



## HUMOR CLIMATE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS<sup>i</sup>

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### **Abstract:**

The aim of this study is to determine the opinions primary school administrators and teachers on humor climates in primary schools. The study was modeled as a convergent parallel design, one of the mixed methods. The data gathered from 253 administrator questionnaires, and 651 teacher questionnaires was evaluated for the quantitative part of the study. The study group of the qualitative part consists of 9 administrators and 12 teachers working in the primary schools. For data collection, the researcher developed and used a semi-structured data collection form consisting of open-ended questions. Qualitative data was also gathered by observation notes. In the quantitative part, a scale was used for gathering data on schools' humor climate. A five-point Likert Scale was used in the questionnaire. Specific descriptive analyses which were conducted to calculate the quantitative data included percentage, frequency, arithmetic means, standard deviation, t-test and one-way ANOVA for unrelated sampling. Where the assumptions of one-way ANOVA were not satisfied, the Kruskal Wallis test was used. The qualitative data obtained was subjected to descriptive analysis and content analysis. The results of humor climate revealed that positive humor types were mostly used in primary schools. The beneficial effect of humor used by administrators was higher than the negative effect on school and subordinates. Parallel to these results, the study observed that positive humor climate styles were predominant in schools.

**Keywords:** humor, humor climate, primary school, school administrator

### **1. Introduction**

In every part, humor is part of our lives and our workplace. It provides sometimes positive, and sometimes negatives emotions, and can sometimes create a constructive

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atmosphere where both sides laugh. However, it may sometimes cause a destructive case where one side is unhappy while the other side laughs. In other words, humor may play both constructive and destructive roles between both sides communicating to each other and may also produce both positive and negative consequences for the organizations (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p. 309; Lyttle, 2007, p. 239; Malone, 1980, p. 359; Meyer, 2000, p.329). Thanks to the effective use of humor in organizational settings, we expect a decrease in destructive outcomes of humor while the constructive outcomes increase. The effective use of humor has crucial effects on several organizational outcomes such as organizational success and efficacy. As such, we must consider that humor climate in organizational settings is therefore an important subject.

Humor is more than telling the nominal joke at the beginning of the meetings, or the office cartoon that few employees understand. Humor is both an effective administrative tool and a dynamic symbolic communicative act that links people. It is a trainable skill; a strategy that everyone can use to create a positive workplace environment (Crawford, 1994, p.28). Humor has been attributed to improved morale, productivity, motivation, creativity, and a more positive culture in an organization (Hoffman, 2007, p.1). Both Cann, Watson and Bridgewater (2014, p.309, 317) state that a humor climate that reflects the presence of positive forms of humor among coworkers, and supported by supervisors, should be associated with higher job satisfaction and commitment. They, however, stress that a climate characterized by higher levels of negative humor in any form would be expected to relate to lower satisfaction and commitment.

Given that humor has been shown to play a significant role in facilitating communication and improving the climate in workplaces, managers using and enjoying positive humor are expected to improve the task and relationship behavior occurring in work settings, as perceived by the employees. However, negative humor was found to be associated with lower perceived task and relationship behaviors in addition to other favorable employee outcomes such as satisfaction (Decker and Rotondo, 2001, p.459).

Humor use in organizations that usually evokes positive and constructive emotions is one of the fundamental variables affecting the climate and culture of the organizations. While humor has negative impacts as well, the general perception concerning it is positive. However, effective and conscious use of humor has been attributed to making destructive outcomes into constructive ones. So, the effects of the use of humor in work settings on organizational climate have become a remarkable issue in terms of effectiveness and productivity. Vacharkulksemsuk, Sekerka and Fredrickson (2011, p.105), similarly claim that positive emotions in the work environment will create a positive emotional climate. Positive emotional climate will, thus, increase the performance of the organization and will improve it.

Workplace humor that can be a central communicative component of an organizational culture (Leslie-Bole, 1985, p.186) is used to project the culture of the organization as an effective administrative tool (Crawford, 1994, p.15). In workplaces where a supportive, but also good-humored, competitive team spirit is nurtured and valued, alongside a positive attitude to having fun at work, tend to provide fertile

contexts for creative humor. All these elements contribute to developing an organizational culture where humor is perceived as a constructive rather than a disruptive component in workplace interaction (Holmes, 2007, p.534).

Organizational humor consists of amusing communications that produce positive emotions and cognitions in the individual, group or organization (Romero and Cruthirds, 2006, p. 59). The effect of humor on physiological, cognitive, and affective responses and on the communication process suggests humor may shape the climate and social relationship at the workplace (Decker and Rotonda, 2001, p.451; Hatch and Ehrlich, 1993, p.506). Consequently, humor that evokes positive emotions may be attributed to creating positive effects on workplace atmosphere.

Humor makes employees optimistic and thus dominates positive communication, creates a positive atmosphere at work, plays as a lubricant in communication and builds a sense of intimacy at work. It also breaks unproductive thought loops and plays a key role in evoking creative thought. It leads creative problem solving and innovation initiatives at the workplace. Thus, humor accelerates the organizational outcomes of employees towards a positive direction, and because of this, humor may increase managerial effectiveness (Güler and Güler, 2010, p.207; Lyttle, 2007, p.240; Meyer, 2000, p.328-329). However, given that some humor is not positive and constructive, we should handle both positive and negative forms of humor in organizations. Moreover, most of the studies on organizational climate have neglected that humor could be an important part of the climate in the organizations (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p. 309). Therefore, it could be said that we need to explore humor in organizational settings in order to use it an effective and strong managerial tool.

Humor climate in organizations expresses the effects of humorous experiences employees had on the atmosphere of the workplace. Humor climate is something different from individual differences in the humor styles of managers and employees. Humor climate focuses on how humor is used, experienced, perceived by employees, and which emotions it caused them to feel in the workplace. In fact, humor climate refers to the existence of humor in the climate of an organization. In other words, it refers to the atmosphere and environment created by the use of humor. Thus, the humor climate of an organization reflects both positive and negative forms of humor (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p. 307, 309).

Humor climate consists of four factors: positive humor, supervisor support, negative humor, and outgroup humor. Positive humor and supervisor support reflect positive and constructive forms of humor, while negative humor and outgroup humor reflects negative and destructive forms of humor (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p. 317-318).

#### **A. Positive Humor**

Positive humor is typically those positive factors associated with higher satisfaction and commitment (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p. 317). The employees working in organizations in which positive humor is dominant have a humorous vision for life and stress positive emotions such as optimism, cheerfulness, wellness, self-confidence in

humor they made. Thanks to positive humor, they try to escape from negative feelings and try to improve intragroup interaction. Employees enjoy making humor and approve it in such humorous climates in workplaces. They also care that the humor should not feel inhospitable and threatening. Humor is often used to encourage or support coworkers in positive humor dominant climates. Employees all enjoy sharing it at work because it makes the work more enjoyable and cheers them up. It, also helps employees relieve stress (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p.134-315). In brief, positive humor would be considered light playful banter that injures no one while it makes people happy (Duncan, 2006, p.53).

### **B. Supervisor Support**

Supervisor support in humor climate relates to how the humor employees use in the workplace is perceived and reacted by managers. The aims, types, and styles of humor that managers use in organizations reveal their humorous sensations. As a result, to what extent managers support and approve the use of humor in the workplace reflects the degree of supervisor support in humor climates.

It is believed that humor is necessary and beneficial in workplaces where supervisor support occurs. In such workplaces, humor is not seen unfavorably, does not stir up trouble. Besides, in workplaces where supervisor support occurs, humor attracts employees in spite of distracting them. Positive humor and supervisor support alike were also typically positive factors, associated with higher satisfaction and commitment (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, pp.317-318).

### **C. Negative Humor**

Negative humor is considered as biting, sarcasm that “puts-down” others in order to elevate oneself (Duncan, 2006, p.53). In detail, negative humor is a destructive feeling evoking a humor type such as threatening, ridiculing a colleague and offensive jokes. The party using negative humor tries to satisfy oneself by making fun of the others. This type of humor makes people feel belittled, ridiculed, intimidated and disparaged. The fact that some employees use negative humor to make someone in the group feel bad, to ridicule and belittle each other, to intimidate others in the group, and to make fun of coworkers indicates that there is negative humor in that organization. Moreover, negative humor was negatively associated with employee satisfaction (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, pp.314,318).

### **D. Outgroup Humor**

Outgroup humor refers to humorous sharing that the subject and the focus of the humor is out-group persons. In outgroup humor; employees often make jokes about “management”. Management policies are often a target for jokes or ridicule among my coworkers, colleagues enjoy laughing together about management policies they do not agree with, humor directed at upper management is encouraged in the workgroup and jokes about company rules are common in the workplace (Cann, Watson and Bridgewater, 2014, p. 314, 318).

Teaching is an extremely stressful job since teachers deal with overcrowded classrooms, changing educational technology, learning and behavior problems of students, legal issues, photocopying, reporting, communicating with the parents, and

massive quantities of paperwork; all in addition to daily planning, managing and motivating students in the classroom. Most of the time, these tasks cause teachers to feel negative emotions such as anxiety, stress, fear, and dissatisfaction (Hurren, 2008, p.83). It is stated that positive organizational culture and climate is quite effective in the elimination of these negative emotions (Çelik, 2000, p.v; Doğan, 2013, p.101, 163-164; George and Jones, 2012, p.28; Türk, 2007, p.34; Vural, 1998, p.71). Similarly, Hurren (2006, p.383) emphasizes that the frequency of humor that principals use in the workplace is more specifically related to teachers' higher job satisfaction. Principals are able to relieve teacher stress and improve teacher job satisfaction by creating a supportive structure that invites humor into the environment. That is, humor can serve as an effective tool to enhance teacher job satisfaction. George and Jones (2012, p.73) emphasize that work moods could have important effects on organizational behavior, and incorporating fun and humor into the workplace could have been a tool to promote positive moods. Aslan (2006, p.1) stresses that people have a tendency to express positive feelings while thinking positively and tend to feel negative while thinking negatively. Indeed, humor may create a climate that allows employees to feel better about their workplace, even though they are dissatisfied with their leader (Avolio, Howell and Sosik, 1999, p.225). In this case, it could be said that humor is so important in terms of creating a positive climate in organizations. Given that humor has both positive and negative consequences for organizations, there exists a need to study the use of humor and its product, humor climate, in organizations.

As a result, the study is significant in terms of creating a positive environment in the organizational outcomes of schools such as motivating employees, enhancement of satisfaction and performance, organizational health, and effectiveness. The aim of this study is to determine the humor climate of schools according to the opinions of primary school administrators and teachers. In this context, the questions below were sought.

According to the opinions of primary school administrators and teachers;

1. What level is the humor climate of primary schools?
2. Are there any differences between the views of school administrators on humor climate of primary schools according to their gender, seniority, education level, and job status?
3. Are there any differences between the views of teachers on the humor climate of primary schools according to their gender, seniority, education level, and job status?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design**

The study was modeled as a convergent parallel design, one of the mixed methods which combined qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2009, p. 14; Creswell, 2012, p.540; Creswell, 2014, p.219; Fırat, Kabakçı and Ersoy, 2014, p.72, 75; Mertens, 2010, p. 298). The first part of the study that aims to explore the opinions of school administrators and teachers on the humor climate of their schools in more depth and

detail was designed as a holistic multiple-case study (Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun, 2011, p.435; Güler, Halıcıoğlu and Taşğın, 2013, p.39; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011, p.77, 290) while the second part was designed as a descriptive survey model (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün and Demirel, 2010, p.22; Karasar, 2002, p.81).

## **2.2. Study Group - Population and Sample**

Since a convergent parallel design was used in the study, the study group of the qualitative part and the sample of the quantitative one were presented with different titles below.

### **A. Study Group of Qualitative Part**

The study group of the qualitative part consists of nine administrators and twelve teachers working in primary schools of Antalya Province in Turkey. The study group was selected according to maximum variation sampling method, one of the non-random purposeful sampling methods (Büyüköztürk etc., 2010, p.89). Four of the school administrators participated in the qualitative part of the study were principals and five were vice principals. Of these, seven were male and two were female. As for the education levels, one of the administrators has a two-year degree, the other one has a three-year degree, five have undergraduate degrees, and two have graduate degrees. For the entire group, the length of service varies from 8.5 to 34 years. Half of the twelve teachers participated in the study were female. Of them, four were class teachers, seven were subject teachers, and one was a psychological counselor. The length of service of the teachers varies from 5 to 30 years. One of the teachers had a two-year degree, ten had undergraduate degrees, and one had a graduate degree.

### **B. Population and Sample of Quantitative Part**

The population of the quantitative part of the study consists of 631 primary school administrators and 6850 teachers working in state primary schools in five central districts (Muratpaşa, Kepez, Konyaltı, Döşemealtı, and Aksu) of Antalya Province in 2014-2015. Multi-stage sampling was undertaken for the determination of sample size. In the first stage, the stratified sampling method was utilized to select the required number of administrators and teachers from the central districts of Antalya Province according to the districts' representation ratio of the population. Then simple random sampling was applied within each stratum to select sufficient participants (Büyüköztürk etc., 2010, p.83). The sample size was determined according to the sample size tables (Balçı, 2001, p.107; Krejcie and Morgan, 1970, p.608), and the formulas used for determining the sample size for continuous variables (Bartlett, Kotrlik and Higgins, 2001, p.46-48; Büyüköztürk etc., 2010, p.94). Finally, the data gathered from 253 administrator questionnaires and 651 teacher questionnaires was evaluated in the study. Power analysis was also utilized for each test. Conventionally, a test with a power greater than 0.80 than or equal to is considered statistically powerful and desired (Brown, 2015, p.381; Dattalo, 2008, p.16; Murphy and Myors, 2004, p.18-19; Murphy, Myors and Wolach, 2014, p.83). In this study, the results of all power analysis tests were greater than 0.95.

Quantitative study data gathered from 253 administrator questionnaires and 651 teacher questionnaires were evaluated in the study. 90 of the participating administrators were principal and 163 were vice principals. The number of female administrators was 71 (42.7%) and male ones were 182 (71.9%). With regards to seniority, 39 (15.4%) administrators had worked for 1-10 years, 108 (24.7%) for 11-20 years, and 159 (24.4%) for 21 years and more. In terms of educational level of the administrators, 23 (9.1%) of the administrators had two-year degrees, 183 (72.3%) had undergraduate degrees and 47 (18.6%) had graduate degrees. As for the teachers, 309 of the teachers were classroom teachers and 342 were taught specific subject matter. 391 (60.1%) of the teachers were female while 260 (39.9%) were male. In terms of teachers' seniority, 278 (42.7%) teachers had worked for 1-10 years, 214 (32.9%) for 11-20 years and 159 (24.4%) for 21 years and more. 44 (6.8%) teachers had two-year degrees, 573 (88%) had undergraduate degrees, 33 (5.1%) had graduate degrees, and only 1 (0.2%) had a graduate degree.

### **2.3. Data Collection Tools and Process**

Qualitative and quantitative data were gathered synchronous and shown detailed below.

#### **A. Qualitative Data Collection Tool**

Both interviews and observations, two of the qualitative data collection techniques, were used in the qualitative part of the study in order to collect data in depth on humor climate of primary schools. For the interviews, the researcher developed and used a semi-structured data collection form. In the first part of the interview form, demographic questions were addressed to the participants. In the second part, open-ended questions were addressed to them in order to explore the humor climate of primary schools. Face to face, individual interviews were held with the participants who fulfilled the criteria in their own schools. The questions were asked the participants one by one. Then, the participants were asked to express their own thoughts in detail. When an issue was not mentioned, the interviewer asked more detailed sub-questions to the participant in order to uncover the related thoughts on the issue. In interviews, the researcher used a voice recorder to collect data with the permission of the participants. For the observations, the researcher developed an observation form and observed the school settings via this form.

#### **B. Quantitative Data Collection Tool**

The Humor Climate Questionnaire (HCQ), developed by Cann, Watson and Bridgewater (2014) and adapted into Turkish by the researcher, was used in the quantitative part of the study as a data collection tool on humor climate in primary schools. The first section of the questionnaire of the Turkish version inquired about the participants' demographic information. In the second section, school administrators and teachers were asked to respond on what they thought of the humor climate in their schools. Since Turkish educators are more familiar with the five-point scales, the researcher used a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* in the Turkish version of the scale (Irmak and Kuruüzüm, 2009, p.15). Explanatory and

confirmatory factor analyses were employed in the data gathered from HCQ. A total of 1073 questionnaires, 259 from administrators and 814 from teachers, were responded. After removing the questionnaires with problems such as missing values and outliers, 904 questionnaires were evaluated (Akgül and Çevik, 2003, p.419; Büyüköztürk, 1992, p.480; Hair, Anderson, Tahtam and Black, 1998, p.98-99). Given that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.83, it can be said that the sampling size of the study is adequate enough for the Explanatory Factor Analysis. As for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the chi-squared test is significant which shows the validity and suitability of the responses collected ( $X^2(190)=4719.89$ ;  $p<.01$ ). As a result, it can be said that the data comes from a multivariate normal distribution (Akgül and Çevik, 2003, p.428; Büyüköztürk, 2003, p.120; Hair, Anderson, Tahtam and Black, 1998, p.99). In order to predict the factor pattern, the Principal Component Analysis and Varimax rotation were used (Büyüköztürk, 1992, p.474-475; Büyüköztürk, 2003, p.117; Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyüköztürk, 2010, p.203). As a result, a questionnaire consists of four factors (positive humor, negative humor, outgroup humor, and supervisor support) and 16 items were developed.

The total size of the variance explained by four factors was 56.815 %. Factor loadings of the items range from 0.692 to 0.774 in positive humor (four items), from 0.579 to 0.802 in negative humor (four items), from 0.448 to 0.828 in supervisor support (four items) and from 0.631 to 0.765 in outgroup humor (four items). The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was calculated in order to determine the extent to which the questionnaire is reliable. The Cronbach's Alpha values were respectively 0.748 for positive humor, 0.733 for negative humor, 0.709 for outgroups humor, and 0.725 for supervisor support, while it was 0.602 for the whole of the questionnaire (Akgül and Çevik, 2003, p.435-436; Bowling, 2009, p.164; Field, 2009, p.675; Kehoe, 1995, p.2).

According to the findings of confirmatory factor analysis, t-values range from 8.58 to 24.16. It was found that all t-values were statistically significant at a 0.01 significance level (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, 1998, p.623). The lowest factor loading of the item was 0.31, while the highest was 0.77 (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyüköztürk, 2010, p.324; Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, 1998, p.623). The goodness-of-fit of the model was evaluated using relative and absolute indices. When the goodness-of-fit indices computed were evaluated, it was seen that  $X^2/sd$  (2.65), GFI (0.97), AGFI (0.95), IFI (0.97), CFI (0.97), NFI (0.95), NNFI (0.96), RMSEA (0.043), RMR (0.045), standardized RMR (0.040), and RFI (0.94) were satisfying the criteria well. In this context, it can be said that the four-factor and 16-item model of the Turkish version of HCQ fits the data gathered in the study (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyüköztürk, 2010, p.271-272, 304, 324; Hair, Anderson, Tahtam and Black, 1998, p.623; Seçer, 2015, p.190; Toprak and Aydın, 2015, p.48) and can be used to assess the humor climate of primary schools in Turkey. Furthermore, it was seen that the factor-item distribution of the Turkish version of the HCQ was the same as the original HCQ developed by Cann, Watson and Bridgewater (2014).



## 2.4. Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed differently and presented below.

### A. Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained was subjected to both descriptive and content analysis via NVIVO Software (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011, p.224-229). In order to satisfy the unity in the data analysis process, a thematic roadmap based on a conceptual framework and research questions was accomplished by the researcher and an academic on educational management and supervision. To ensure conformity and unity in the analysis of data, the researcher and the academic analyzed the responses of the first two respondents (one administrator and one teacher) using the roadmap. At the end of the other analysis achieved separately, most of the codes were well-matched and increased the reliability of the study. Then, the researcher shared the findings anonymously with four respondents (of these, two were administrators and two were teachers) to check whether the data accurately reflected their opinions (Güler, Halıçioğlu and Taşğın, 2013, p.360). The researcher found that the respondents' opinions regarding the data obtained overlapped with the study's results. This is regarded as proof of high internal validity. The views of the participants from different demographics and different education districts were well-matched and increased the external validity. Moreover, the analyzed opinions of school administrators who came from different regions and had varying demographic characteristics were consistent with each other which increases the study's external validity. Finally, the study's level of reliability is even higher since the researcher clearly explains the research process, and the raw data is now archived and available for future inspection if necessary (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011, p.256-274).

In order to keep the participants' demographics secret, the researcher coded school administrators as "P1", "P2", etc.; teachers "T1", "T2", etc. and observations "O1", "O2", etc. Some names took part in the study were, also, coded as "Mr. R", etc.

### B. Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data gathered from HCQ was analyzed via LISREL and SPSS. An alpha level of either .05 or .01 was set for the analyses. Specific descriptive analyses which were conducted to calculate the quantitative data included percentage, frequency, arithmetic means, standard deviation, t-test and one-way ANOVA for unrelated sampling. In case the assumptions of one-way ANOVA were not satisfied, the Kruskal Wallis test was used (Akgül and Çevik, 2003, p.100, 129, 172; Büyüköztürk, 2003, p.39, 44; Bryman and Cramer, 2001, p.115, 117, 142; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p.317; Field, 2009, p.134; Leech, Barrett and Morgan, 2005, p.27-28, 132, 139; Muijs, 2004, p.134).

## 3. Findings

First, qualitative study findings, then quantitative findings, gathered from humor climate questionnaires, were presented in this part. What the school administrators feel about the humor used in school settings was described and presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** The Views of Administrators on Humor Climate of Primary Schools

Views	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9
Positive Humor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supervisor Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Negative Humor	✓				✓	✓	✓		
Outgroup Humor		✓				✓			

In Table 1, I asked the school administrators what they feel about the humor used in school settings, and which emotions are evoked when humor is used.

According to the administrators who participated in the study, dominant humor climates are positive humor and supervisor support which are attributed to positive humor climate types. Y1 stresses both positive humor and supervisor support in his school like that: *“That the teachers are able to make humor comfortably in our work settings indicates there exists positive humor climate in your school settings. Despite the fact you have the administrator status, they use humor freely in the environment. This is, in fact, an indicator of a positive humor climate between the school administrators and employees. Moreover, the employees feel your support via the humor you do and their loyalty to you therefore increases. Because they accept you as one of them. I have a servant who imitates me. He does it freely. However, he never wants to humiliate or ridicule me. That he imitates my walking and shaking the bag in my hands, cheers me up. I am a little serious and businesslike as a principal regarding work discipline. However, I also have a witty temperament as well as my seriousness. People outside the school don’t know my witty and humorous temperament. But my employees come into my room seriously. If no stranger is in the room, humor starts to fly in the atmosphere in two minutes, and the ambiance, suddenly becomes colorful.”* P2, similarly, stated the presence of the positive humor climate evoking positive emotions in oneself and other employees. *“I like it (the humor made by other employees). I never miss, I certainly respond with another humor. Similarly, they always welcome me positively when I make humor... That is, I like it (the humor done in schools). And thanks to this humor, I feel more sincere towards the people. That is, it motivates me and evokes positive feelings in me as positive humor doesn’t hurt anyone else and is used in our school.”* The note of the researcher on an observation conducted at the school of P4 regarding the positive humor is that *“P4 welcomes me and we are going to the room of one of the vice principals together. The school principal, four vice principals, a person came for inspection, and I are in the room. I learned later that the school management had an inspection on İLBAP (The Project for Enhancing the Success of Primary and Secondary Education). The principal of another primary school came for inspection to P4’s school. P4 welcomes me in a funny and witty way, despite the stressful atmosphere. They are laughing. They are deriving humor from their tasks. They are making fun of some of their own failings while praising the positive sides in a humorous way. I felt a positive atmosphere. While I was expecting a stressful and negative atmosphere because of the inspection, feeling the positive and funny atmosphere, to tell the truth, surprised me. After drinking coffee and chatting, P4’s task finished, and we went to his/her office.”* (O4). Related to the supervisor support, A2 points out that he/she likes, joins and supports the humor used by employees by saying *“I like it. I, certainly, respond in a humorous way. I never miss responding.”* This attitude of

A2 may suggest that supervisor support exists in his or her school. Similarly, A6 expresses his or her support for the humor used in their school by voicing *“I try to accompany him immediately. To make it even more positive, I do everything if I have anything that I could do. First of all, I enjoy being in the atmosphere and I want the subject in the occasion to be continued.”*

Related to humor climate A6 voices his/her thoughts as *“If humor does not humiliate me. In fact, I don’t want anybody to be humiliated, but perhaps the nature of the human wants to humiliate. I listen if someone humiliates another one without any reaction. I listen to them till the end unless I laugh loudly. But, if the humor is about me, I don’t give a break.”* Another principal A7 expresses his/her own humor use was misunderstood like: *“Sometimes, other people could be too sensitive to our humor since we are administrators. Or they can have concealed thought because of our voices. Or they can totally misunderstand the humor we made with goodwill. Sometimes this happens. If we feel that, we, of course, try to correct that.”* However, A7’s words refer that humor use of A7 sometimes insults and hurts the feelings of other people. This finding evokes the use of negative humor by A7 and is associated with negative humor climate.

Regarding the outgroup humor, A6 states that outgroup staff sometimes could be the subject of humor in the school. Yet, the points should be considered are the focus and core of the humor are unpleasant things that are not liked by the people towards whom the humor was done. A6 says *“For example, my servant talks about the ex-principals as “Rahmetli” (“Rahmetli” means a dead pitiful person). Like they were dead.”* In fact, that his servant says *“Rahmetli”* to ex-principals is attributed by A6 to they were dismissed from school principality which is an awful, poor thing (O6). A2 points that outgroup humor exists in his school by saying *“If there exists a negative humor in the school, it does not relate to us. No one is insulted or emotionally hurt since the humor is not related to people in the workgroup.”*

What the teachers feel about the humor used by all staff in school settings and which emotions evoke in them when humor used were described and presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** The Views of Teachers on Humor Climate of Primary Schools

Views	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12
Positive Humor	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supervisor Support		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Negative Humor			✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		
Outgroup Humor		✓										✓

Table 2 shows that according to participating teachers, the dominant humor climate in schools is positive humor and supervisor support which are accepted as the positive and constructive humor climates. The positive humor in their school is emphasized by T6 like *“The humor used certainly aims to create a positive atmosphere. That is, I have generally used and seen positive types of humor. . I am usually positive and get happy in the school. That is to say. Yes, I leave school happily.”* Similarly, T7 says that the humor shared with

colleagues in their school evokes positive emotions in themselves, and expresses the existence of positive humor in their school such as *“Especially, I go to class cheerfully because of the humor we did during the breaks and because of the fun atmosphere. We feel rested and had a good time at the breaks. Therefore, humor is for us, especially as it is done among us and our friends with relish. Creates a joyful atmosphere. Honestly, makes me happy. Especially, when I thought the friendship atmosphere, the humor shared with our friends, that is humorous feelings always makes me happy and motivates me.”*

With regard to supervisor support, T2 states that *“I have never been criticized about that (humor use in school) by my principal, vice principals, and colleagues. I have never been criticized, so far, since I have done humor. Rather, they say that they are glad to share humorous things with me.”* A closer look at the opinion of T2 indicates that the humor done in their school is approved and supported by their administrators. Along similar lines, by emphasizing that their administrators support the humor use in workgroups, T12 expresses his opinions like *“They are too. I have seen how they have responded to the humor with other humor. That is, I have seen how they have converted that to a mutual conversation.”* Another opinion about the supervisor support was voiced by T10 like *“Since they laugh with me, I awfully like.”*

Regarding the negative humor climate of the schools, T3 voices *“I can’t say that they support the atmosphere. That is, the humor they use, in fact, creates a negative work setting. Yes, for me, negative. Modesty is very important for me. I felt this at my ex-school. There, the administrators and the colleagues valued and valued my thoughts and didn’t humiliate me. But in my new school, I couldn’t feel that. I can’t still feel that atmosphere. When I go to my new school, I don’t even want to greet my administrators. They don’t pull me. They, rather, push me away; since the humor they use is always biting and sarcastic. It is disparaging, belittling, insulting. When you feel the negative one, you automatically push yourself away from the school and become estranged from it. That is, it doesn’t have a positive consequence for me. It rather demotivates me. When you go to such a school, you become unhappy. When you leave it, you become happy.”* A closer look at the voices of T3 reveals that negative humor use existed in their school. T4 similarly indicates his opinion regarding the use of negative humor in schools like *“That is, as an outside eye, I feel that my friends who are the subject of the humor are insulted and belittled. In my opinion, it’s like that. But the person in the focus of the humor laughs. That is, they don’t care about this type of humor. I mean destructive, insulting ones. If someone makes me something like that, I certainly oppose him since I feel I was insulted.”*

As for the outgroup humor, T2 says that the faculty may sometimes make their students and the parents the subject of their humor. T2 reported, *“We usually use humor in order to have a good time, to laugh and to cheer up among our friends. Sometimes, there are some occasions in which we relate the funny and ridiculous situations of our students and their parents to each other.”* The humor focused on out-group persons was used in their school, as T11 stated: *“But, sometimes, there may be ridiculous, I mean, mocking behaviors about not of us. There may be much more unpleasant jokes. I don’t approve of this very much.”*

Quantitative findings regarding the views of administrators and teachers on humor climates of primary schools were presented below.

**Table 3:** The Views of Administrators and Teachers on Humor Climate of Primary Schools

Factors	Job	n	$\bar{x}$	sd	df	t	p
Positive Humor	A- Administrator	253	4.0464	.70505	902	1.745	.081
	B- Teacher	651	3.9547	.71162			
Negative Humor	A- Administrator	253	2.4328	.83952	902	.408	.683
	B- Teacher	651	2.4086	.78563			
Outgroup Humor	A- Administrator	253	2.7905	.83249	902	1.635	.102
	B- Teacher	651	2.6974	.74293			
Supervisor Support	A- Administrator	253	3.1374	.97826	383.675	-2.600	.010
	B- Teacher	651	3.3161	.78241			

According to the data given in Table 3, there were no significant differences in relation to participants' jobs about positive humor [ $t_{(902)}=1.745$ ;  $p>.05$ ], negative humor [ $t_{(902)} = -.408$ ;  $p>.05$ ] and outgroup humor [ $t_{(902)} =1.635$ ;  $p>.05$ ]. For the supervisor support, equal variances were not assumed. Therefore, the equal variances assumption was used to compare the two groups. Regarding this assumption, the views of the administrators and teachers of primary schools differed significantly in supervisor support [ $t_{(383.675)}=-2.600$ ;  $p\leq.01$ ]. The view of teachers ( $\bar{x}=3.31$ ) was higher than that of the administrators ( $\bar{x}=3.13$ ) in supervisor support.

Both administrators and teachers voice that the use of positive and constructive humor types, positive humor and supervisor support, are dominant in schools with regard to negative and destructive ones, negative humor and outgroup humor. This finding reveals that there is a dominant positive climate in schools in terms of the use of humor. The most dominant humor climates are respectively positive humor, supervisor support, outgroup humor and negative humor, according to both administrators and teachers.

The views of school administrators regarding the humor climate of their schools were presented below in terms of job position, gender, seniority, and education level.

**Table 4:** The Views of Administrators on Humor Climate Regarding Job Position

Factors	Job Position	n	$\bar{x}$	sd	df	t	p
Positive Humor	A- Principal	90	3.8750	.61609	251	-2.917	.004
	B- Vice Principal	163	4.1411	.73443			
Negative Humor	A- Principal	90	2.6167	.74124	251	2.618	.009
	B- Vice Principal	163	2.3313	.87484			
Outgroup Humor	A- Principal	90	2.8500	.80535	251	.844	.399
	B- Vice Principal	163	2.7577	.84776			
Supervisor Support	A- Principal	90	3.0389	.82611	221.878	-1.275	.204
	B- Vice Principal	163	3.1917	1.05137			

Table 4 shows that the views of primary school administrators and teachers differ significantly in positive humor [ $t_{(251)}=-2.917$ ;  $p<.01$ ] and negative humor [ $t_{(251)}=2.618$ ;  $p<.01$ ], while they do not differ significantly in outgroup humor [ $t_{(251)}=.844$ ;  $p>.05$ ]. The view principals ( $\bar{x}=3.87$ ) and vice principals ( $\bar{x}=4.14$ ) agree on the existence of positive humor in their schools. However, they [principals ( $\bar{x}=2.61$ ); vice principals ( $\bar{x}=2.33$ )] do not agree on the existence of negative humor. In this instance, findings suggest that

positive humor climate is dominant with respect to negative humor climate in primary schools. As for the outgroup humor in schools, both principals ( $\bar{x}=2.85$ ) and vice principals ( $\bar{x}=2.75$ ) express that they are hesitant.

In supervisor support, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated. Therefore, unequal variance assumption was used to compare the two groups. According to this, the views of the school administrators and teachers do not differ statistically significantly in supervisor support [ $t_{(221.878)}=-1.275$ ;  $p>.05$ ].

**Table 5:** The Views of Administrators on Humor Climate Regarding Their Gender

Factors	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	df	t	p
Positive Humor	A- Female	71	4.3275	.56945	251	4.081	.000
	B- Male	182	3.9368	.72361			
Negative Humor	A- Female	71	2.2746	.83469	251	-1.881	.061
	B- Male	182	2.4945	.83557			
Outgroup Humor	A- Female	71	2.6303	.83330	251	-1.922	.056
	B- Male	182	2.8530	.82605			
Supervisor Support	A- Female	71	3.3063	1.07004	251	1.723	.086
	B- Male	182	3.0714	.93489			

According to the data in Table 5, the views of primary school administrators only differ significantly in positive humor [ $t_{(251)}=4.081$ ;  $p<.01$ ] regarding their gender. Female administrators had higher positive humor scores ( $\bar{x}=4.32$ ) than did the male administrators ( $\bar{x}=3.93$ ). This finding suggests that female administrators accept more the presence of positive humor in their schools with respect to the males. Unlike the positive humor, there were no statistically significant difference between the views of female and male administrators in negative humor [ $t_{(251)}=-1.881$ ;  $p>.05$ ], outgroup humor [ $t_{(251)}=-1.922$ ;  $p>.05$ ] and supervisor support [ $t_{(251)}=1.723$ ;  $p>.05$ ].

**Table 6:** The Views of Administrators on Humor Climate Regarding Their Seniority

Factors	Years of Service	n	$\bar{x}$	sd	F	p	Sig. Difference
Positive Humor	A- 1-10 years	39	4.0000	.87922	1.109	.332	-
	B- 11-20 years	108	4.1227	.63806			
	C- 21 years and over	106	3.9858	.69849			
Negative Humor	A- 1-10 years	39	2.5897	.87638	.810	.446	-
	B- 11-20 years	108	2.3981	.84073			
	C- 21 years and over	106	2.4104	.82606			
Outgroup Humor	A- 1-10 years	39	2.7628	.89580	.767	.466	-
	B- 11-20 years	108	2.7269	.82069			
	C- 21 years and over	106	2.8656	.82243			
Supervisor Support	A- 1-10 years	39	3.0192	.86104	2.370	.096	-
	B- 11-20 years	108	3.2917	.99971			
	C- 21 years and over	106	3.0236	.98351			

According to Table 6, the views of administrators regarding their seniority do not differ significantly in positive humor [ $F_{(2-250)}=0.332$ ;  $p>.05$ ], negative humor [ $F_{(2-250)}=0.446$ ;

$p > .05$ ], outgroup humor [ $F_{(2-250)}=0.466$ ;  $p > .05$ ] and supervisor support [ $F_{(2-250)}=0.096$ ;  $p > .05$ ].

**Table 7:** The Views of Administrators on Positive Humor, Outgroup Humor and Supervisor Support in Primary Schools Regarding Their Education Level

Factors	Education Level	n	$\bar{x}$	sd	F	p	Sig. Difference
Positive Humor	A- Two-year degree	23	3.8913	.86873	1.791	.169	-
	B- Undergraduate	183	4.0260	.68916			
	C- Graduate	47	4.2021	.66684			
Outgroup Humor	A- Two-year degree	23	3.2065	.74488	3.335	.037	A-B A-C
	B- Undergraduate	183	2.7623	.82387			
	C- Graduate	47	2.6968	.86435			
Supervisor Support	A- Two-year degree	23	2.6522	.97334	7.014	.001	C-A C-B
	B- Undergraduate	183	3.0984	.95749			
	C- Graduate	47	3.5266	.94010			

As seen in Table 7, the views of administrators regarding their education level do not differ significantly in positive humor [ $F_{(2-250)}=1.791$ ;  $p > .05$ ], while they differ significantly in outgroup humor [ $F_{(2-250)}=3.335$ ;  $p < .05$ ] and supervisor support [ $F_{(2-250)}=7.014$ ;  $p < .01$ ].

Post hoc analyses using the Tukey HSD and LSD Test post hoc criteria for significance indicated that the outgroup humor was significantly higher in two-year degree than in the other two education levels (undergraduate and graduate).

According to the results of the Scheffe test which was conducted for seeking the statistically significant difference among the groups of education level in the supervisor support that refers the humor climate approved by managers, the graduate administrators reported more positive views than the two-year degree and undergraduate administrators.

**Table 8:** The Views of Administrators on Negative Humor in Primary Schools Regarding Their Education Level

Factor	Education Level	n	Mean Rank	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p	Sig. Difference
Negative Humor	A- Two-year degree	23	130.91	2	.503	.778	-
	B- Undergraduate	183	128.20				
	C- Graduate	47	120.39				

Kruskal-Wallis Test results in Table 8 show that the views of the primary school administrators regarding the education level, do not differ significantly in negative humor [ $X^2(2)=0.503$ ;  $p > .05$ ].

The views of teachers regarding the humor climate of their schools are presented below regarding their gender, seniority, and education level.

**Table 9:** The Views of Teachers on Humor Climate Regarding Their Gender

Factors	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	df	t	p
Positive Humor	A- Female	391	3.9476	.71172	649	-.313	.755
	B- Male	260	3.9654	.71272			
Negative Humor	A- Female	391	2.3913	.79220	649	-.689	.491
	B- Male	260	2.4346	.77643			
Outgroup Humor	A- Female	391	2.6304	.74179	649	-2.835	.005
	B- Male	260	2.7981	.73462			
Supervisor Support	A- Female	391	3.3370	.79246	649	.836	.404
	B- Male	260	3.2846	.76749			

Table 9 shows that the views of primary school teachers regarding their gender, only differ significantly in outgroup humor [ $t_{(649)}=-2.835$ ;  $p<.01$ ], while they do not differ significantly in positive humor [ $t_{(649)}=-.313$ ;  $p>.05$ ], negative humor [ $t_{(649)}=-.689$ ;  $p>.05$ ] and supervisor support [ $t_{(649)}=.836$ ;  $p>.05$ ]. Male teachers had higher outgroup humor scores ( $\bar{x}=2.79$ ) than did the female teachers ( $\bar{x}=2.63$ ). This finding refers that male teachers accept the existence of outgroup humor in their schools more with respect to the females.

**Table 10:** The Views of Teachers on Humor Climate Regarding Their Seniority

Factors	Seniority	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	F	p	Sig. Difference
Positive Humor	A- 1-10 years	278	4.0045	.69437	1.312	.270	-
	B- 11-20 years	214	3.9019	.74569			
	C- 21 years and more	159	3.9387	.69282			
Negative Humor	A- 1-10 years	278	2.4433	.79409	.733	.481	-
	B- 11-20 years	214	2.3575	.78879			
	C- 21 years and more	159	2.4167	.76755			
Outgroup Humor	A- 1-10 years	278	2.7077	.76843	.054	.948	-
	B- 11-20 years	214	2.6857	.72733			
	C- 21 years and more	159	2.6950	.72241			
Supervisor Support	A- 1-10 years	278	3.3831	.77751	1.916	.148	-
	B- 11-20 years	214	3.2839	.78854			
	C- 21 years and more	159	3.2421	.77817			

According to Table 10, the views of teachers regarding their seniority do not differ significantly in positive humor [ $F_{(2-648)}=1.312$ ;  $p>.05$ ], negative humor [ $F_{(2-648)}=.733$ ;  $p>.05$ ], outgroup humor [ $F_{(2-648)}=.54$ ;  $p>.05$ ] and supervisor support [ $F_{(2-648)}=1.916$ ;  $p>.05$ ].

**Table 11:** The Views of Teachers on Humor Climate Regarding Their Education Level

Factors	Education Level	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	F	p	Sig. Difference
Positive Humor	A- Two-year degree	44	4.0398	.71517	.406	.667	-
	B- Undergraduate	573	3.9459	.71396			
	C- Graduate	34	3.9926	.67836			
Negative Humor	A- Two-year degree	44	2.3750	.80964	1.202	.301	-
	B- Undergraduate	573	2.3992	.78278			
	C- Graduate	34	2.6103	.79818			
Outgroup Humor	A- Two-year degree	44	2.7102	.62166	1.522	.219	-
	B- Undergraduate	573	2.6837	.74823			



	C- Graduate	34	2.9118	.78306			
	A- Two-year degree	44	3.2273	.76785			
Supervisor Support	B- Undergraduate	573	3.3277	.79007	.527	.591	-
	C- Graduate	34	3.2353	.67122			

Table 11 shows that the views of teachers regarding their education level do not differ significantly in positive humor [ $F_{(2-648)}=.406$ ;  $p>.05$ ], negative humor [ $F_{(2-648)}=1.202$ ;  $p>.05$ ], outgroup humor [ $F_{(2-648)}=1.522$ ;  $p>.05$ ] and supervisor support [ $F_{(2-648)}=0.527$ ;  $p>.05$ ].

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

According to the qualitative results, what do the school administrators feel about the humor used in school settings and which emotions are evoked in them when humor is used? It was found that negative humor and outgroup humor, accepted as negative and destructive humor climate types were less than the positive ones, positive humor and supervisor support, in schools. In this context, the findings reveal that positive humor climate types were more dominant than the negative ones. When the researcher asked the teachers what they feel about the humor climate of their school, it was similarly shown that negative humor and outgroup humor, accepted as negative and destructive humor climate types, were less than the positive ones, positive humor and supervisor support, in schools. Consequently, according to the qualitative findings gathered from both teachers' and administrators' views, positive humor and supervisor support accepted as positive humor climate types are more dominant than the negative ones, outgroup humor and negative humor, in schools. This result indicates that there exists an atmosphere evoking positive emotions in schools. To conclude, it seems that interaction and communication between the school administrators and teachers will be constructive in schools.

Actually, Williams and Clouse (1991, p.45) highlight that administrators and teachers think humor is important to create satisfactory work settings. Therefore, it can be said that these kinds of schools are able to create high-quality organizational outcomes and perform higher organizational performances easily by means of effective management and leadership. Similarly, Lyttle (2007, p.239) claims that humor in the workplace can provide positive effects such as stress relief, team unification, employee motivation, idea generation, and frustration diffusion through venting. Matthias (2014, p.iii-iv) points out that administrators may improve their school climate by supporting staff through the use of humor and further emphasizes that the positive use of humor by the administrators is important. However, it may be claimed that high order policy and leadership are required in order to use this convenient input and atmosphere effectively and turn them into opportunities.

As for the opinions of administrators and teachers based on quantitative data on humor climate in schools, both administrators and teachers agree on the existence of positive humor in their schools. Unlike positive humor, they do not agree on the existence of negative humor. They are also uncertain of the existence of outgroup humor and supervisor support in their workplaces. These results provide positive

evidence that opinions of both administrators and teachers on the humor climate of primary schools support each other. Essentially, the fact that the administrators and teachers have the same opinion on humor climate shows that they all became a unique identity by becoming integrated with the culture of their organizations. Further, it shows the consistency of the opinions of the parties. This can be a result that the school administrators are in fact, teachers and that teachers accept the administrators as one of themselves. Besides, the results showed that the opinions of teachers on supervisor support, which is referred to the humor climate in which humor use is supported and encouraged by the administrators, was significantly higher than those of the administrators. The teachers declared that their administrators supported the use of humor in the school are meaningful. Based on this view, it can be stated that the teachers approved and appreciated the use of humor of the administrators higher than that of the administrators anticipated. Further, another significant difference regarding supervisor support was between the opinions of the administrators who have a graduate degree and the other administrators who have a graduate or a two-year degree. This result may be explained by the fact that the administrators who had a graduate degree have better understood and appreciated the effects of organizational humor use on the organizational efficiency. They believe they can benefit from the humor use as a managerial tool, and that they have supported the use of it in school settings. All these things considered, it seems reasonable to educate the school administrators on the effective use of humor as a managerial tool in schools. Thus, most functional and positive organizational outcomes such as loyalty, performance, satisfaction and motivation can benefit from the use of humor. Matthias (2014, p.iv), in the same way, points out that school climate can be improved by the use of humor in schools since humor can reduce school tension felt by students, teachers, parents and community members.

Both qualitative and quantitative findings reveal that positive humor climate types are more dominant than the negative ones. According to the quantitative results gathered from the views of both teacher' and administrators, positive humor and supervisor support accepted as positive humor climate types are higher than the negative ones, outgroup humor and negative humor, in schools. The only difference in both qualitative and quantitative results is the difference in the order of dominant humor climate types. The dominant humor climates are respectively positive humor, supervisor support, outgroup humor and negative humor, according to the quantitative findings, while they are respectively positive humor, supervisory support, and negative humor and outgroup humor according to the qualitative ones. We just see a difference in the order of negative humor climate types, negative humor and outgroup humor. Positive humor climate types are more dominant than negative ones, according to both the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study.

In general, it can be said that similar results were found from both qualitative and quantitative research findings. In this instance, it may be stated that positive school climates are dominant in terms of humor usage in schools. It may also be said that necessary humor climates are ready for the positive organizational outcomes, and

organizational productivity and efficacy may be enhanced thanks to an effective leadership in schools.

Positive (constructive) humor climates dominant in climates of primary schools revealed in the study shows that the administrator-teacher relationships of these schools were positive and sincere. The opinions of the administrators were supported by the opinions of teachers and indicate that both results were consistent and an organizational climate, convenient for a healthy communication in schools is available. Organizational effectiveness may increase in schools if we think that decision making, cooperation, motivation and satisfaction may be higher in the schools where positive communication is available (Tutar, 2003, p.253). Williams and Clouse (1991, p.45) supported the results by asserting that humor appears to create bonds among the employees and to facilitate the accomplishment of work tasks.

All these results conclude that primary school administrators and teachers can recognize the use of humor in workplaces and may benefit from the constructive outcomes of it by making them conscious of the use of humor in schools. Educational administration programs conducted by the Ministry of National Education may benefit from the organizational use of humor in school settings. For further studies, it may also be useful to examine the effects of humor climate on organizational factors such as commitment, satisfaction, occupational burnout, motivation, performance and organizational culture and climate.

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