

Northumbria Research Link

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Interprofessional
GLOBAL



23 September 2022
12pm GMT/1pm BST

FREE REGISTRATION

Humour: a bridge to interprofessional learning

Vikki Park
Northumbria University

#Hello my name is...

Ivana Singh

“...whether it's the charge nurse giving one of my colleagues a fake patient name on April Fools Day, that if read out loud was slightly dodgy... or it's just day-to-day light heartedness about certain things... it's probably a sign of fairly healthy morale I think”

Interview 1





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Humour in healthcare teams:

"...a sign of fairly healthy morale"

"...a symptom of a happy team"

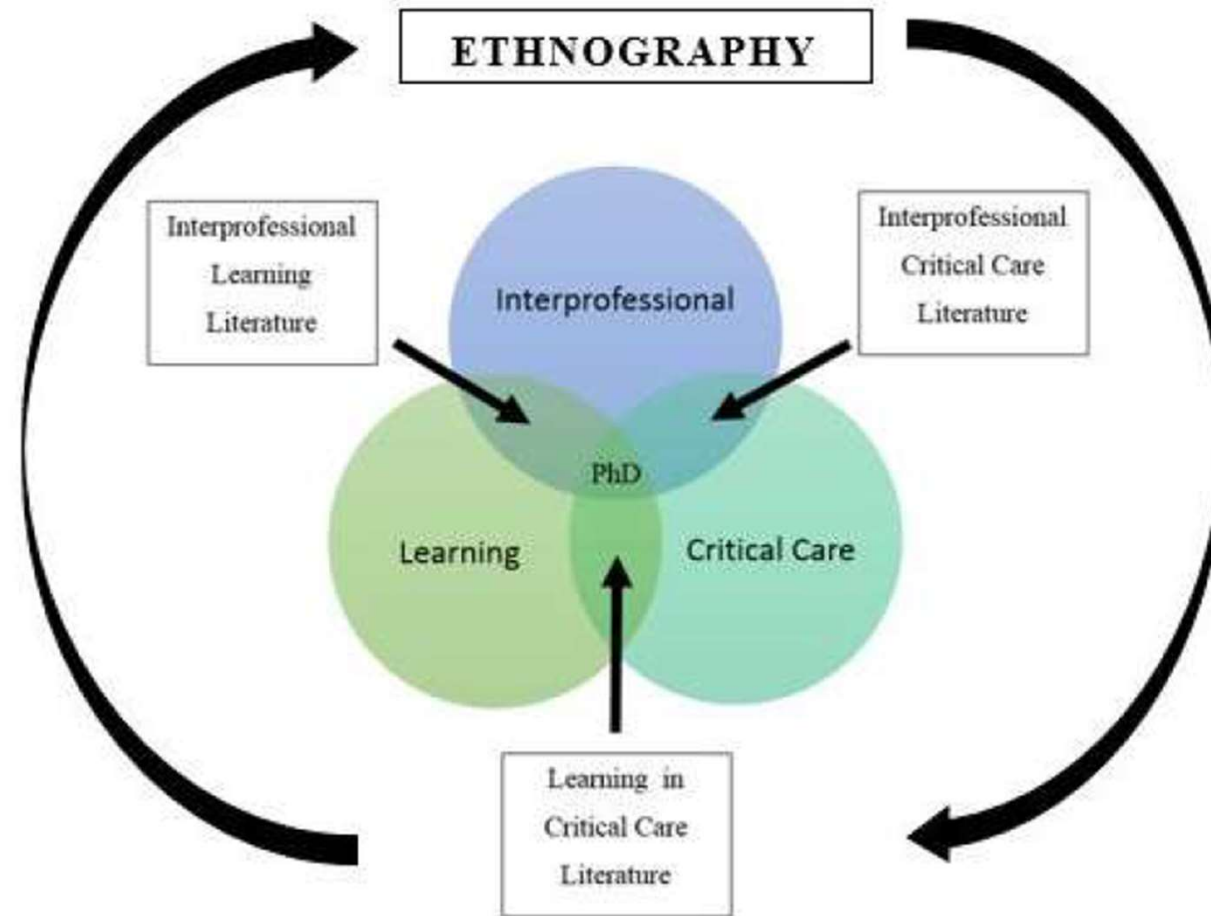


wit
laugh
humour
joke
banter
gallows humour
laughter
black
funny
fun
irony
smile
professional
sarcasm



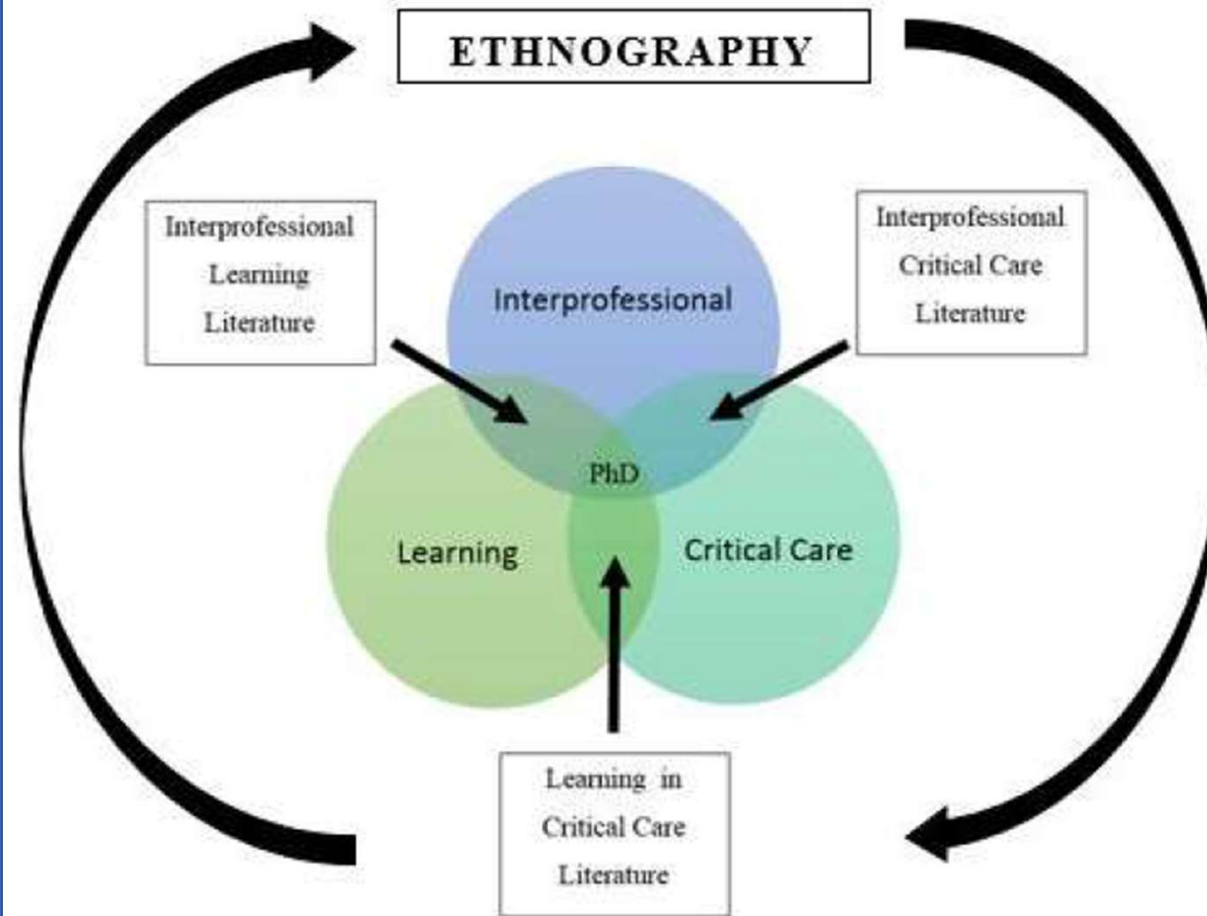
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**Humour
was not the
focus of my
research**





The focus was on
**interprofessional
learning culture**
in critical care, and...



...humour was a
recurrent, unanimous
and prominent
key finding
which shaped IPL
culture in SO many
ways!

What is IPL?

Interprofessional learning refers to learning which happens between different occupational groups, through the collaborative sharing of expertise, knowledge, and experience.

Park (2019)

What about IPE?

IPE, interprofessional education, is one way **how** people can learn together...

whereas **IPL**, interprofessional learning, is **what** people learn.





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IPL is...

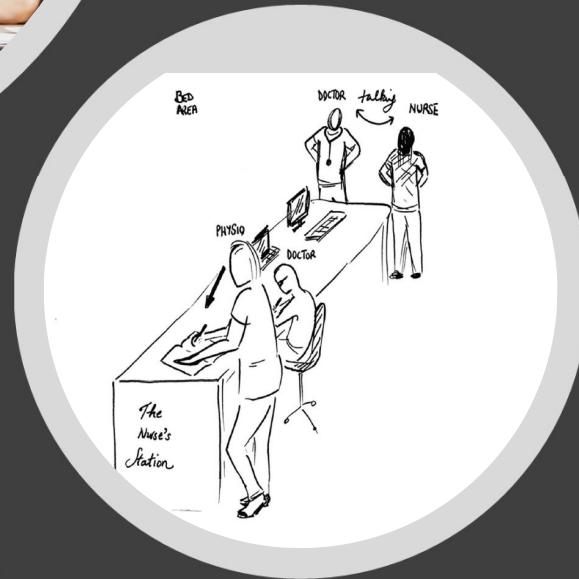
Difficult to see

Often described as
invisible!

Hard to measure



Research methods used in 3 critical care units...



- Interviews (x22)
- Observations (x18)
- Field Notes & Images



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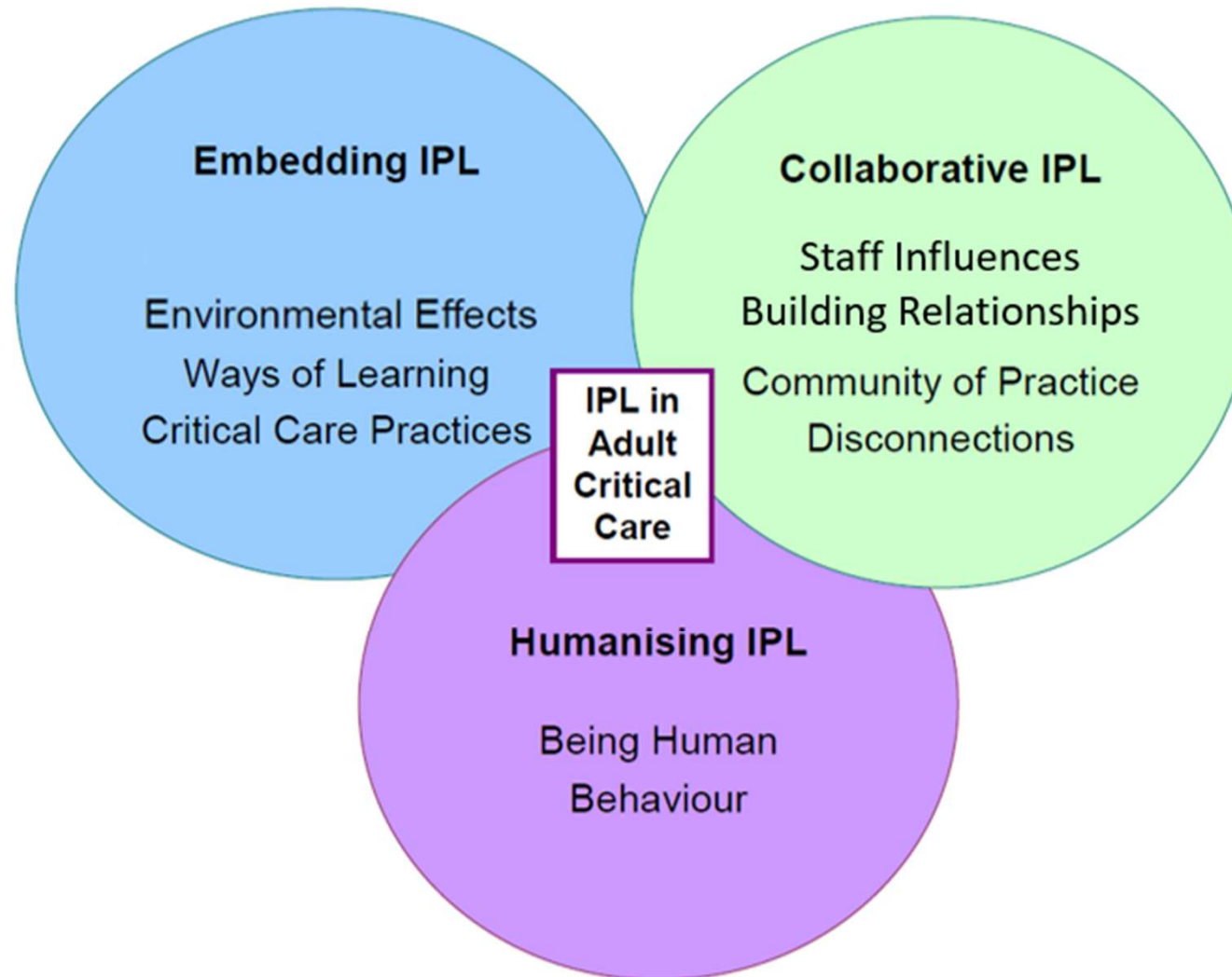
Thematic Analysis

3 Overarching Themes

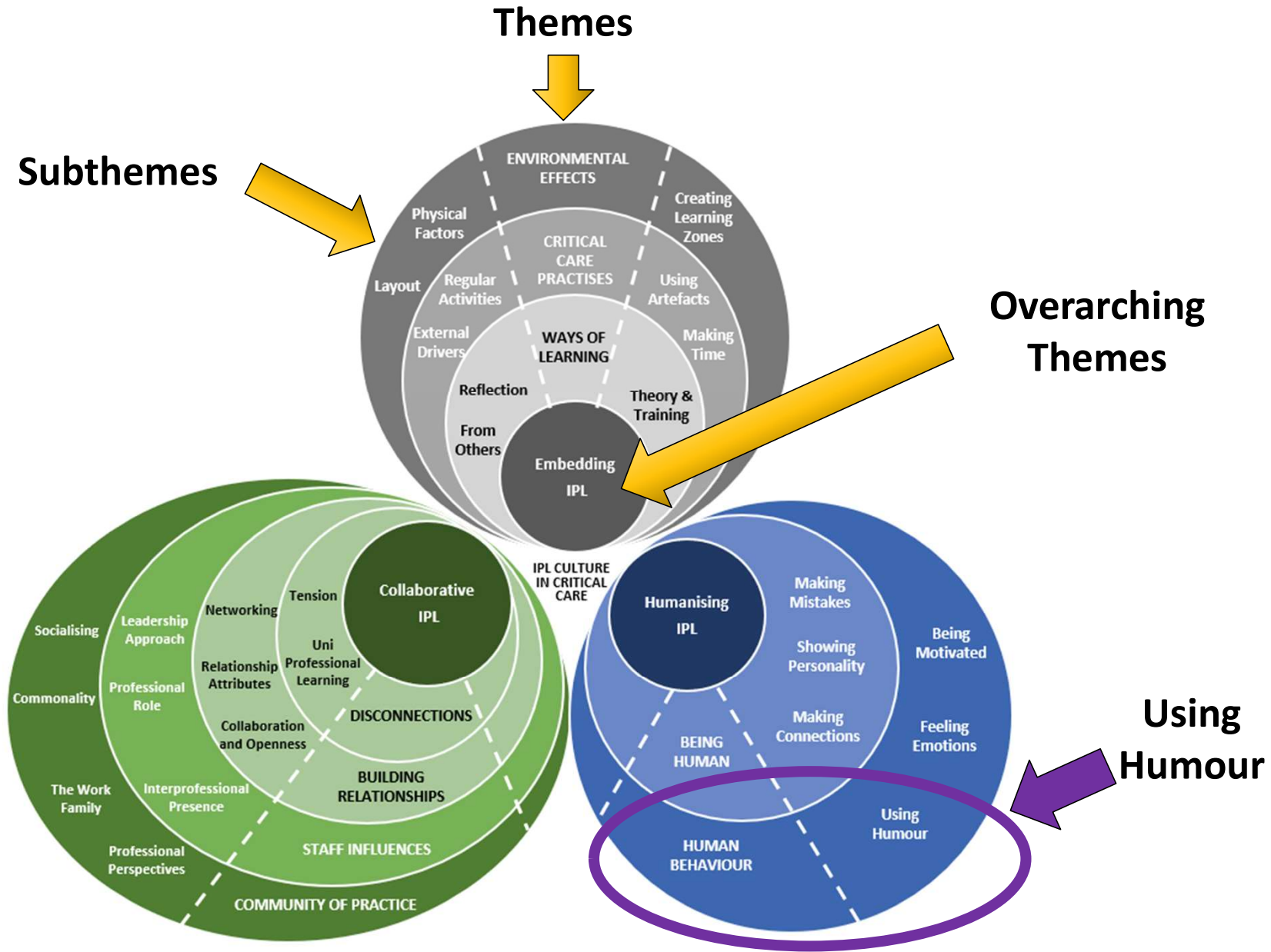
9 Themes

29 Subthemes

Key Research Findings



Mapped Findings



Humanising IPL

Healthcare professionals are people first.

Practitioners shape the holistic nature of the IPL through their human behaviour.

This relates to emotions, using humour and being motivated to learn from others.



Ultimately, humour influenced
behaviour and created a climate
favourable for IPL

It increased readiness
and receptiveness for IPL

Humour prepared staff
to learn together





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laughter
smile
gallows
irony
wit
humour
humour
joke
black
banter

Humour increased workplace happiness:

“a symptom of a healthy relationship between staff groups”

The culture of using humour in healthcare

- An everyday occurrence
- Embedded in the culture
- Contextual to time & place
- It was accepted
- Widely adopted
- Understood by staff



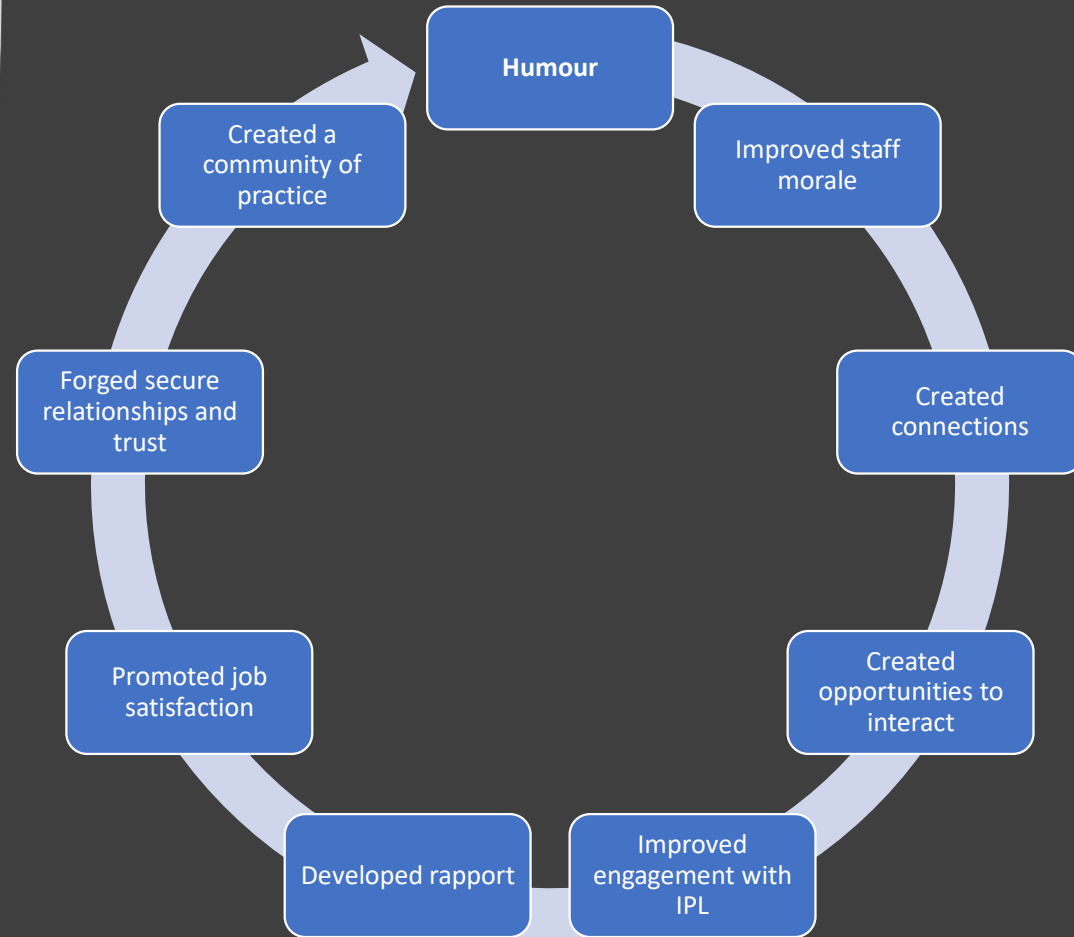


Visiting professions stayed longer on the unit when there was a positive and open atmosphere.

This ↑ IPL opportunities 😊



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An icebreaker

Relieved tension

Diffused conflict

Broke down hierarchical barriers

Increased interactions which created
opportunity for IPL

Humour could be used to call out poor
behaviour or express dissatisfaction

A way to express negative thoughts and
feelings in a more light-hearted way

Approachability

Humour made “people human and more approachable” to learn together

Easier to ask questions and learn

Funny staff were “more approachable and easier to learn from”

Created a safe space to ask questions and promoted psychological safety.



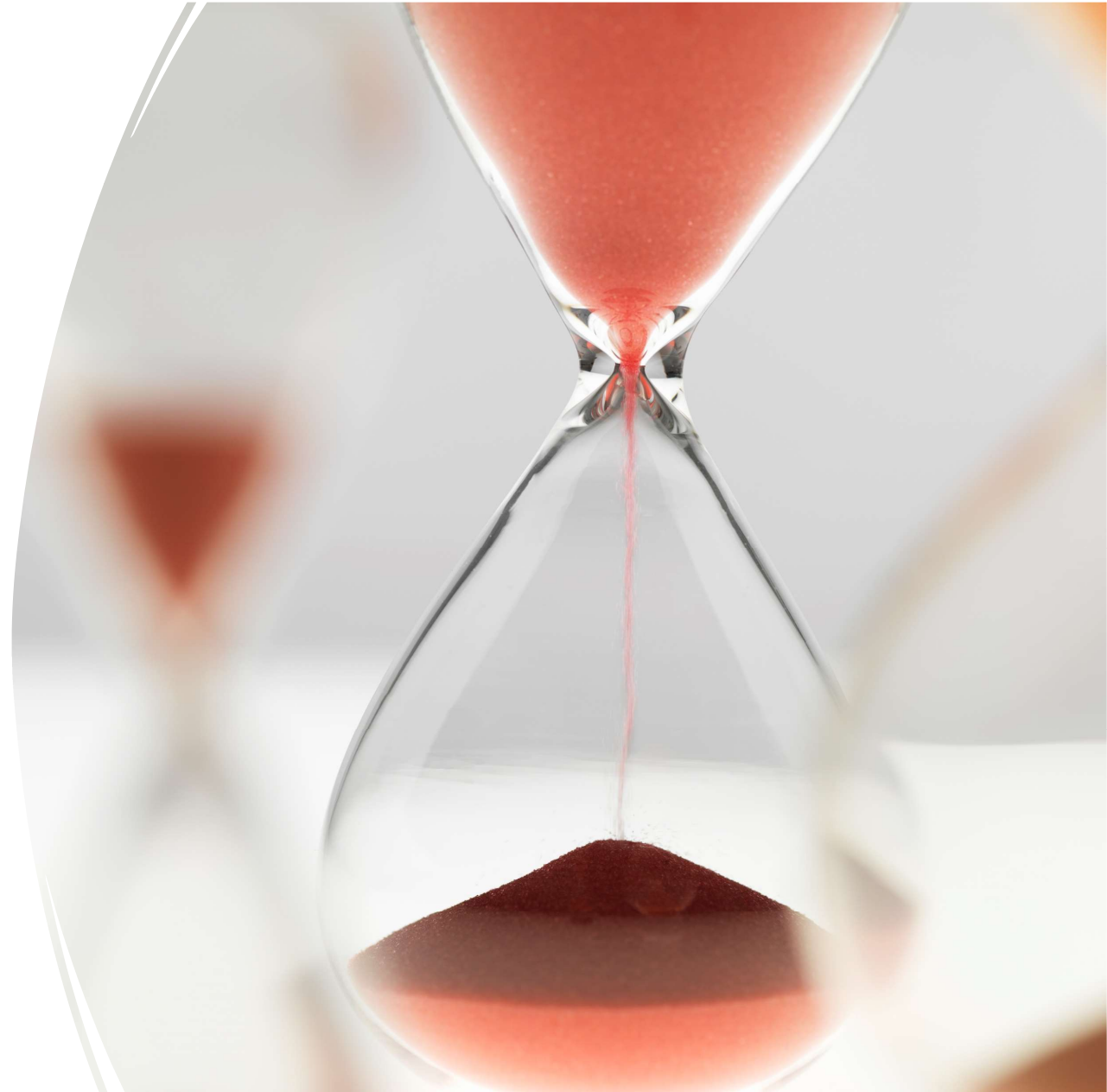
Shared Experiences

- Storytelling
- Reminiscence
- Making people more human & relatable
- Creating connections
- Commonalities
- Humanising IPL



Humour as a Time Filler

- A lot of time was taken up by humour
- Humour acted as a buffer
- Gave time to think, plan & act
- It provided light relief and gave respite
- It provided time & space to learn





Humour and Memory

- 'You remember funny stories'
- Aids memory recall
- Can help information to stand out
- Helped with knowledge retention



Learning to use humour

- People learned how to use humour through IPL
- By watching others
- Through sharing experiences
- Disciplinary expectations
- Professional socialisation
- Professional identity and world views





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**Humour as a way of
disguising and managing
emotions**

**Humour can be used to 'deal with
emotions and avoid burnout'**

**Humour can deflect emotions
and can be 'boxed away'**



“if we didn't laugh, we would cry!”

The Dark Side of Humour

Black humour as a learned coping mechanism.

Negative emotions or an absence of humour detrimentally affected IPL culture – causing disconnections – interrupting or deterring interactions that led to IPL.



Humour needed to be used professionally

- Sarcasm or irony were perceived as threats to safety because of risks of misinterpretation and offense
- These reduce IPL
- Reduce confidence
- Reduce teamwork
- Lead to disengagement from interactions



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Ultimately, humour brings joy to the workplace

**Humour acted as a bridge to interprofessional learning.
It could provide a way to connect people to help them to reach a point where they learn together.**





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Humour was sometimes the missing link to interprofessional learning



Recommendations

Professional use humour to enhance IPL

Influential factors for IPL can be used to evaluate IPL culture, *including consideration of the use of humour.*

Leaders can enhance IPL by humanising it.

Policies may be informed regarding development of guidelines for the professional use of humour.

Holistic IPL may be promoted by raising awareness of the benefits of using humour to enhance IPL.

In Summary



IPL was humanised through
the use of humour

Humour was a human aspect
of critical care and an
influential factor affecting IPL.

The conditions for interprofessional
learning were created
through the use of humour
and people were more receptive
and ready to learn
from, with, and about others.

My [thesis](#)

My [website](#)

[Staff Profile](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Research &
Scholarly Profile](#)

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[@VikkiPark2](#)



Find out more...



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Acknowledgements

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Professor Alison Machin

Lesley Durham

Northumbria University

**3 NE NHS Trusts and staff for
their research participation**



Thanks for joining
me today



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