

The Role of Humour in Nursing Education

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Abstract

Background: Homour is recognized as a dynamic pedagogical strategy that can reduce anxiety, promote engagement, enhance memory retention, and foster positive classroom environments. Despite global literature on its effectiveness, limited research exists on its application and impact within nursing education in India, particularly in Uttar Pradesh.

Objective: To explore the role of Homour in nursing education and its influence on student motivation, understanding, and class participation.

Methods: A descriptive mixed-methods study was conducted among 150 nursing students and 12 nursing faculty from three nursing colleges in Uttar Pradesh. Data were collected using standardized questionnaires, focus group discussions, and classroom observations. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data followed thematic analysis.

Results: Homour was found to significantly enhance student engagement ($p < 0.01$), reduce educational stress, and improve retention of complex nursing concepts. Three major themes emerged: (1) Homour as a learning facilitator, (2) Homour and student–teacher rapport, and (3) Contextual challenges in academic application.

Conclusion: Homour is a valuable educational strategy in nursing training. Its intentional and culturally sensitive use enhances learning outcomes and should be integrated systematically into nursing curricula.

Keywords: Homour, nursing education, student engagement, pedagogy, Uttar Pradesh

Introduction

Nursing education demands the assimilation of complex theoretical knowledge, clinical skills, and professional attitudes. Traditional lecture-based teaching can often lead to monotony, reduced student engagement, and high anxiety levels, particularly among pre-licensure students (Abdulrahman & Al-Ateeq, 2019). Educational scholars have identified Homour as an effective tool to humanize learning environments, reduce stress, and facilitate cognitive processing (Wanzer & Frymier, 2019). Homour in education refers to the *purposeful inclusion of amusing, light-hearted interactions, anecdotes, or activities* to promote meaningful learning. In health professions education, Homour has been linked to increased student motivation, improved critical thinking, and stronger student–faculty relationships (Berk, 2002). However, its role within nursing education in India — specifically in the culturally diverse and resource-constrained context of Uttar Pradesh — remains underexplored. This study examines how Homour functions in nursing classrooms and clinical teaching settings, and how students and faculty perceive its impact on learning, classroom climate, and stress reduction.

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Literature Review

Homour Theory in Education

Homour functions by activating emotional engagement and lowering psychological barriers, enabling better encoding of information into long-term memory (Martin, 2007). Integrative Homour theory suggests that when Homour is used intentionally in pedagogy, it enhances attention and information processing (Ziv, 1988).

Homour in Health Professions Training

Studies in medical education demonstrate that Homour:

- Reduces student anxiety before exams and clinical practice (Frymier et al., 2018).
- Encourages class participation and peer interaction (Wanzer et al., 2010).
- Improves long-term recall of content (Banas et al., 2011).

Gap in Nursing Education Research

While international evidence supports Homour's pedagogical value, *limited research focuses on Indian nursing contexts*. Existing studies do not address cultural norms around Homour, faculty comfort with Homourous techniques, or student perceptions unique to Indian classrooms.

Objectives

1. To assess the perceived role of Homour among nursing students and faculty.
2. To examine the effect of Homour on student engagement and learning outcomes.
3. To explore barriers and facilitators to the use of Homour in nursing education.

Methodology

Study Design

A mixed-methods descriptive study was conducted.

Setting and Participants

- **Sites:** Three nursing colleges in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Participants:**
 - 150 nursing students (B.Sc. & GNM) selected through stratified sampling.
 - 12 nursing faculty selected purposively.

Data Collection

Quantitative Tools:

- *Homour in Education Scale* (validated, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.88$).
- Student Engagement Questionnaire.

Qualitative Tools:

- Focus Group Discussions (3 student groups; 1 faculty group).
- Classroom observations using an observational checklist (behavioral engagement metrics).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from institutional review boards. Written informed consent was obtained. Confidentiality and voluntary participation were ensured.

Data Analysis

- Quantitative data analyzed using SPSS v26: means, frequencies, chi-square tests, *t*-tests ($p < 0.05$ significant).
- Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Results

Quantitative Findings

Variable	Mean \pm SD
Homour Perception Score	4.2 \pm 0.8
Student Engagement Score	3.9 \pm 0.7
Academic Stress (post-lecture)	2.8 \pm 0.9

- **Homour perception** positively correlated with **learning engagement** ($r = 0.62, p < 0.01$).
- Students reporting frequent Homour exposure scored higher on retention tests (mean 78% vs 65%, $p < 0.01$).

Qualitative Themes

Theme 1: Homour as a Learning Facilitator

This theme reflects participants' perceptions of Homour as an effective pedagogical tool that enhances comprehension, attention, and retention of complex nursing concepts. Students consistently reported that the use of Homour during lectures reduced cognitive overload and made abstract or difficult subjects—such as pharmacology, pathophysiology, and medical–surgical nursing—easier to understand. Humorous anecdotes, relatable examples, and light-hearted comments helped simplify theoretical content and aided long-term memory.

Students emphasized that Homour increased attentiveness during classes, especially during lengthy lectures, by breaking monotony and maintaining interest. Faculty members echoed this view, noting that Homour helped re-energize students and recapture attention when signs of fatigue or disengagement were evident.

“When the teacher used funny examples in pharmacology, I understood the drug classes better and remembered them during exams.”

Faculty participants also reported that Homour served as an instructional strategy to encourage participation and reduce the rigidity often associated with traditional teaching methods.

“A small joke or story helps students relax and focus again, especially during long theory sessions.”

Theme 2: Homour and Student–Teacher Rapport

This theme highlights the role of Homour in strengthening interpersonal relationships between students and faculty. Participants described Homour as creating a welcoming, non-threatening classroom environment that encouraged open communication. Students reported feeling more comfortable approaching faculty, asking questions, and expressing doubts when Homour was incorporated into teaching.

Homour helped reduce the hierarchical gap traditionally perceived between teachers and students in nursing education. This improved rapport fostered trust, emotional safety, and mutual respect, contributing to a positive learning climate.

“We feel more comfortable asking questions when the teacher jokes with us. It makes the class friendly.”

Faculty members observed that Homour humanized them in the eyes of students, making them more approachable and supportive.

“When students laugh with you, they connect better. It builds trust and improves communication.”

Theme 3: Contextual Challenges in Academic Application

While Homour was largely viewed positively, participants also acknowledged challenges related to its appropriate use. Faculty members expressed concerns about maintaining professionalism, cultural sensitivity, and academic decorum. In the culturally diverse setting of Uttar Pradesh, Homour needed to be carefully moderated to avoid misunderstanding or offense related to religion, family values, gender, or regional differences.

Some faculty felt hesitant to use Homour due to fear of misinterpretation or crossing professional boundaries. Students also emphasized that excessive or irrelevant Homour could distract from learning objectives.

“Not all Homour is suitable. We must avoid jokes that may offend family or religious values.”

This theme underscores the need for intentional, respectful, and culturally appropriate Homour, aligned with educational goals rather than entertainment alone.

“Homour should support learning, not distract from it.”

Discussion

The study shows that Homour is a significant pedagogical asset in nursing education. Quantitatively, Homour was associated with higher engagement and lower perceived stress. Qualitatively, participants emphasized its role in enhancing understanding and building rapport — consistent with global findings in medical and nursing education (Banas et al., 2011; Wanzer & Frymier, 2019).

However, cultural context matters. Faculty concerns about appropriateness highlight the need for *culturally sensitive Homour training*. Homour should be deployed ethically, avoiding stereotypes or topics that may offend.

Conclusion

Homour plays a valuable role in nursing education in Uttar Pradesh. Its positive influence on student engagement, comprehension, and emotional well-being suggests that nursing curricula can benefit from structured inclusion of appropriate Homour strategies.

Implications for Nursing Education

1. **Faculty Development Workshops** on Homour pedagogy.
2. **Integration of Homour-Based Strategies** into lesson plans.
3. **Guidelines for Appropriate Homour** ensuring cultural sensitivity.

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