Abstract

Building on positive psychology, the present study aims to address the role of humour in the workplace, and particularly in job design, one of the crucial job aspects contributing to employee well-being. Specifically, we examine the main effects of self-enhancing and affiliative types of humour both on burnout and work engagement. Furthermore, we study whether these humour styles serve as personal resources, moderating the associations of job hindrances (i.e., role conflict), job challenges (i.e., workload) and job resources (i.e., social support) with burnout and work engagement, as outlined in the Job Demands-Resources model. Results in a large sample of Belgian employees (N= 1200) showed that both types of humour related negatively to burnout and positively to work engagement. No interactions between humour and the job characteristics were found in the prediction of burnout. The significant interactions in predicting work engagement showed that self-enhancing and affiliative humour played a positive role, particularly when role conflict and social support were low. No interactions with workload were found. The discussion aims to shed light on the unexpected results and to further the study of the humour-health hypothesis.