzed. Once an employee completed the survey he or she handed it back to me where I placed it in an envelope marked confidential. Afterwards I offered deserts to the employees as thanks for their participation. To include employees who did not work in the factory I gave the human resources manager a stack of packets and envelopes to pass out to the office staff. During the noon lunch break the human resources manager returned the sealed completed surveys to me where I placed them with the other completed surveys.

The liberal organization allowed me one day to come and administer my survey. In the morning an employee from the human resources department and I went around the facilities asking anyone at their cubical if she/he would participant in my study. Any questions or concerns employees had about the survey were answered by either the human resources employee or me. Since time was not an issue I gave participants the option of either waiting until I came by at the end of the day to collect the packets, or they could put them in a drop box located on their floor. The drop boxes were marked for the survey packets, and labeled confidential. The rest of the day, I spent with the human resources department, occasionally answering questions about the survey from employees. At the end of the day, the human resources employee and I went around the facilities and collected the sealed survey packets from either the individual employee, or the drop box. The liberal organization has several employees who work off sight, to include them in this study, a company email was sent with an attached survey, which they

were able to be completed on the computer. These participants were asked to email me directly so their information would be kept confidential from the liberal organization.

Once I received an emailed packet I responded with confirmation and thanks.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis was that employees from the conservative organization would lean more towards the self-enhancement end (power and achievement) of Schwartz's other-focused vs. self-focused values dimension, while employees from the liberal organization would lean more towards the self-transcendence end (universalism and benevolence). This hypothesis was supported ($t(78) = -2.88, p < .01$). Interestingly the employees of both organizations preferred self-transcendent values. The mean self-transcendent value for the conservative organization was 0.07 and the mean value for the liberal organization was 0.45. If an organization's employees preferred self-enhancement values, the mean should have been a negative number.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypotheses were that employees from the conservative organization would use more self-enhancement and aggressive humor than the employees from the liberal organization, while employees from the liberal organization would use more affiliative and self-defeating humor than the conservative organization. One of these hypotheses was supported. Four independent sample *t*-tests found significant differences between the two organizations (affiliative humor, $t(76) = 2.65, p < .01$; aggressive humor, $t(76) = 4.13, p < .001$; self-defeating humor, $t(76) = 2.53, p < .05$). However, the only difference that was in the expected direction and was significant was that the employees at the conservative organization used more aggressive humor. Instead of finding that two types of humor were preferred at the liberal organization and another two types of humor

were preferred at the conservative organization, I found that all four types of humor were used more at the conservative organization (see Table 1).

Hypothesis 3

The third hypotheses stated that individuals who lean more towards the self-enhancement end of Schwartz's self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension would use self-enhancing and aggressive humor more than individuals who leaned more towards the self-transcendent end. Thus, negative correlations were expected between the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension and the use of self-enhancement and the use of aggressive humor. One of these hypotheses was supported, $r = -0.44$ ($p < .001$) for aggressive humor, while the other hypothesis was not supported, $r = -0.07$ ($p > .05$) for self-enhancement humor. On the other hand, positive correlations were expected between the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension and the use of affiliative humor and the use of self-defeating humor. Neither of these hypotheses were supported, $r = -0.23$ ($p > .05$) for affiliative humor, and $r = -0.15$ ($p > .05$) for self-defeating humor. The last two hypotheses were not only not supported, they were in the opposite direction than what was predicted. In fact, it seems self-transcendence has a negative relationship with all styles of humor.

Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis was, within each organization, individuals who best conform to the organization's median on Schwartz's self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension will have greater affective organizational commitment. To explore these two hypotheses I conducted two simple regressions, using a quadratic

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Four Styles of Humor

Humor Style	Organization	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Affiliative Humor	Conservative	35	5.71	0.87
	Liberal	43	5.12	1.04
Aggressive Humor	Conservative	35	3.68	1.07
	Liberal	43	2.76	0.91
Self-Enhancing Humor	Conservative	35	4.97	0.91
	Liberal	43	4.75	0.87
Self-Defeating Humor	Conservative	35	3.66	0.91
	Liberal	43	3.08	1.05

formula each time to examine the curvilinear relationship between values and affective organizational commitment. Neither hypothesis was supported. For the conservative organization the R^2 value was 0.025, which was not significant ($F(2, 34) = 0.44, p > .05$). For the liberal organization the R^2 value was 0.021, which was not significant ($F(2, 40) = 0.43, p > .05$).

Hypothesis 5

The fifth hypothesizes stated, within each organization, individuals conforming to the organization's median humor style (i.e., affiliative, aggressive, self-enhancing, and self-defeating) would have greater affective organizational commitment. To explore these eight hypotheses I conducted eight simple regressions using a quadratic formula each time to examine the curvilinear relationship between humor style and affective organizational commitment at each organization. None of the hypotheses was supported. For the liberal organization $R^2 = 0.095$ for affiliative humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 40) = 1.85, p > .05$), $R^2 = 0.072$ for aggressive humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 40) = 1.55, p > .05$), $R^2 = 0.029$ for self-defeating humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 40) = .59, p > .05$), and $R^2 = 0.120$ for self-enhancement humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 40) = 2.73, p > .05$). For the conservative organization $R^2 = 0.016$ for affiliative humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 32) = .27, p > .05$), $R^2 = 0.078$ for aggressive humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 32) = 1.36, p > .05$), $R^2 = 0.054$ for self-defeating humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 32) = .91, p > .05$), and $R^2 = 0.002$ for self-enhancement humor, which was not significant ($F(2, 32) = .03, p > .05$). These results can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Curvilinear Relationships between Humor and Commitment for Each Organization

Organization	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²
Conservative		
Affiliative Humor	.27	0.016
Aggressive Humor	1.36	0.078
Self-Enhancing Humor	.03	0.002
Self-Defeating Humor	.91	0.054
Liberal		
Affiliative Humor	1.85	0.095
Aggressive Humor	1.55	0.072
Self-Enhancing Humor	2.73	0.012
Self-Defeating Humor	.59	0.029

Note: None of the relationships were significant.

Exploratory Analyses

One of the limitations of this study is that the liberal and conservative organizations were so different demographically. For example, the liberal organization had more women, had older and better educated participants than the conservative organization. Thus, it is difficult to conclude whether the differences in humor and values between the two organizations were due to organizational culture differences or due to demographic differences, or both. In an attempt to gain clarity on this issue, I performed several multiple regression analyses where I first entered the demographic variables into the equation (dummy coding of sex) before entering organization (also dummy coded) to see if organization was still able to explain variance in the values or humor variables.

First, I performed a stepwise multiple regression to see how well gender, age, years of tenure, education, and organization predicted the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension. The first variable that was entered into the equation was gender, which explained 10% of the variance in the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension. None of the other variables were able to significantly explain more of the variance. Women were more self-transcendent than the men.

Next, I performed a stepwise multiple regression to see how well gender, age, years of tenure, education, and organization predicted affiliative humor. The first variable entered into the equation was age, which explained 6% of the variance in affiliative humor. None of the other variables were able to significantly explain more of the variance. Younger workers used more affiliative humor than older workers.

Next, I performed a stepwise multiple regression to see how well gender, age, years of tenure, education, and organization predicted aggressive humor. The first

variable entered into the equation was gender, which explained 25% of the variance in aggressive humor. The second variable entered into the equation was age, which explained an additional 10% of the variance. Together they explained 35% of the variance in aggressive humor. None of the other variables were able to significantly explain more of the variance. Younger men used more aggressive humor than older women.

Next, I performed a stepwise multiple regression to see how well gender, age, years of tenure, education, and organization predicted self-enhancing humor. None of the variables were significantly related to self-enhancing humor.

Next, I performed a stepwise multiple regression to see how well gender, age, years of tenure, education, and organization predicted self-defeating humor. The first variable entered into the equation was gender, which explained 32% of the variance in self-defeating humor. None of the other variables were able to significantly explain more of the variance. Men used more self-defeating humor than women.

In conclusion, although my first hypothesis was supported, the liberal organization was more self-transcendent than the conservative organization, this may be due to the gender differences between the two organizations. On the other hand, perhaps gender differences created different organizational cultures.

As an extension to my first hypothesis, that liberal and conservative organization would differ based on Schwartz's self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement dimension, I wanted to also see if they would differ on Schwartz's second values dimension, openness to experience vs. conservation. I conducted an independent samples *t*-test and found no significant difference between the organizations. This is consistent with Rokeach's

(1979) research, which found that Western liberalism and conservatism is divided mainly on the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement dimension.

Next, I conducted several independent sample *t*-tests between the organizations based on different experimental variables. I found four significant differences between the organizations based on affective organizational commitment ($t(79) = -2.39, p < .05$), education ($t(75) = -5.91, p < .001$), humor frequency within the organization ($t(79) = 5.23, p < .001$), and humor frequency within the immediate work group ($t(79) = 3.34, p < .001$). Based on the means, the liberal organization had higher affective organizational commitment ($M = 4.66$) than the conservative organization ($M = 3.89$). I coded education in ascending order from 1 to 5, one being the least amount of education (i.e., high school diploma) to five being the most education (i.e., doctorate degree). The liberal organization was more highly educated than the conservative organization (liberal $M = 2.60$, conservative $M = 1.27$). The conservative organization had both higher frequencies of humor within the organization (liberal $M = 4.16$, conservative $M = 5.79$) and within the employees' immediate work group (liberal $M = 5.05$, conservative $M = 5.95$).

My next exploratory analysis was to determine if any of the demographic information (e.g., gender, age, position, etc.) had any effects or relationships on either values or humor style. After multiple *t*-tests, four significant differences occurred based on gender: self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement values ($t(77) = 2.67, p < .01$), and openness vs. conservation values ($t(77) = -2.31, p < .05$), aggressive humor ($t(75) = 4.02, p < .001$), self-defeating humor ($t(75) = -4.19, p < .001$). It seems women are significantly more self-transcendent (men $M = 0.10$, women $M = 0.46$), while men are more open to other experiences (men $M = 0.03$, women $M = -0.39$). In addition, men use

more aggressive humor (men $M = 3.60$, women $M = 2.70$) and self-defeating humor (men $M = 3.76$, women $M = 2.87$) than women. These results are depicted in Table 3.

To determine if age affects values or humor, I correlated age with the different experimental factors. Several significant correlations emerged between age and self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values ($r = 0.40$, $p < .01$), openness vs. conservation values ($r = -0.30$, $p < .01$), affiliative humor ($r = -0.26$, $p < .05$), aggressive humor ($r = -0.51$, $p < .01$), and self-defeating humor ($r = -0.28$, $p < .05$). It seems as we age, people become more self-transcendent, hold values that are more conservative, and use less humor in general, although only affiliative, aggressive, and self-defeating humor were significant (see Table 4).

Affective organizational commitment significantly correlated with four variables. Gender correlated negatively with affective commitment ($r = -0.22$, $p < .05$), showing that women are more likely to have greater commitment than men. As years in tenure increased so did affective organizational commitment ($r = 0.33$, $p < .01$). Of the four styles of humor only self-defeating humor significantly correlated with affective organizational commitment ($r = -0.23$, $p < .05$). It seems that those who use more negative humor are less committed to their organization. Lastly, the highest affective organizational commitment correlation was with humor satisfaction scale ($r = 0.44$, $p < .001$). It seems the more satisfied employees are with their organization's humor, the more likely they will have higher affective commitment.

Finally, some interesting non-significant results occurred. The employees at the liberal organization were as satisfied with their organization's humor as the employees at the conservative organization, despite using all four styles of humor less than the

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Values and Styles of Humor Based on Gender

Variable	Gender	N	M
Self Transcendence-Self Enhancement	Men	45	0.10**
	Women	37	0.46**
Openness to Experience-Conservation	Men	45	0.03*
	Women	37	-0.39*
Affiliation Humor	Men	45	5.16
	Women	37	5.57
Aggressive Humor	Men	45	3.60***
	Women	37	2.70***
Self-Enhancing Humor	Men	45	4.76
	Women	37	4.96
Self-Defeating Humor	Men	45	3.76***
	Women	37	2.87***

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4

How Age Correlates with Values and Humor

Variable	Correlation with Age
Self Transcendence-Self Enhancement	.40**
Openness to Experience-Conservation	-.30**
Affiliation Humor	-.026*
Aggressive Humor	-.51**
Self-Enhancing Humor	-.015
Self-Defeating Humor	-.28*

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

employees at the conservative organization. Therefore, more humor does not necessarily equate with more organizational humor satisfaction. In fact, the liberal organization had higher affective commitment than the conservative organization, although it was less humorous.

In an effort to discover which styles of humor had positive or negative impacts on affective organizational commitment and organizational humor satisfaction at each organization, I examined the correlations among humor style and affective organizational commitment and organizational humor satisfaction at each organization. These are presented in Table 5. Although there are few significant results in Table 5, the pattern of results suggests that, in general, affiliative humor and self-enhancement humor work better to promote organizational affective organizational commitment and/or organizational humor satisfaction, while aggressive humor and self-defeating humor are more negative.

Table 5

Correlations among Humor Style, Affective Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Humor Satisfaction at Each Organization

	Conservative Organization		Liberal Organization	
Humor Style	Affective Organizational Commitment	Organizational Humor Satisfaction	Affective Organizational Commitment	Organizational Humor Satisfaction
Affiliative	.07	.29	.27	.34*
Aggressive	-.20	.10	-.11	-.05
Self-Enhancing	-.01	.39*	.34*	.30
Self-Defeating	-.21	.04	-.16	-.26

* $p < .05$

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Organizational leaders influence the values their organization holds, which results in various organizational outcomes. The purpose of this study was to determine if organizational values, at the core of an organization's culture, affect the style of humor used within that organization. Humor is an untapped cultural aspect that can bring about either positive or negative results and affect various organizational outcomes, such as leadership, cohesion, stress, and creativity.

My first hypothesis was supported. Employees from the conservative organization, such as a manufacturing facility, hold stronger self-enhancement values than employees from a liberal organization, such as a government service agency, who hold more self-transcendent values. These findings support Rokeach's (1979) findings that different parties (i.e., political) can vary significantly based on values. It is interesting to note that although there was a significant difference between the organizations, the conservative organization still held more self-transcendent values than self-enhancement values. In addition, though not hypothesized, it was interesting to see that there was no significant difference between the two organizations based on Schwartz's second values dimension, openness to experience vs. conservation (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). Rokeach found that Western societies tend to prefer openness to experience over conservation values. However, more recent research found that more openness, democratic societies have a greater variation of values, as people are more free to value different things.

The second hypotheses were partially supported. Out of the four styles of humor, only one was related to organization type in the predicted direction. The conservative organization used more aggressive humor than the liberal organization. Two other significant differences were found, but they were opposite to what was predicted; the conservative organization used more affiliative and self-defeating humor than the liberal organization. I originally suspected that employees within the conservative organization would use more self-enhancing humor because they had more self-enhancement values. While they did use more, it was not significantly more, than employees in the liberal organization.

Looking back at the organizational demographics, close to 82% of the conservative organization's sample were men, and around 70% of the liberal organization's sample were women. According to Martin et al. (2003) and Decker and Rotondo's (2001) findings, men engage in more humor, especially more aggressive humor, than women do, which can explain not only why the conservative used more humor all around than the liberal organization, but why aggressive humor had the highest significance. In addition, looking at the mean ages of both organizations, the conservative organization had younger employees, who use more humor than older employees do (Martin et al., 2003; Decker & Rotondo, 2001).

The third hypotheses were also partially supported. Only aggressive humor correlated negatively, as expected, with individual's self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values. What was that surprising was affiliative humor also negatively correlated with self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values. Though not significant, it

is worth noting that self-enhancement humor did correlate in the predicted direction. Overall, it seems that the more self-transcendent employees are, the less likely they are to use any style of humor. Perhaps self-transcendent people do like to engage in humor, or perhaps because of their increased focus on other individuals, self-transcendent people just do not want to engage in humor that may offend another individual. Maybe they are more likely to stop and think first, and by that time the moment for humor has fled, or take themselves too seriously. Either way further research is necessary to test these explanations.

The fourth hypothesis was not supported. I expected to find a curvilinear relationship between an employees' self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values and his or her affective organizational commitment within his or her organization. I expected an inverted-U relationship where employees near the median value for the organization would experience the greatest affective organizational commitment because those employees would best fit the organization's culture. This hypothesis was based on the research findings of Haley and Sidanis (2005) who stated better person-organization value fit increased organizational commitment. However, no patterns emerged between the employees' values and their commitment. One possible explanation for this could be the lack of variance in the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension. Most of the employees at both organizations were near the middle of the values scale, very few employees valued self-transcendence much more than self-enhancement, or vice versa.

The fifth hypotheses were also not supported. I expected to find curvilinear relationships between the employees' humor styles and their affective organizational commitment within their organization. I expected inverted-U relationships where

employees near the median humor style for their organization would experience the greatest affective organizational commitment because those employees would best fit the organization's culture. These hypotheses were based on the research findings of Haley and Sidanis (2005). However, no patterns emerged between the employees' style of humor and their commitment at either organization. One possible explanation for this could be that I measured how much each employee used a particular style of humor. I did not measure how much each employee appreciated each style of humor. For example, an employee might not use much aggressive humor, but he or she might really appreciate aggressive humor. If that employee's organization uses a fair amount of aggressive humor, it would be appreciation of humor, more than use of humor, which might best predict affective organizational commitment.

The exploratory analyses yielded some interesting results. The first interesting findings were the regressions of the demographic information with values and humor styles. Gender, along with age, was a significant variable in helping to explain the variances in Schwartz's self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement values dimension, aggressive humor, and self-defeating humor (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). This supports previous research that aggressive and self-defeating humor are both negative in nature, and are likely to be used more by men than by women (Yip & Martin, 2006; Martin et al., 2003; Decker & Rotondo, 2001). One possible explanation for this is that women are more emotionally intelligent than men and do not wish to engage in humor that might harm another person. This follows trends found in Yip and Martin (2006) who found women had higher emotional intelligence scores, and as the emotional perception aspect

of emotional intelligences increased aggressive humor and self-defeating humor significantly decreased.

Age was the other demographic variable that was able to explain a significant amount of the variance in affiliative humor and aggressive humor. This supports Martin et al.'s (2003) work stating younger people engage in more affiliative humor and aggressive humor. One possible explanation Martin et al. make is that as people age they engage in fewer social interactions with others. Though men in general engage in more aggressive humor than women do, my findings also support Martin et al.'s findings that younger men engage in more aggressive humor than older men do.

Though not all of the correlations were significant, an interesting pattern emerged in Table 2. At both organizations, employees who used the two negative styles of humor (aggressive and self-defeating) more were either less satisfied with their organization's humor or had less affective commitment for their organization. Employees who used the two positive styles of humor (affiliative and self-enhancement) more tended to experience greater satisfaction with their organization's humor or had more affective commitment for their organization. This is consistent with Martin et al.'s (2003) description of aggressive and self-defeating humor as negative humor styles and affiliative and self-enhancement humor as positive humor styles. Because some humor can be positive and some humor can be negative, it is not surprising that the organization that uses more humor, the conservative organization, does not enjoy more humor satisfaction.

Practical Implications

For the organizational leader, one implication of this study is that more humor does not necessarily translate into an increased liking for the organization or an increased use of humor. This is because some humor can be inappropriate. In fact, aggressive humor may not only be demoralizing, it could lead to a lawsuit, if it helped create a hostile work environment.

By promoting norms and taboos around what is appropriate and what is inappropriate humor, an organizational leader can use humor to develop or promote cultural values. For example, at IBM aggressive jokes are not tolerated because they violate one of the company's core values, respect for the individual. With humor, the important thing is the quality, not the quantity.

In my study, women were much less likely to use aggressive or self-defeating humor than men. Thus, if a male manager had a predominately female workforce, these would probably not be effective styles of humor to use to help the manager identify with her/his female subordinates. On the other hand, if a female manager had a predominately male workforce, aggressive or self-defeating humor would still not be recommended, but the manager may find those styles of humor more pervasive. As forewarned is forearmed, she could take one of two approaches. She could develop a thick skin or she could actively educate her sophomoric underlings about the damaging effects of negative humor.

In my study, younger employees were much more likely to use affiliative and aggressive humor than older employees. Thus, if you were an older manager with a predominately younger workforce, perhaps the use of affiliative humor might be an

effective style of humor to use to help the manager identify with her/his younger subordinates. Instead of appearing horribly old and obsolete, she/he might appear more “with it.” On the other hand, aggressive humor would still not be recommended, but the older manager, like the female manager in the previous paragraph, could develop a thick skin or actively educate his or her subordinates about the damaging effects of negative humor. If a younger manager had a predominately older workforce, she/he may need to reign in the funny persona, as the older workers beneath her/him may fail to find the humor in the remarks.

Limitations

The first limitation to this study was the uneven distributions of men and women, and the uneven distribution of ages between the two organizations. Having uneven demographics was a major issue because of sex and age are both related to values and humor. If this study were to be replicated, organizations should be selected a more even distribution of demographics.

An internal validity limitation was the use of the shortened Schwartz’s values scale (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). The reason for using the shortened scales was to shorten the length of the survey, making it more likely participants would complete the survey packet in the short time I was allowed to administer them. Yet, a shortened scale can compromise validity and reliability. If this study were to be replicated, I would suggest using the full values scales. For example on the SVM my internal consistency was low, .60 for the self-transcendent vs. self-enhancement dimension, and .70 for the openness to change vs. conservation dimension. However, the test-retest reliability for both

dimensions was high .80 and .76. In addition, my organizational humor satisfaction scale had a low alpha of .68, which could improve with more items within the scale.

Another internal validity limitation was the correlational design. No causal inferences can be drawn from any of my findings. I suggest for future research to design experiments or longitudinal studies that can better uncover causal relationships.

An external validity limitation to this study was the lack of cross-population generalizability. I used Midwest employees from two local organizations. The results I found may not generalize to other public service or private manufacturing facilities. Future attempts to research these topics should use other organizations, such as international branches or organizations in other regions, to determine whether the findings of this study generalize across other populations.

A last limitation of this research is the possibility that humor is not as salient in some organizations as in others. More than one participant either commented to myself or wrote on her/his survey packet that she/he experienced little humor in her/his organization. This could result from the recent layoffs at one of the organizations creating a sullen atmosphere during the time of the study, or it could be the result of the organization's culture. Either way, further research needs to examine the salience of humor within organizations and possible factors that may affect its frequency and its positive or negative impact on organizational life.

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Appendix A

Schwartz Values Questionnaire

Instructions: Listed below, on this page and the next page, are short verbal portraits of 24 different people. For each portrait, please indicate, “*How much this person is like you,*” by circling the appropriate number from 1 (not like me at all) to 6 (very much like me).

	Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Somewhat like me	Like me	Very much like me
This person likes to be in charge and direct other people’s efforts. This person wants to make command decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to this person. This person wants to do things in his/her own original way.	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is important for this person to be able to help his/her family and friends as best he/she can, whether the help be financial or emotional.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Being very successful is important to this person. This person wants to stand out and be one of the best.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person has great respect for his cultural traditions. This person tries to follow them as best he/she can.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person really wants to enjoy life. Having a good time is very important to this person.	1	2	3	4	5	6
A secure job, good benefits, and financial security are important to this person. This person wants to know that he/she, and his/her family, will be taken care of now and in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person looks for adventures and likes to take risks. This person wants to have an exciting life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
To live a good life, this person feels that it is important to restrain from socially inappropriate impulses and temptations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person thinks it’s important to be interested in things. This person is curious and tries to understand everything.	1	2	3	4	5	6

This person thinks it is important that every person in the world should be treated equally. This person wants justice for everybody, even for people he/she doesn't know.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person likes to take on challenging tasks, even if they may be anxiety provoking. This person wants to test his/her limits.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person always wants to help the people who are close to him/her. It's very important to this person to care for the people he/she knows and likes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person likes things that feel good. This person wants to enjoy good food, good sex, and/or good friends because they bring him/her pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person thinks it is important to do things the way he/she learned from his/her family. This person wants to follow the customs and traditions he or she grew up with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person would like to be rich. This person wants to have a lot of money and expensive things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person thinks everyone should follow society's rules, even when no one is watching people ought to behave appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Being good at what he/she does is important to this person. This person wants to feel competent in his/her profession.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The safety of his/her country is very important to this person. This person wants his/her country to be safe from its enemies.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Protecting the environment is important to this person because he/she believes Mother Earth nourishes us all, but only if we nourish her.	1	2	3	4	5	6
When playing a game this person likes to put forth his/her best effort.	1	2	3	4	5	6
When playing a game this person always plays to win	1	2	3	4	5	6
This person enjoys donating his/her time and or money to charitable organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	6

This person does not mind sacrificing him/herself to help a loved one.	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Appendix B

Humor Styles Questionnaire

Instructions: Below is a list of statements describing different ways in which humor might be experienced. Please read each statement carefully, and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with it. Please respond as honestly and objectively as you can. Use the following scale:

	Totally Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Totally Agree
I usually don't laugh or joke around much with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with humor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I let people laugh at me or make fun at my expense more than I should.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I don't have to work very hard at making other people laugh – I seem to be a naturally humorous person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Even when I'm by myself, I'm often amused by the absurdities of life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People are never offended or hurt by my sense of humor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will often get carried away in putting myself down if it makes my family or friends laugh.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I rarely make other people laugh by telling funny stories about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I am feeling upset or unhappy I usually try to think of something funny about the situation to make myself feel better.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When telling jokes or saying funny things, I am usually not very concerned about how other people are taking it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weaknesses, blunders, or faults.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I laugh and joke a lot with my friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My humorous outlook on life keeps me from getting overly upset or depressed about things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not like it when people use humor as a way of criticizing or putting someone down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I don't often say funny things to put myself down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I usually don't like to tell jokes or amuse people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I'm by myself and I'm feeling unhappy, I make an effort to think of something funny to cheer myself up.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sometimes I think of something that is so funny that I can't stop myself from saying it, even if it is not appropriate for the situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often go overboard in putting myself down when I am making jokes or trying to be funny.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I enjoy making people laugh.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I am feeling sad or upset, I usually lose my sense of humor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I never participate in laughing at others even if all my friends are doing it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When I am with friends or family, I often seem to be the one that other people make fun of or joke about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I don't often joke around with my friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is my experience that thinking about some amusing aspect of a situation is often a very effective way of coping with problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I don't like someone, I often use humor or teasing to put them down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I am having problems or feeling unhappy, I often cover it up by joking around, so that even my closest friends don't know how I really feel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I usually can't think of witty things to say when I'm with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I don't need to be with other people to feel amused -- I can usually find things to laugh about even when I'm by myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Even if something is really funny to me, I will not laugh or joke about it if someone will be offended.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Letting others laugh at me is my way of keeping my friends and family in good spirits.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix C
Organizational Commitment Survey

Instructions: Below is a list of statements describing ones organizational commitment. Please read each statement carefully, and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with it. Please respond as honestly and objectively as you can. Use the following scale:

	Totally Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Totally Agree
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix D

Organizational Humor Satisfaction Scale

	Totally Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Totally Agree
I like the way people use humor in my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People in my organization have a good sense of humor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People use too much inappropriate humor in my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Humor/jokes are frequently used in my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Humor/jokes are frequently used in my immediate work group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix E
Humor Frequency Items

	Totally Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Totally Agree
Humor/jokes are frequently used in my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Humor/jokes are frequently used in my immediate work group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix F
Demographic Questions

Age:

Gender: Male Female

Length of Service at Current Organization
(in years): years

Check which Describes your Current Position Best:

Top Management Middle Management First Line Supervisor

Base Line Worker Other

What is the highest level of education that you have completed:

High-school Bachelor's Degree Doctorate

Associate's Degree Master's Degree

Appendix G
IRB Approval



1200 Commercial
Emporia, Kansas
66801-5087

620-341-5351
620-341-5909 fax
www.emporia.edu

GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
RESEARCH AND GRANTS CENTER
Campus Box 4003

January 19, 2012

Myles Louderback
Psychology
911 Sylvan Apt. #2
Emporia, KS 66801

Dear Mr. Louderback:

Your application for approval to use human subjects, entitled "How Organizational Culture Influences the Use of Humor in the Workplace," has been reviewed. I am pleased to inform you that your application was approved and you may begin your research as outlined in your application materials.

The identification number for this research protocol is 12034 and it has been approved for the period 01/01/2012 to 01/01/2013.

If it is necessary to conduct research with subjects past this expiration date, it will be necessary to submit a request for a time extension. If the time period is longer than one year, you must submit an annual update. If there are any modifications to the original approved protocol, such as changes in survey instruments, changes in procedures, or changes to possible risks to subjects, you must submit a request for approval for modifications. The above requests should be submitted on the form Request for Time Extension, Annual Update, or Modification to Research Protocol. This form is available at www.emporia.edu/research/docs/irbmod.doc.

Requests for extensions should be submitted at least 30 days before the expiration date. Annual updates should be submitted within 30 days after each 12-month period. Modifications should be submitted as soon as it becomes evident that changes have occurred or will need to be made.

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I wish you success with your research project. If I can help you in any way, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Michael Butler' followed by a small 'pr'.

Michael Butler
Chair, Institutional Review Board

pf

cc: George Yancey

Appendix H

Cover Letter

Dear Employee,

Please be so kind as to help me in collecting data for my thesis project about how organizational values affect styles of humor. Although this survey is voluntary, I hope you will participate because it is an opportunity for you to communicate your thoughts about the values and humor your organization hold.

The attached survey includes 68 items. It should take about 15 minutes to complete. Please do not put your name on this survey.

To protect your confidentiality, your individual surveys will only be seen by me and my thesis committee. Surveys will be kept in a locked file and disposed of after 3 years. Only summarized findings will be shared.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask during the survey. If any questions come up after the survey, please contact me at the phone number or email address listed below. Thank you for your help in my research efforts.

Best Regards,

Myles D. Louderback
Industrial Organizational Psychology
Graduate Researcher
mlouderb@emporia.edu
785-213-5817

I, Myles Louderback, hereby submit this thesis/report to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, digitizing or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

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Date

How Organizational Culture Influences the Use of Humor in the Workplace
Title of Thesis

Signature of Graduate School Staff

Date Received