



The influence of humor on workplace mentoring and employee attitudes

Zachary M. Love¹, Jennifer L. Bowler¹, Mark C. Bowler¹

¹Department of Psychology, East Carolina University, United States

How to cite: Love, Z. M., Bowler, J. L., & Bowler, M. C. (2020). The influence of humor on workplace mentoring and employee attitudes. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal*, 48(9), e8459

Organizations are under continual pressure to cultivate an environment in which employees feel valued and committed, and mentoring provides one channel through which this may be achieved. In particular, the dynamics characterizing the mentoring relationship are of paramount importance. In the current study of 108 direct-care staff at a psychiatric hospital, we investigated the influence of 2 aspects of these dynamics—mentor humor style and the frequency with which humor is used—on protégé satisfaction with the mentoring relationship and on several key work-related outcomes (i.e., organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions). Overall, mentor humor style and frequency were both positively associated with protégés' mentoring satisfaction. Furthermore, mentoring satisfaction favorably influenced protégés' affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction, both of which were inversely related to their turnover intentions. Theoretical and practical implications of these results, along with the role of indirect effects, are discussed.

Keywords

organizational commitment; humor; humor style; mentoring; mentoring satisfaction; job satisfaction; turnover intention

The quest to ensure employee satisfaction and commitment is becoming increasingly vital in today's competitive marketplace. To promote growth and sustainability, organizations devote considerable time and effort to employee development (Noe et al., 2014). This investment is crucial as its absence may lead to decreased job satisfaction, diminished affective organizational commitment (Bulut & Culha, 2010), and increased turnover (Jiang et al., 2012). In an effort to prevent these costly issues, organizations frequently implement programs designed to enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Slattery et al., 2008).

Mentoring relationships provide a promising avenue for achieving these outcomes, as they enable protégés to develop their professional identity and personal competence (Eby, 2012; Eby et al., 2008). Developmentally oriented dyadic partnerships between less experienced and more seasoned individuals (protégés and mentors, respectively) provide a source of encouragement and support for protégés (Eby et al., 2013; Kram, 1985). Additionally, high-quality mentoring relationships are known to mitigate work-related stress and alleviate the psychological and physical aspects of protégé strain (Eby et al., 2008, 2013). Likewise, mentor support has been implicated in a host of other positive outcomes for protégés, including enhanced self-efficacy, increased job satisfaction, and reduced turnover inclinations (Eby et al., 2013; Payne & Huffman, 2005; Robert et al., 2016).

Literature Review and Development of Hypotheses

Humor

The role of *humor* in mentoring has been examined by analyzing stimulus characteristics (i.e., the nature of jokes), associated cognitive processes (i.e., the perception and appreciation of humor), and behavioral responses, such as laughing (Martin, 2000). Sense of humor has been conceptualized as both a social skill and an enduring personality trait, and its interpersonal benefits are evident in numerous domains, including educational settings and the workplace (Ford et al., 2016; Yip & Martin, 2006). As humor relieves tension, reduces frustration, and facilitates communication, it serves as a catalyst for relationship building and increased productivity (Cooper et al., 2018). Additionally, leaders who employ constructive forms of humor are more likely to attract, psychologically empower, and boost the job satisfaction and performance of their followers (Decker, 1987; Kim et al., 2016; Pundt, 2015; Vecchio et al., 2009).

Humor has been identified as an important facet of relationship building and maintenance in a variety of leader–follower and supervisor–subordinate contexts (Decker, 1987; Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Gkorezis et al., 2011; Vecchio et al., 2009; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999). Evidence of humor’s benefits in these similar relational dyads provides the framework for applying humor to mentoring relationships. Specifically, the effect of humor on protégés’ mentoring satisfaction depends on the particular humor style (positive or negative) that is operative (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Kim et al., 2016; Yam et al., 2018). Although various factors may influence the quality of each mentoring relationship (Eby et al., 2013), we expected the utilization of a positive (e.g., affiliative, self-enhancing) rather than a negative (e.g., aggressive, self-defeating) humor style to influence protégés favorably. Specifically, protégés whose mentors exhibit a positive humor style should report more favorable outcomes than do those whose mentors demonstrate a negative humor style. Similarly, protégés whose mentors frequently employ constructive forms of humor should experience greater relationship satisfaction (Cooper et al., 2018).

Hypothesis 1: Positive mentor humor style will be positively related to protégé mentoring satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Positive mentor humor frequency will be positively related to protégé mentoring satisfaction.

Mentoring

Mentors serve as socializing agents, providing protégés with multiple forms of support (i.e., instrumental and psychological) as well as knowledge about organizational values and goals (Eby et al., 2013; Payne & Huffman, 2005). Moreover, the quality of mentoring relationships carries implications for key organizational variables, such as affective commitment and turnover intentions (Eby et al., 2013; Payne & Huffman, 2005). High-quality mentoring may significantly influence protégés’ turnover intentions through both direct and distal mechanisms (Scandura, 1992; Wanberg et al., 2003). Mentors influence protégés’ self-efficacy perceptions by challenging their negative self-views (Rhodes, 2002) and by providing coaching, positive feedback, and support (Bearman et al., 2007), thus bolstering their protégés’ self-confidence (Eby et al., 2013; Johnson, 2007). Job resources, including interpersonal support from colleagues, are associated with increased work engagement and reduced turnover intentions. As turnover considerations are frequently attributed to diminished job satisfaction (Griffeth et al., 2000; Harter et al., 2002; Li et al., 2018; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), one avenue for retaining valued employees is the development of high-quality mentoring relationships that enhance protégés’ job satisfaction (Robert et al., 2016).

In summary, protégés in highly satisfying mentoring relationships experience numerous positive work-related outcomes, including an increased sense of affiliation, which is evidenced by greater psychological attachment to the organizational context, deeper contentment with the roles that they occupy, and more favorable attitudes toward the organization (Eby et al., 2013; Yam et al., 2018). Mentors also serve as role models for managing stress and equip protégés with resources to cope with work-related challenges, both of which engender positive work-related attitudes among protégés (Scandura, 1997). Collectively, these sentiments and attitudes translate to increased affective organizational commitment (Wanberg et al., 2003) and greater job satisfaction (Eby et al., 2008).

Hypothesis 3: Mentoring satisfaction will be positively related to protégé affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 4: Mentoring satisfaction will be positively related to protégé job satisfaction.

As noted, interrelationships among job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, work stress, and turnover intentions have been empirically supported. First, a positive association has been established between job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Kittinger et al., 2009). Job satisfaction and work engagement share many common antecedents, and clear linkages between work engagement and affective organizational commitment are also evident in the literature (Hakanen et al., 2008; Liu & Huang, 2019). Second, affective organizational commitment has been shown to be inversely related to turnover intentions (Vandenberghe & Bentein, 2009; Wanberg et al., 2003). Employees who feel valued and supported are less inclined to leave the organization, and previous findings support a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Griffeth et al., 2000; Harter et al., 2002; Li et al., 2018). Finally, as work stress undermines job satisfaction and significantly increases turnover intentions (Addae & Wang, 2006; Bhuian et al., 2005; Yankelevich et al., 2012; Zivnuska et al., 2002), we expected to find an inverse relationship between work stress and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Job satisfaction will be positively related to affective organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 6: Affective organizational commitment will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 7: Job satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 8: Work stress will be negatively related to job satisfaction.

The research model is presented in Figure 1.

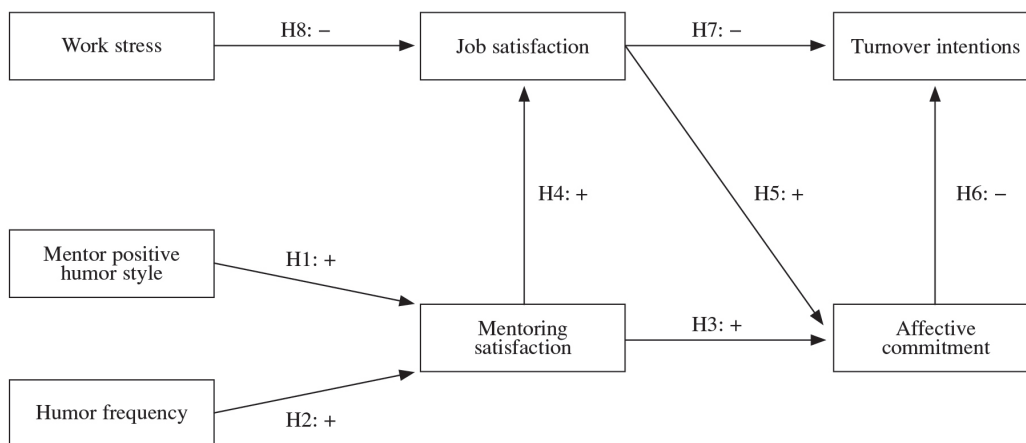


Figure 1. Annotated hypothesized path model. + denotes a positive hypothesized correlation, – denotes a negative hypothesized correlation.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 108 direct-care staff (54 mentors, 54 protégés) who worked at a large state psychiatric hospital and who were assigned to a formal mentoring relationship. Direct-care staff provide basic nursing care for psychiatric patients within the hospital, including supervision of patients (e.g.,

observing and monitoring), direct patient care (e.g., ensuring that nutrition, elimination, and personal hygiene needs are met), communication/documentation of patient progress, and routine ward activities (e.g., collecting routine laboratory specimens). The mentor subsample included 33 men (61%) and 21 women (39%), of whom 45 (83%) were African American and nine (17%) were Caucasian. With regard to age, two mentors (4%) were between 18 and 29 years old, 14 (26%) were between 30 and 39 years old, 34 (63%) were between 40 and 49 years old, and four (7%) were between 50 and 59 years old. The protégé subsample included 27 men (50%) and 27 women (50%), of whom 44 (81%) were African American and 10 (19%) were Caucasian. In terms of age, 19 (35%) were between 18 and 29 years old, 17 (32%) were between 30 and 39 years old, 12 (22%) were between 40 and 49 years old, and six (11%) were between 50 and 59 years old.

Procedure

Upon receiving approval from the institutional review board of the sponsoring educational institution, hospital administrative personnel distributed flyers, published a newsletter article, and issued a broadcast email describing the study in hopes of maximizing participation. Following the recruitment phase, 225 packets containing all study-related materials (i.e., instruction sheet, consent form, and measures) were dispensed. The packets were returned in sealed envelopes via internal hospital mail delivery. Although participants were asked to identify their mentor or protégé for matching purposes, once matched, all names were coded and all identifying information was discarded to preserve confidentiality. Participants were entered in a drawing to win one of several \$25 gift cards for a large online retailer, resulting in a response rate of 24%.

Measures

Job satisfaction. The Global Job Satisfaction Scale (Pond & Geyer, 1991) was used to measure job satisfaction. This measure includes six questions (e.g., “How does this job compare with your ideal job?” and “In general, how much do you like your job?”) scored on 5-point Likert scales, with response options tailored to each question. Scores range from 6 to 30, with higher scores indicating greater global job satisfaction. This scale displayed good internal consistency ($\alpha = .88$).

Affective organizational commitment. The Affective Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990) was used to assess affective organizational commitment. This measure features eight items (e.g., “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own” and “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me”) scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Scores range from 7 to 56, with higher scores indicating greater affective organizational commitment. This scale demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = .86$).

Work stress. The Revised Stress in General Scale (Yankelevich et al., 2012) was used to measure work stress. This measure features eight items typically scored on a 3-point nominal scale: 1 (*yes*), 2 (*no*), and 3 (*not sure*). Respondents indicate whether each of a set of descriptors (e.g., “demanding,” “pressured,” and “overwhelming”) describes their job situation. As positive instances of stress were of interest in this study, the values for yes, no, and not sure were coded as 1, 0, and 0, respectively. These scores were summed to yield a composite score ranging from 0 to 8, with higher scores indicating greater levels of work stress. This scale displayed good internal consistency ($\alpha = .83$).

Turnover intentions. Turnover intentions were evaluated with a single item (“All in all, how likely is it that you will try to find a new job within the next 12 months?”) scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 7 (*very likely*). Single items have been shown to be effective for assessing specific work-related behavioral intentions (Johnsrud & Heck, 1994) and are commonly used to assess turnover intentions (see, e.g., Conklin & Desselle, 2007).

Humor frequency. Humor frequency was measured using a single item (“How often is humor used in your mentoring relationship?”) scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*).

Mentor positive humor. Mentor positive humor style was assessed using the Positive Mentor Humor Scale, which was adapted from the Positive Supervisor Humor Scale (Decker & Rotondo, 2001). This measure features five items (e.g., “My mentor has a good sense of humor” and “My mentor uses nonoffensive humor”) scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). Aggregated scores range from 5 to 35, with higher scores indicating use of a more positive humor style and lower scores indicating a more negative humor style. This scale displayed excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = .95$).

Mentoring satisfaction. Mentoring satisfaction was evaluated with a single item (“How satisfied are you with your mentoring relationship?”) scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 7 (*very satisfied*).

Data Analysis

The hypothesized path model was tested using Mplus, which runs a series of sequential multiple regressions for each step in the model to calculate path estimates, standard errors, *t* values, and probability values for each proposed path. The sequential multiple regressions were as follows: (1) affective commitment and job satisfaction predicting turnover intentions, (2) job satisfaction and mentoring satisfaction predicting affective commitment, (3) work stress and mentoring satisfaction predicting job satisfaction, and (4) mentor positive humor style and humor frequency predicting mentoring satisfaction.

In addition to path coefficients and their associated probability values, we computed the explained variance and residual variance statistics for each dependent variable in the model (i.e., turnover intentions, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and mentoring satisfaction). To assess the fit of the model with the data, we calculated several fit indices within the Mplus program: chi square, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), comparative fit index (CFI), and Tucker–Lewis index (TLI). Statistical significance of .05 was employed for all data analysis procedures.

Results

Descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) and correlations for the study variables in the path analysis are presented in Table 1. Additionally, Table 2 provides the decomposition of effects from the analysis of the hypothesized path model. Hypotheses 1 and 2 relate to the overall impact of humor on mentoring satisfaction. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, mentor positive humor style was associated with increased mentoring satisfaction; thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Likewise, support was garnered for Hypothesis 2, as humor frequency was significantly and positively related to mentoring satisfaction. Taken together, the two humor variables accounted for 63% of the variance in mentoring satisfaction. Mentor positive humor was unrelated to age ($r = .10, p = .47$), gender, $F(1, 51) = .36, p = .55$, or race, $F(1, 52) = 1.49, p = .23$. Humor frequency was also unrelated to age ($r = -.09, p = .52$) or gender, $F(1, 51) = 1.73, p = .19$; however, Caucasian protégés reported significantly higher levels of mentor humor frequency ($M = 4.30, SD = 0.82$) than African American protégés did ($M = 3.25, SD = 0.78$), $F(1, 52) = 14.44, p < .001$. Similarly, mentoring satisfaction was unrelated to age ($r = .05, p = .75$) or gender, $F(1, 51) = 0.64, p = .43$, but Caucasian protégés reported significantly higher levels of mentoring satisfaction ($M = 6.40, SD = 0.97$) than African American protégés did ($M = 5.20, SD = 1.65$), $F(1, 52) = 4.82, p = .03$.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations of Variables in the Path Analysis

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. TI	2.74	1.42	1.00						
2. AC	37.41	7.46	-.69***	1.00					
3. JS	22.67	4.51	-.60***	.68***	1.00				
4. WS	4.57	2.41	.28*	-.31*	-.36**	1.00			
5. MS	5.43	1.61	-.44**	.55***	.58***	-.30*	1.00		
6. HF	3.44	0.88	-.36**	.34*	.39**	-.06	.66***	1.00	
7. MPHS	27.39	5.80	-.50***	.56***	.64***	-.35**	.75***	.59***	1.00

Note. *N* = 54. TI = turnover intentions; AC = affective commitment; JS = job satisfaction; WS = work stress; MS = mentoring satisfaction; HF = humor frequency; MPHS = mentor positive humor style.

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

Table 2. Decomposition of Effects From Path Analysis

Effect	(Intercept) Standardized estimate	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> ²
TI	(0.03)			.51***
on AC	-.53	0.12	-4.43***	
on JS	-.24	0.13	-1.83	
AC	(-.13)			.50***
on JS	0.54	0.11	5.12***	
on MS	0.24	0.10	2.02*	
JS	(0.05)			.36***
on WS	-.21	0.11	-1.82	
on MS	0.52	0.10	5.18***	
MS	(-.04)			.63***
on HF	0.34	0.10	3.38**	
on MPHS	0.55	0.09	5.88***	

Note. TI = turnover intentions; AC = affective commitment; JS = job satisfaction; MS = mentoring satisfaction; WS = work stress; HF = humor frequency; MPHS = mentor positive humor style.

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

Hypotheses 3 and 5 relate to protégé affective commitment. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, higher levels of mentoring satisfaction were associated with increased affective organizational commitment; thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported. In addition, job satisfaction had a significantly positive relationship with affective commitment, thus offering support for Hypothesis 5. Collectively, mentoring satisfaction and job satisfaction explained 50% of the variance in affective organizational commitment. Affective organizational commitment was unrelated to age ($r = .03$, $p = .82$), gender, $F(1, 51) = 0.21$, $p = .65$, or race, $F(1, 52) = 0.26$, $p = .61$.

Hypotheses 4 and 8 relate to protégé job satisfaction. Results in Tables 1 and 2 support Hypothesis 4, in which we proposed that higher levels of mentoring satisfaction would be related to increased job

satisfaction. In contrast, Hypothesis 8, in which we proposed that work stress would be negatively related to job satisfaction, was not supported, as no significant relationship was found. Taken together, mentoring satisfaction and work stress accounted for 36% of the variance in job satisfaction. Work stress and job satisfaction were both unrelated to age ($r = -.22, p = .11$ for both constructs); gender, $F(1, 51) = 0.14, p = .71$, and $F(1, 51) = 0.25, p = .61$, respectively; or race, $F(1, 52) = 0.22, p = .64$, and $F(1, 52) = 0.32, p = .57$, respectively.

Finally, Hypotheses 6 and 7 relate to protégé turnover intentions. Hypothesis 6, in which we proposed that affective organizational commitment would be negatively related to turnover intentions, was supported (see Tables 1 and 2). Contrary to our prediction, job satisfaction and turnover intentions were not significantly related; thus, Hypothesis 7 was not supported. Collectively, affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction explained 51% of the variance in turnover intentions. Overall, the final model (see Figure 2) demonstrated a good fit to the data, $\chi^2(10, N = 54) = 11.48, p = .32$; RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .06, CFI = .99, and TLI = .98. Turnover intentions were unrelated to age ($r = -.09, p = .53$), gender, $F(1, 51) = 0.25, p = .62$, or race, $F(1, 52) = 0.71, p = .41$.

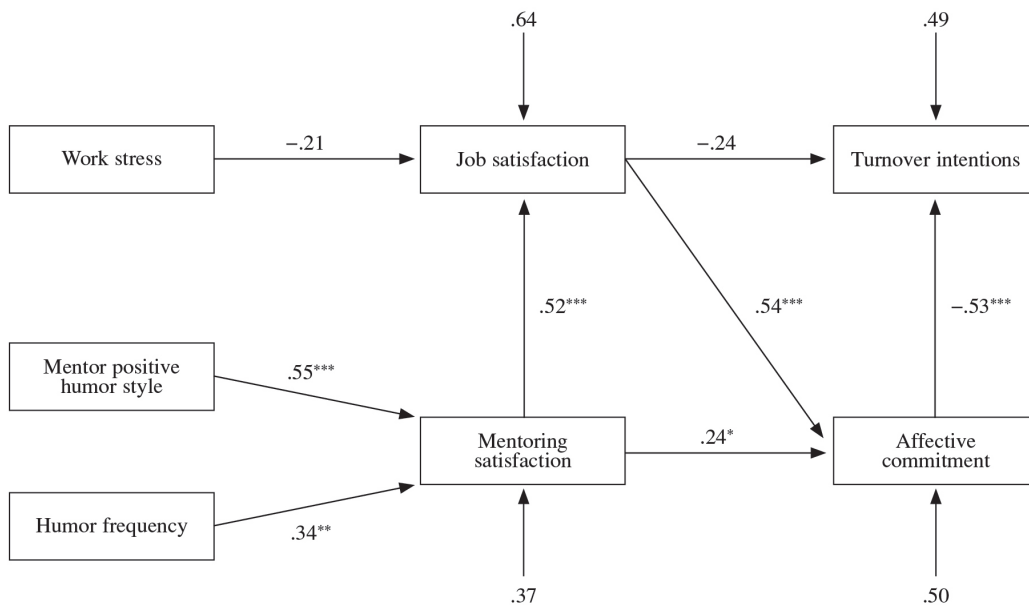


Figure 2. Path model of results.
 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

Considerable knowledge has been amassed regarding antecedents and correlates of successful mentoring relationships and the influence of mentoring on work-related outcomes (Cooper et al., 2018; Eby et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2016). Indeed, humor has been associated with numerous benefits in organizational and mentoring contexts (Cooper et al., 2018; Gkorezis et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2016; Vecchio et al., 2009). The current results contribute to the empirical integration of humor and mentoring and offer support for our proposed model. Specifically, mentor positive humor style and humor frequency displayed significant relationships with mentoring satisfaction and interpersonal dynamics (Cooper et al., 2018; Vecchio et al., 2009). Furthermore, mentoring satisfaction exhibited direct, positive effects on both affective

organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Finally, support was garnered for two of the four remaining paths involving work-related outcomes, such that job satisfaction was positively associated with affective organizational commitment (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Kittinger et al., 2009), and affective organizational commitment negatively influenced turnover intentions (Vandenberghe & Bentein, 2009; Wanberg et al., 2003). To our surprise, the hypothesized effects of job satisfaction on turnover intentions, and of work stress on job satisfaction were not supported, and inspection of the scatterplots did not suggest the presence of curvilinear relationships. Nonetheless, collective analysis of the model paths indicates that the proposed model had an extremely good fit to the data.

Implications

The results of this study offer several practical implications. First, our findings highlight the importance of humor as an antecedent of successful mentoring relationships. Mentors appear to function comparably to superiors, teachers, and leaders with respect to power dynamics, roles, and support (Decker, 1987; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999), which suggests that mentors who use positive humor impart beneficial outcomes to protégés that are similar to those applicable to subordinates, students, and followers. Moreover, our results indicate that frequent use of humor between mentors and protégés facilitates greater mentoring satisfaction via increased interpersonal attraction and improved relationship maintenance. This suggests that employees who frequently use positive humor in the workplace would be ideal candidates as mentors for new organizational members.

The results of this study additionally provide support for the impact of humor on work-related outcomes. Our findings suggest that humor positively influenced the success of mentoring relationships, which subsequently favorably affected protégés' job satisfaction, affective commitment, and, ultimately, their turnover intentions (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Kittinger et al., 2009; Vandenberghe & Bentein, 2009; Wanberg et al., 2003). Thus, due to its relative importance in successful mentoring relationships, humor may be a valuable predictor of the aforementioned work-related outcomes.

Finally, these findings contribute to collective knowledge regarding the consequences of workplace mentoring. The results of our study of actual organizational mentoring practices underscore the profound influence of successful mentoring on work-related sentiments (i.e., job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment) that subsequently affect turnover intentions (Griffeth et al., 2000; Harter et al., 2002; Li et al., 2018). Taken together, our findings provide empirical support for including humor in personnel selection processes and training initiatives directed at improving affective job-related reactions and decisions. However, continual evaluation of mentoring programs is critical to their success.

Study Limitations

Although a statistically significant model was garnered in the current study, two main limitations should be noted. First, due to the cross-sectional nature of the study common method variance cannot be ruled out, and any causal attributions drawn from the current data should be made with caution. However, the path analytical method, which involves sequential multiple regression combined with empirical evidence for the causal nature of the study variables, offers cogent credence to our findings. Second, we employed self-report measures, some of which featured a single item. Although the use of these measures did not appear to encumber our results, including multiple-item measures of all constructs would be advisable in future research. In addition, self-reported information regarding mentoring satisfaction or other work-related outcomes may be subject to response distortion arising from social desirability bias or other demand characteristics related to the study. These issues are of particular concern when assessing work-related attitudinal outcomes and mentor evaluations. However, as our participants were informed that all identifying information would be removed, we considered these concerns to be allayed.

Directions for Future Research

In light of the noted study limitations and the statistically significant path model, we have identified several avenues for further study. First, in future endeavors researchers should employ a longitudinal design to examine the stability of the path model across time. This would allow mentors and protégés to be matched based on the positive humor style of the mentor. Furthermore, the use of a longitudinal design would permit researchers to track mentoring pairs from the onset of the relationship, thus enabling the detection of differences in humor frequency, mentoring satisfaction, and other work-related variables over time.

A second valuable addition to the model would be the examination of different operationalizations or conceptualizations of humor within mentoring relationships. For example, the application of Martin's (2000) typology of affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating styles of humor may clarify the way in which mentor–protégé agreement with respect to the various humor styles contributes to a successful mentoring relationship. Specifically, a high level of agreement on affiliative and self-enhancing (positive) humor styles may yield mentoring outcomes that are different to those associated with high agreement on the aggressive and self-defeating (negative) humor styles. Examining different operationalizations of humor (e.g., amount of laughing, coping humor use) may provide valuable insights into other aspects of humor within mentoring relationships. Additionally, conducting qualitative studies may advance understanding of the role that humor plays in mentoring relationships.

A third avenue for future research involves including objective outcomes of successful mentoring relationships in the current model. Investigating whether humor in mentoring relationships has distal outcomes on actual turnover or productivity would further enhance organizational theory as well as offer valuable implications for practice.

Conclusion

Our findings contribute to the literature on humor and mentoring by clarifying the roles of mentor positive humor style and humor frequency in workplace mentoring relationships. Specifically, our results indicate that humor should be recognized as an important antecedent of a successful mentoring relationship. Mentors who frequently use constructive forms of humor may be viewed more positively by their protégés, thus engendering protégé satisfaction with the relationship as well as more favorable job attitudes of protégés. Furthermore, in light of these results we can unequivocally assert that humor is a variable of interest in organizations, and one that significantly influences work-related outcomes. Consequently, managers who are responsible for recruitment and training in organizations may wish to incorporate humor into selection procedures for applicants and training initiatives for employees. Finally, our findings demonstrate the implications of successful mentoring for job attitudes and performance. The influence of humor in the workplace warrants further empirical attention, and we hope that the results of this study will inspire more extensive research efforts in this domain.

References

- Addae, H. M., & Wang, X. (2006). Stress at work: Linear and curvilinear effects of psychological-, job-, and organization-related factors: An exploratory study of Trinidad and Tobago. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 13(4), 476–493.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/1072-5245.13.4.476>
- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1), 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x>
- Bearman, S., Blake-Beard, S., Hunt, L., & Crosby, F. J. (2007). New directions in mentoring. In T. D. Allen & L. T. Eby (Eds.), *The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach* (pp. 375–395).

Blackwell Publishing.

Bhuiyan, S. N., Menguc, B., & Borsboom, M. (2005). Stressors and job outcomes in sales: A triphasic model versus a linear-quadratic-interactive model. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(2), 141–150.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963\(03\)00132-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963(03)00132-2)

Bulut, C., & Culha, O. (2010). The effects of organizational training on organizational commitment. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 14(4), 309–322.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2419.2010.00360.x>

Conklin, M. H., & Desselle, S. P. (2007). Job turnover intentions among pharmacy faculty. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 71(4), Article 62. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2ZSgKOM>

Cooper, C. D., Kong, D. T., & Crossley, C. D. (2018). Leader humor as an interpersonal resource: Integrating three theoretical perspectives. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(2), 769–796.

<https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2014.0358>

Cooper-Hakim, A., & Viswesvaran, C. (2005). The construct of work commitment: Testing an integrative framework. *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(2), 241–259.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.2.241>

Decker, W. H. (1987). Managerial humor and subordinate satisfaction. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal*, 15(2), 225–332.

<https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.1987.15.2.225>

Decker, W. H., & Rotondo, D. M. (2001). Relationships among gender, type of humor, and perceived leader effectiveness. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 13(4), 450–465.

<https://bit.ly/2XgZUHW>

Eby, L. T. (2012). Organizational mentoring: Past, present, and future. In S. Kozlowski (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 615–642). Oxford University Press.

Eby, L. T., Allen, T. D., Evans, S. C., Ng, T., & DuBois, D. L. (2008). Does mentoring matter? A multidisciplinary meta-analysis comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 72(2), 254–267.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2007.04.005>

Eby, L. T., Allen, T. D., Hoffman, B., Baranik, L. E., Sauer, J. B., Baldwin, S., Morrison, M. A., Kinkade, K. M., Maher, C. P., Curtis, S., & Evans, S. C. (2013). An interdisciplinary meta-analysis of the potential antecedents, correlates, and consequences of protégé perceptions of mentoring. *Psychological Bulletin*, 139, 441–476.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029279>

Ford, T. E., Platt, T., Richardson, K., & Tucker, R. (2016). The psychology of humor: Basic research and translation. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, 2(1), 1–3.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/tps0000066>

Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of Management*, 26(3), 463–488.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600305>

Gkorezis, P., Hatzithomas, L., & Petridou, E. (2011). The impact of leader's humor on employees' psychological empowerment: The moderating role of tenure. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 23(1), 83–95.

<https://bit.ly/36ka9ze>

Hakanen, J. J., Schaufeli, W. B., & Ahola, K. (2008). The job demands-resources model: A three-year cross-lagged study of burnout, depression, commitment, and work engagement. *Work & Stress*, 22(3), 224–241.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370802379432>

Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(2), 268–279.

<https://doi.org/10.1037//0021-9010.87.2.268>

Jiang, K., Lepak, D. P., Jia, H., & Baer, J. C. (2012). How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(6), 1264–1294.

<https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0088>

Johnson, W. B. (2007). Student-faculty mentorship outcomes. In T. D. Allen & L. T. Eby (Eds.), *The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach* (pp. 189–210). Blackwell Publishing.

Johnsrud, L. K., & Heck, R. H. (1994). A university's faculty: Predicting those who will stay and those who will leave. *Journal of Higher Education Management, 10*, 71–84.

Kim, T.-Y., Lee, D.-R., & Wong, N. Y. S. (2016). Supervisor humor and employee outcomes: The role of social distance and affective trust in supervisor. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 31*, 125–139.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-015-9406-9>

Kittinger, J. D., Walker, A. G., Cope, J. G., & Wuensch, K. L. (2009). The relationship between core self-evaluations and affective commitment. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management, 11*(1), 68–92.

<https://bit.ly/3cWTynC>

Kram, K. E. (1985). *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life*. Scott Foresman.

Li, L., Zhu, Y., & Park, C. (2018). Leader–member exchange, sales performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment affect turnover intention. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal, 46*(11), 1909–1922.

<https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.7125>

Liu, E., & Huang, J. (2019). Occupational self-efficacy, organizational commitment, and work engagement. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal, 47*(8), Article e8046.

<https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.8046>

Martin, R. A. (2000). Humor. In A. E. Kazdin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 202–204). American Psychological Association.

Noe, R. A., Clarke, A. D. M., & Klein, H. J. (2014). Learning in the twenty-first-century workplace. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 1*, 245–275.

<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091321>

Payne, S. C., & Huffman, A. H. (2005). A longitudinal examination of the influence of mentoring on organizational commitment and turnover. *Academy of Management Journal, 48*(1), 158–168.

<https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2005.15993166>

Pond, S. B., & Geyer, P. D. (1991). Differences in the relation between job satisfaction and perceived work alternatives among older and younger blue-collar workers. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 39*(2), 251–262.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(91\)90012-B](https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(91)90012-B)

Pundt, A. (2015). The relationship between humorous leadership and innovative behavior. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 30*(8), 878–893.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-03-2013-0082>

Rhodes, J. E. (2002). *Stand by me: The risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth*. Harvard University Press.

Robert, C., Dunne, T. C., & Iun, J. (2016). The impact of leader humor on subordinate job satisfaction: The crucial role of leader-subordinate relationship quality. *Group & Organization Management*, 41(3), 375–406.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601115598719>

Scandura, T. A. (1992). Mentorship and career mobility: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 13(2), 169–174.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030130206>

Scandura, T. A. (1997). Mentoring and organizational justice: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 51(1), 58–69.

<https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1997.1588>

Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(3), 293–315.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.248>

Slattery, J. P., Selvarajan, T. T., & Anderson, J. E. (2008). The influences of new employee development practices upon role stressors and work-related attitudes of temporary employees. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(12), 2268–2293.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190802479512>

Vandenberghe, C., & Bentein, K. (2009). A closer look at the relationship between affective commitment to supervisors and organizations and turnover. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82(2), 331–348.

<https://doi.org/10.1348/096317908X312641>

Vecchio, R. P., Justin, J. E., & Pearce, C. L. (2009). The influence of leader humor on relationships between leader behavior and follower outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 21(2), 171–194.

<https://bit.ly/3geHiBd>

Wanberg, C. R., Welsh, E. T., & Hezlett, S. A. (2003). Mentoring research: A review and dynamic process model. In J. J. Martocchio & G. R. Ferris (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resources management* (Vol. 22, pp. 39–124). Emerald Group Publishing.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-7301\(03\)22002-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-7301(03)22002-8)

Wanzer, M. B., & Frymier, A. B. (1999). The relationship between student perceptions of instructor humor and students' reports of learning. *Communication Education*, 48(1), 48–62.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03634529909379152>

Yam, K. C., Christian, M. S., Wei, W., Liao, Z., & Nai, J. (2018). The mixed blessing of leader sense of humor: Examining costs and benefits. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(1), 348–369.

<https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2015.1088>

Yankelevich, M., Broadfoot, A., Gillespie, J. Z., Gillespie, M. A., & Guidroz, A. (2012). General job stress: A unidimensional measure and its non-linear relations with outcome variables. *Stress and Health*, 28(2), 137–148.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.1413>

Yip, J. A., & Martin, R. A. (2006). Sense of humor, emotional intelligence, and social competence. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40(6), 1202–1208.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2005.08.005>

Zivnuska, S., Kiewitz, C., Hochwarter, W. A., Perrewé, P. L., & Zellars, K. L. (2002). What is too much or too little? The curvilinear effects of job tension on turnover intent, value attainment and job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 32(7), 1344–1360.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2002.tb01440.x>