



**HUMOUROUS METHOD: AN INNOVATION IN
THE SCIENCE OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

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Abstract

If you can love and if you can laugh, totally wholeheartedly, your life will become such bliss and a benediction, not only to yourself but to everyone else. You will be a blessing to the world (Osho). The ability to infuse humour into every day life is invaluable for health and happiness. Research evidence, supports what folk wisdom has long held: chuckling at situations and the self is healthy (Dixon 1980; Long , 1987; Martin & Lefcourt , 1983, Nezu, Nezu & Blissett 1988). Humour at the expense of others is something else altogether of course (Blumenfeld & Alpern , 1986). But mirthful laughter, funniness and joking in a playful spirit can enhance mental and physical well being and sometimes can earn heal (Causins, 1981, Graham, 1990; Ornstein & Sobel 1989; Sobel & Ornstein 1996,)Willinghom Jones, 1989. Studies suggest that humour may promote health partly through bolstering the immune system (Berk , 1989, Dillon, Minchoff, & Baker, 1985)

Keywords: *humour, teaching.*



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Introduction

Scientific research bears witness to the therapeutic effects of laughing. It can help in healing and pain reduction; it gives a cardiovascular and respiratory workout; it can steady blood pressure. When we laugh our immune system is more active, our digestion improves and stress levels decreases. (John Andrews, 2005 Laughter is the Best Medicine, Reader's Digest Association Limited, London) .Development of sense of humour are very much stabilizing in making tension- ridden persons easy and carefree (Kumar 2004, Relax and Be successful Personality and You, Competition Master, vol-45, No.09, April 2004). The Cardiovascular

experts report “three minutes of rearing laughter is worth many more minutes of aerobic exercise and Diller (1997)” says, “I’d rather have the laugh! to release stress to make man superactive.

Humour: Its meaning and Definition:

Humour (humor in American English) is a form of entertainment and a form of human communication intended to make people laugh and feel happy. The origins of the word “humour” lie in the humoral medicine of the ancient Greeks started that a mix of fluids, or humours, controlled human health and emotion. Different types of humour which appeal to different sectors of humanity exist - for instance, young children particularly favour slapstrak, while satire tends to appeal more to the older and better-educated. Humour often varies by locality and does not easily transfer from one culture to another. This happens because humour often relies on a content and someone not understanding the content will usually not understand the humour.

American Heritage Dictionary: 2009 The free online Dictionary defines humour in the following ways:

1. The quality that makes something laughable or amusing.
2. That which is intended to induce laughter or amusement.
3. The ability to perceive, enjoy or express what is amusing, comical incongruous or absurd.
4. A person’s characteristics disposition or temperament.
5. An often temporary state of mind, a mood.
 - a. A sudden unanticipated whim
 - b. Capricious or peculiar behaviour.

Accurate & Reliable Dictionary 2004 : A free english - english online dictionary defines humour as :

1. That quality of the imagination which gives to ideas an incongruous or fantastic turn, and tend to excite laughter or mirth by ludicrous images or representations : Playful fancy facetiousness.
2. To help a by indulgence or compliant treatment; to soothe; to gratify; to please.
3. The quality of being funny:
4. A message whose ingenuity or verbal skill on incongruity has the power to evoke laughter.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary humour (US humor) refers to

1. quality of being amusing or comic
2. ability to appreciate things, situations or people that are comic; ability to be amused.

3. Person's state of mind; mood; temper.

All that discussed above are pertaining to the meaning and definition of humour . If we closely observe and analyse different definitions on humour we will see that although the different words/ terms have been used to describe the nature of humour, yet essentially they mean one fundamental thing i.e. a form of communication created to evoke laughter and happy feeling.

Concept of Humorous Method of Teaching :

Learning by laughing is the fundamental principle of humorous method of teaching. In this method different techniques of humour are employed by the teacher in the classroom at very phase or stage of teaching or learning to create laughter , happiness, funniness, facetiousness, playfulness, etc. and with help of these new knowledge and information are imparted to the student Humorous techniques include - amusing or witty remarks, facetious statement, joking or jesting, playful behaviour, buffoonish remarks, unusual and strange gestures, coarsely witty stories, facetious remarks, telling funny and other types of quotes, telling sayings, telling related proverbs, peculiar smiling, giving surprise, commical song, performance and remarks, mirthful explanation, ludicrous statements, remarks etc, playful fancy, peculiar verbal skills, comedy, examples and illustration from different sources, uttering rhythmical words, telling dual meaning words or statements, using voice modulation, drawing funny cartoons, satirical comments, clever remark, irony, sarcastical remarks, caricature, impersonation and imitation, caustic remarks, adroitness or cleverness in reply etc.

This is a simple, systematic and better method of teaching in the sense that, it can be applied at levels of education primary, secondary and higher education. It can also be applied and used by all teachers and in all subjects. Accordingly this method can be perceived in two ways :

1) Method of Methods of Teaching:

In the true sense of fact humorous method is a method of methods of teaching which is traditionally used to teach different subjects at higher or lower levels of education. Following are different methods of teaching:

a) Observation Method (b) Excursion and Field Trip Method (c) Laboratory Method (d) Project Method (e) Discussion Method (f) Description Method (g) Heuristic Method (h) Regional Methods (i) Simulation Methods (j) Assignments Methods (k) Narration Methods (l) Story Telling Methods (m) Comparative Methods (n) Concentric Method (o) Socialised Recitation

Method (p) Source Method (q) Dalton Plan Method (r) Text Book Method (s) Lecture Method (t) Question - Answer Method (u) Inductive Method (v) Deductive Method (w) Problem Method (x) Review Method (y) Supervised Study Method.

All the above stated methods of teaching are applied and used in humorous method of teaching, for which it is known as “Method of Methods” of teaching.

2) Method in Methods of Teaching

Method in Methods refers to the use of humorous techniques in different conventional methods of teaching. In discussion method or observation method or in any method humorous approaches and techniques can be used to maximise learning outputs. So humorous method is like potatoes which can be used in all types of curry for which it is known as “Method in Methods” of teaching.

Techniques of Humorous Method of Teaching :

Multifarious techniques are employed to create humour in the classroom. All the techniques can broadly be categorised as :

- i) Verbal Techniques
- ii) Non- verbal Techniques

Verbal Techniques:

Following are verbal techniques :

- * Irony
- * Play of words such as oxymorons, puns, etc.
- * Wit as in many one - liner jokes.
- * Sarcasm
- * Satire
- * Parody etc.

Non Verbal Techniques :

- * Fake stern manner (in-appropriate in a comic setting)
- * Ridiculous gestures and movements
- * Slapstick
- * Inflicting pain (Such as kick in the groin or in the film Home alone etc.)
- * Faking Stupidity

- * Pointing out real stupidity (Such as the Darwin Awards)
 - * Silly acts in appropriate for the situation or age of person.
 - * Praxtral joke : deliberately luring some one into a humourous position and then laughing at their expense.
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- Adeges, often in the form of parody “laws” of nature.
 - Deliberate ambiguity and confusion with redity (Such as in Andy Kaufman’s humour)
 - Unexpected outcome, such as witty punchline (Surprise)
 - Absurdity
 - Humorous “Laws” such as Murphy’s Law.
 - Self inflicted embarassing situation , e.g. losing one’s swimming trunks after a dive.
 - Comic sounds or inherently funny words with certain sounds that make them amusing in a particular language.
 - Self-deprecation (Such as Rodney Danger field’s humour.)
 - stereo typing (such as blonde jokes, lawyer jokes, racial jokes, etc)
 - Unintentional humour, that is making people laugh withut trying.
 - Form - versus - content humour.

Principles of Humourous Method of Teaching

1. **Learning by Laughing** : Learning by laughing the basic principles of humourous method of teaching. New Knowledge information are served to the learners with the help of humourous techniques.
2. **Principle of Freedom and Flexibility** : Humorous method aims at bringing out the innate potetialities and allows freedom and flexibility in teaching - learning process. It gives opportunities for self-expression.
3. **Enjoyable Learning** : The focus areas of humourous method are enjoyable learning , stress free learning and learning without boredom and burden. The Learners enjoy to the learning atmosphere.
4. **Principle of variety** : Various techniques and approaches are used to deal a single topic in a single classroom. The principle of variety is strictly followed which facilitate enjoyable learning.
5. **Effective Communicaion** : Teaching learning process is considered as communication process. The effectiveness of educational system depends on effective communication process . Humourous method of teaching focuses on effective communication process.

6. Minimum cost and maximum Benefits :Cost effectiveness is an important features of teaching - learning process and this method aims at maximising benefit with minimum cost.

- * Humourous elements should be collected from different sources- day to day life events , experiences, history, mythology, etc.
- * This method is specifically influenced by the teacher. Teacher should be a man of humour.
- * Time should not be wasted to irrelevant humour.
- * Due care should be taken to avoid too much humour .
- * Humorous topics/ elements should be chosen with due care and thought.
- * Freedom , flexibility and democratic principles should be maintained inside the classroom.
- * Teacher should be active and smart inside the classroom while dealing with this method.
- * Teacher should invite humorous ideas from the students.
- * While dealing with this method teachers should be careful to see the course progress.
- * Teacher should plan in advance and execute this method nicely to satisfy all the children taking part in learning.

Demands of Humourous Method of Teaching:

Following are the demands of humourous method of teaching.

(1) Versatile knowledge (2) Mastery over the subject matter (3) Stress free mind (4) Language fluency (5) Absence of stage fearing (6) Flow of teaching (7) Teaching with acting (8) Friendly treatment with students (9) Shame-free behaviour (10) Voice should be followed by action (11) Dramatic aptitude (12) Multi lingual fluency (13) Creative approach (14) Attractive personality.

Advantages of Humourous Method of Teaching:

- Humourous method can be applied at all stages of education starting from primary to higher.
- It is suited to all topics and all subjects.
- It results in better, paramanent and more learning.
- It is suitable for students of both extrovent and introvert character.
- Emotional tensions are mitigated in this method.

- A friendly feeling is generated in the classroom. The relation between the teacher and the taught becomes more intimate.
- Rigorous instructional inputs are avoided.
- Minimum instructional materials and physical facilities are required in this method.
- Here the students are the active participants, not passive listeners or inactive observers.
- It is basically a psychological method as it is based on psychology of learner.
- Teaching touches all learners as topics are dealt in a lucid manner.
- Problem of discipline are solved as students remain alert and active during teaching learning process.
- Attention of students is easily arrested by the teacher.
- Interest and motivation are easily aroused.
- It gives the best of results in the shortest possible time and with the least wastage of money and energy.
- Maximum educational values are provided without strain.
- The mental horizon is widened as the principle of variety is used.
- Children can pick up the fact easily and quickly.
- This method as a whole enliven the classroom when the teaching learning activities are continuing.

No doubt this method is a very effective method, But while dealing with this method following points should be kept in mind in order to get positive results.

1. Progress of course may be hampered , if due attention is not paid to course progress.
2. Students may treat teacher as mere teacher not as a respected person if the teacher always use humorous approach.
3. High quality expertise needed to deal with this method of teaching but, most of the teachers lack this quality .
4. Mastery over the subject is pre requisite condition in this method but most of the teachers do not possess mastery over the subject.
5. Slow, silence and reserved teachers can not use this method successfully.

Humorous method considered one of the best method of teaching. If the students and teachers are kept motivated the real learning occurs, which remains more permanently as compared to the learning resulting in any other method. This method can be applicable in all

subjects and in case of all learners. All topics can be dealt with this method at all levels of education if this method can be applied effectively and efficiently. The success of this method rests a lot upon the competency and resourcefulness of the teacher. The author of this article has been using this method to teach B.Ed and M.Ed. students since last 14 years with hundred percent success. This is a best method of teaching which has already been proved by the author. To substantiate the effectiveness of this method, scientific studies are needed.

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