

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


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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

This opening is strong, but it would benefit from a clearer statement of the research gap earlier. The novelty of this study should be emphasized (e.g., testing mediation in a family context in South Africa).

This paragraph mixes developmental findings (infancy, adolescence) with family stress contexts. It would improve readability if these are separated into two distinct discussions.

The research question is clearly stated, but hypotheses are not explicitly formulated. Adding directional hypotheses would strengthen the scientific rigor of the introduction.

This is a strong statement, but it should be slightly tempered given the cross-sectional design. Consider rephrasing to “Positive affect appears to function as a mediator...” to avoid overstating causality.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

While the broaden-and-build theory is cited, the paragraph would benefit from a deeper explanation of how positive affect translates into reduced stress at the family level (e.g., through communication, conflict management).

The description of assumption testing is commendable, but the details on handling missing data are absent. Please explain whether any imputation, listwise deletion, or pairwise deletion was applied.

The indirect effect is reported as significant ($\beta = 0.09$, $p = .002$). However, it would be helpful to indicate whether bootstrapping was used to test mediation, since this is considered best practice.

The paper notes that humor styles matter but admits they were not differentiated. This limitation should be moved to the "Limitations" section for coherence.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.