

# The Use of Comics in Social Studies Material and Its Effect on Achievement and Retention among Second-Grade Students

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The research aims to know the effect of comic and comic method for second-graders (average students) for social studies. In order to reach the goal and hypotheses of the research, the researcher chose the experimental design (with partial control) from the type of partial post-test for the two equal groups. The research sample consisted of 61 female students from the second intermediate class, who are studying social studies at the Directorate of Education, Rusafa / First. As the sample of the research was randomly chosen from the students of the Hariri Elementary School located in the Naguib Pasha region in Adhamiya, in a simple random way, two middle-class divisions were also chosen and distributed in two groups - the traditional way in experimental and taught according to the cartoon and comic method, and the control group taught according to the usual method, after the researcher conducted parity operations between the two groups in the following variables (students' chronological age, academic achievement for the previous year 2017-2018, and intelligence). In order to achieve the goal of the research, the researcher prepared an achievement test consisting of 30 paragraphs after confirming its sincerity by submitting it to experts and arbitrators, as well as extracting its reliability by reapplying it. After correcting the answers and statistically processing the data, the research results showed the superiority of the experimental group students who studied the social studies subject of the same subjects according to the achievement test. In the light of the results of the research, the researcher reached a number of recommendations, including using the comic method not only in the field of social studies, but also using this method in other subjects, and this has an impact on increasing educational achievement and retention, because successful teaching depends on the personality of the teacher and his intelligence and on his use of different teaching methods. The researcher also suggested conducting a number of future

studies, including conducting similar studies in other dependent variables, including developing creative and contemplative thinking and developing geographical concepts, as the researcher also suggested conducting other studies in variables of other levels of education for both genders.

**Key words:** *Cartoon and comic books, achievement, middle school students.*

## **Research Problem**

The research problem is that the poor achievement of students in the subject of social studies at all educational levels is no longer a hidden issue, despite the large number of studies that were conducted to facilitate the teaching and understanding the subject of social studies; as a person looking at this is noting that the general level of deterioration as well as the complaint about poor student achievement continues. Hence the main role of the teaching methods comes about because science searches for answers to questions based on observation and reasoning to reach answers to these questions. (Kumuna, 2005 196).

With the teacher's extensive knowledge of teaching methods and modern and diverse learning strategies and their capabilities to use them, he/she undoubtedly helps the student to know the teaching conditions appropriate for the application, so that it becomes an interesting and enjoyable process for students, appropriate to their capabilities, and closely related to their daily life and needs. As it is necessary to develop these methods to suit the scientific progress in various areas of life, development and change became necessary and imperative. (Merhi, 2003 25) Therefore the present study came about as an attempt to identify the best ways that can be used to treat the condition of weakness in the academic achievement in the subject of social studies in answering the following question -Do caricatures and comics influence the achievement of social studies material and its retention among second-graders middle students especially since caricatures and comics have a clear effect in achieving this? So the researcher used it to improve the teaching of social studies in our schools.

## **Research Importance**

The nature of life today requires an individual life today to face events, challenges, and changes (intellectual, social, technological, political, and economic) that have not been seen before, and to address them through the individual possessing many skills and capabilities.

Modern education stands as an active process that aims to provide an environment that helps to form the human personality of members of society and enables them to acquire social



qualities through balanced growth physically, mentally and psychologically and according to the ideological framework of society. (Resourceful, 1999 19)

Also, by the fact that education is a major humane process through which it can achieve social hopes and aspirations and build societies and their development, because it aims at events that change human behaviour and develop his/her personality. (Al-Ubaidi, 2004 64) Education is an imperative because it transports the human baby from a mere organism to a person with a distinct personality. (Tantawi, 17, 2009).

And because education depends on the school to achieve its goals, then there must be an axis that revolves around its educational system, and it is the curriculum that is the primary axis of the educational system.

Attention has increased in the curriculum in terms of employing, developing, and organising it by increasing the perception of educators of the role assigned to it and the formation of emerging generations. The curriculum is described as a comprehensive integrated energy through which learners are provided with educational opportunities that work to achieve the educational process. (Zaiton, 2001:5). Teaching methods are one of the factors of a teacher's success or failure, because the method that the teacher follows with his students in implementing the curriculum entails achieving educational goals or not achieving them. If choosing the appropriate method is important in the academic subjects in general, the main goal lies not only in obtaining matter, but also in educating a generation that has an understanding of the nature of society and the understanding of its variables. (Al-Jumaili, 2012 7) Teaching methods depend on the experiences of teachers and also on student activities and practices for the scientific subject and by moving away from traditional methods, the achievement increases their ability to learn better. (Al-Azzawi, 1999 21).

The interest in making the learning process a popular process among learners has become an essential requirement by many educators, especially among middle school students, because of its impact on raising the level of achievement of their level of education and their attitudes towards learning. In order to achieve this, we must use methods and ways that are modern and innovative. (Mahmoud, 2005 32) Caricatures and comics are among the teaching methods that can be used in teaching geography, as it is one of the interesting methods that learners interact with in a striking way, although some think that it falls within the literary frameworks. However, its presence in the culture of society justifies its use in teaching; we note the presence of those drawings in daily newspapers and magazines to express a specific political, economic or social situation, and in the field of teaching in general some teachers

use this type, but that use is mostly intentional and unplanned, and it is not directed much at teaching geographic phenomena, despite its positive repercussions on student achievement. (Al Samurai and Al Khafaji, 2014 and 2015).

From the foregoing, the importance of the current research is reflected in the following:

- 1- Caricature and comic experience in teaching social studies may help in breaking the traditional framework adopted in its teaching.
- 2 - This study is the first of its kind according to the knowledge of the researcher and her humble briefing in the research effect of use of cartoons and comics.
- 3 - The importance of the intermediate school stage that contributes to preparing a generation capable of facing the requirements of the age and later a good and beneficial citizen of its society.
- 4- The use of comics in teaching social studies comes in implementation of the concept of the partnership between teacher and student, and art.
- 5- The possibility of benefit to the competent authorities such as researchers and those working in the educational process from the results of this research in the field of social teaching and development.

### **Research Objective**

The research aims to know the effect of comics and cartoons on the achievement of social studies subject and its retention among second year middle school students.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The research hypotheses are : 1- There are no statistically significant differences at the level 0.05. Between the mean scores of the experimental group that were studied according to the cartoons and comics and the control group that studied the same material in the traditional way in the post achievement test.

2- There are no statistically significant differences at the level 0.05 between the mean scores of the experimental group which were studied according to the cartoons and comics and the control group that studied the same material in the traditional way of retention.

**Search Limits** The search is limited to the following limits:

- 1- The General Directorate of Education for the first Rusafa.
- 2- The middle school for girls.
- 3- The first semester of the academic year 2018-2019.

## Definition of Terms

### First: Caricatures and comics

- Salem, 2008 A type of drawing or writing that depends on exaggerating the privacy of people or things or expressing a process or incident to appear funny and is characterised by its ability to attract attention and influence the behaviour and trends. (Salem, 2008 40)
- Salama, 2016 An art of drawing art, which is an image of highlighting and amplifying natural features, distorting the characteristics of a person or an object, and departing from it as usual with the aim of secrecy and criticism. (Salama, 2016 35).

**Procedural definition** is satirical illustrations that help the teacher clarify the vocabulary of the subject of social studies that he presents to his students and encourages them to accept them in order to reach the desired goals.

### Second: Achievement

- Alkalza and Mukhtar, 1987 - as the extent of students' understanding of what they have learned from specific experiences in a specific subject measured by the grades they obtain by post-test achievement. (Chalza and Mukhtar, 1987 46).
- Allam, 2009 - as the achievement or efficiency of performance in a specific skill or set of knowledge, or that it is acquired knowledge or developing skills in various fields of study, and is represented in the grades of tests or marks that the teacher sets for his students or both. (Allam, 2009 201)

**Procedural Definition:** The set of degrees obtained by students of the research sample in the achievement test prepared by the researcher after their study of the subject of social studies in the experiment.

### Third: Retention

- Webster, 1998 - as the ability to retain the distant influences of experience and learning that makes remembering or recognising things possible. (Webster, 1998 999)
- Mahmoud, 1984 Preserving and collecting pre-acquired experiences while needing to use them.

A period that elapses between the acquisition of the subject and the restoration of it again. (Mahmoud, 1984 587)

**Procedural definition:** The amount of information or experiences that remain with students of the research sample, which can be retrieved after the passage of two weeks of the achievement test.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### ***Cartoons and Comic Method***

Cartoons and comic method - Cartoons and comics are a great tool for expression through which communication is possible, as the formative expression drawing things and evoking them is confirmed; it is one of the easiest ways to communicate as the often heard expression that “the image may be worth a thousand words” shows. He/she still possesses the ability to find contact and touch the mind and the heart together, as it is a global symbolic system. If the skill in the formative expression coincides with the skill in the linguistic expression in one work, the message is more clear, and the reception is from two sensory inputs of hearing and sight (a symbolic visual expression) that is read, uttered and heard, and another visual that is perceived by the eye and the mind. Also, the fact that comics are a form of visual perception, in addition to being an art that carries linguistic awareness and symbolic writings, the communication combines these two expressive systems in one work that we see as language and image, and we realise understanding and meaning. (Al Amouri, 2014 71).

The previous and other reasons have called for the use of caricatures in educational media: Perhaps what helps him/her to perform this task successfully is that he/she is characterised by linking the event, time, verbs, concepts, writing and emotions together without causing inconvenience to his/her reader and makes acceptance of thinking about it as an essence. (Al-Khaleeji, 2002 112).

### **The Philosophical Origins of Cartooning and Comic Method in Teaching**

The use of the comic method in teaching can be traced back to Structural Theory of Learning. Constructivist thought, among its companions, which is trying to find out what is the students' previous information, discussion thereof, and modification of their misunderstanding of the scientific phenomenon. The comic and cartoon drawings work to know what the learner holds about the scientific phenomenon, and then he/she tries to modify the incorrect ideas through discussion and questions. (Keogh and Naylor, 1997 : 37)

It is worth noting that historical studies have agreed that cartoons and comics are present in the Sumerian seals and on the walls of the Pharaonic temples and Greek wine pots, and thus the caricature has accompanied man from the dawn of civilizations to the establishment of the French Revolution And with the atmosphere that accompanied it, there were clear features of

the cartoon art as an independent art with specific goals. (Camel, 2005 31) By using such drawings in teaching leads the learner to demonstrate his/her knowledge of the scientific phenomenon and the ideas and beliefs he holds about it. Hence, the teacher can conclude whether this learner carries false ideas and concepts about the phenomenon, and thus attempts to modify and correct it. (Petty, 2005 97).

### ***Types of Caricatures and Comics***

1-Caricatures with an emphasis on the image, which is the illustration in which the illustration is self-sufficient to convey the message, and this type of caricature is the most basic and the one in which the first caricatures appeared. 2- Caricatures with an emphasis on the text. Although the image is the basis for the caricatures, however, over the centuries this image has transformed until it has become simplified and has become a resource and accompanying text that is strong enough and gives weight to the content that is being sent. 3- Chain caricatures, which is a drawing that consists of more than one syllable, and these syllables are sequenced and arranged, because they express a scientific phenomenon in which there is a set of steps or sequential procedures. (Abdel Nasser, 2016 97) (Al-Huwaidi, 2002 120).

### ***How to Use Comics***

There is a set of suggestions on how to use the method of comics in the teaching of social studies:

- 1 - The teacher uses comics as a method to explain the lesson after taking the comment.
- 2- The teacher offers ready drawings and students read them to extract specific information.
- 3- Students prepare drawings after the end of the lesson to express their understanding of the lesson.
- 4- Using the computer to display the drawings, which allows the teacher to employ a lot of things, such as the movement of fees and the introduction of sounds of things like movement of graphics and the introduction of appropriate sounds.
- 5- Providing scattered comic drawings, which students arrange according to their logical sequence.
- 6- Giving caricatures and a set of phrases related to the subject of the lesson. The student chooses one of them to put it in the appropriate cartoon. (Soliman, 1997 2016).

### ***Previous Studies***

1 - Akram 2011 studied the effectiveness of using the cartoon strategy in teaching family education on developing academic achievement for seventh grade students in the city of

Mecca. The study was conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and aims to identify the effectiveness of using the cartoon strategy in teaching family education to develop the academic achievement of seventh graders in Makkah Al-Mukarramah. The sample of the community was restricted to the capital's schools. The number of individuals in the sample reached 41 students, including 21 students for the experimental group and 20 students for the control group. The study revealed that there are statistically significant differences in favour of the experimental group and it is recommended the use of caricatures in teaching family education and the availability of curricula based on modern methods of education that help in achieving goals.

2- Abu Hewar Study 2017 -The Impact of Using the Cartooning Strategy on the Development of Historical Concepts of Fourth-Year Secondary Students. The study was conducted in Palestine (Gaza) and the study aimed to reveal the impact of the use of the cartoon strategy on developing the Historical concepts of fourth-grade secondary students. An intentional sample was chosen from the El-Zaytoun Elementary School where the experimental group consisted of 40 female students, according to the cartoons, and the control group 40 students, according to the usual traditional method. The study revealed the presence of statistically significant differences in favour of the experimental group, and the study recommended the necessity of using caricatures in teaching because it contributes to developing historical concepts and raises real participation in the learning process.

### ***Research Procedures***

The researcher followed a number of procedures that are required to reach her goals and verify her hypothesis, as follows: Firstly, the experimental design : The experimental design represents the researcher's plan to implement the experiment, and experimental designs are defined as strategic plans that define the systematic (accurate) method of studying the research hypotheses and its questions derived from theory or practice be determined. (Habib, 188 188) The researcher chose the experimental design with partial control, which contains two experimental groups that are subjected to the independent variable (comics and cartoons).

Research experimental scheme

(1)

<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>group</b>
- -Collection.	comics and cartoons	experimental
- - Retention.	Traditional way	control

### ***Second: The Research Community and Its Sample***

The current research community includes the official middle schools and high schools for girls within the academic year (2018-2019), in which the number of people in the second grade average is not less than two.

#### **A- Research Sample**

1- Schools' sample after recognising the names of the middle and high school schools who chose the middle scholar (Hariri Primary Girls) in a simple random manner to conduct her research of them.

2- The female sample after the researcher identified the school in which the experiment will take place and found that it includes three middle class students The second medium and the researcher chose the two divisions (A, B) by the random drawing method to be the two research groups, and in the same way the researcher chose Division (A) to represent the control group and the number of its students was 30 female students who will study their students in the traditional way and represented the division (B), for the experimental group The number of female students is 31 female students, who will be taught in cartoon and comic style. The total of the research sample reached 61 students, after excluding cases of female students failing.

### ***Third: Equivalence of the Two Research Groups***

The researcher made sure that the two research groups are statistically equivalent in some variables that may affect the dependent variables. The two groups were rewarded in the following variables:

- 1 - the chronological age of the students, calculated in months.
- 2- IQ test.
- 3- Female students' achievement in the social studies course for the first intermediate class.
- 4- Test the previous information.

### ***Fourth, Control of Exotic Variables***

Control of exotic variables is one of the important procedures in experimental research in order to provide an acceptable degree of internal honesty for experimental design, so that the researcher can attribute most of the variance in the dependent variable to the independent variable in the study and not to other variables. (Melhem, 2010 73) Therefore, the researcher tried as much as possible to control the non-experimental variables that she believes affect the integrity of the experiment as follows :experimental extinction, maturity, the effect of the

experimental procedures, the academic subject, the duration of time, material, teaching aids, and class distribution.

### ***Fifth, Research Requirements***

1- Defining the scientific subject (the first three chapters of the Social Book for the second intermediate grade for the academic year) (2018-2019).

2- Formulating the behavioural goals in the vocabulary included in the experiment according to Bloom's classification in the cognitive domain restricted to the first four levels (remembering, comprehension (understanding), application, analysis) as it reached 112 behavioural goals, and the researcher presented behavioural goals to the experts, as a ratio of 80 was adopted to accept the behavioural goal. 3- Preparing teaching plans, the researcher prepared 18 generating plans for each of the experimental and control group; two plans were presented for the experts, and a percentage of 80 of the experts' agreement was set.

### ***Sixth: The Research Tools***

Building the achievement test 1- Defining the scientific subject

2- Analyse the content of the scientific material and formulate behavioural goals.

3- Preparing the test map (specifications table).

4- Building the achievement test paragraphs and instructions (50 items from the objective questions).

4- Building achievement test items and instructions (50 items from objective questions - multiple choice).

5- Marking test scores.

6- The sincerity of the test (virtual honesty and content honesty)

### ***Seventh: Statistical Analysis of Test***

Items coefficient of paragraph difficulty, discriminatory strength of paragraphs, effectiveness of wrong alternatives.

### ***Eighth: Stability of Test***

The stability of the test has done by using half-way selection and the Richardson Koder formula.

### ***Ninth: Procedures for Applying the Experiment***

A-Applying the test to the research sample. The experiment started on Tuesday 16/10/2018 with two sessions per week and ended on Wednesday 26/12/2018 and applied the achievement test to the two research groups.

B- Applying the test to measure retention. The test was applied again on Wednesday on 9/1/2019, i.e. two weeks after the same sample, to know the extent of their retention of the scientific subject.

### ***Tenth: Statistical Means***

The following statistical methods were used - T-test for two unequal independent samples, difficulty equations, paragraph recognition strength, the effectiveness of wrong alternatives, the Pearson correlation equation, the Spearman-Brown correlation coefficient, and the Kuder Richardson equation.

### ***Presenting and Interpreting the Results***

This chapter deals with presenting the results that were reached according to the research objectives and hypotheses, and interpreting the results, and also deals with the conclusions, recommendations and proposals reached by the researcher.

### **First Displaying Results**

1 - Check the first hypothesis which is based on the following: There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the average score of the group that studied the sociology subject according to the caricature and comic method and the average score of the control group that studied the same subject according to the traditional method, in achievement. In order to test the validity of the first zero hypothesis, the researcher performed the following procedures: The arithmetic mean and variance were found for the degrees of students of both the experimental and control groups in the achievement test. It was found that the average achievement of the experimental group was 35.96, while the average achievement of the control group was 29.1; the researcher used the T-test for two samples and the research found that the calculated T value reached 4.02 which is higher than the tabular value of 2, and at the level of significance 0.05 and degree of freedom 59, and this indicates the superiority of the experimental group students who studied according to the cartoon method over the students of the control group who studied by the traditional method in answering the achievement test. In light of this result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 is rejected between the average grades of the second

grade students, the average who study according to the method of cartoons and comics, and the average grades of average second graders who studied according to the traditional method of achievement test.

2 - Verify the second hypothesis, which states as follows : There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the average scores of the experimental group who studied the subject of social studies according to the method of cartooning and comics, and the average scores of students of the control group that studied the same subject according to the traditional way of retaining. In order to test the validity of the second hypothesis, the researcher performed the following procedures: the arithmetic mean and the variance for the grades of the students of both the experimental and control groups in the test (retention) were found, and the researcher found that the average achievement of the experimental group was 32, while the average achievement of the control group was 25.93; the researcher used the T-test for two independent samples. It was found that the calculated T value reached 3.89 which is higher than the tabular value of 2 and at the level of significance (0.05) and degree of freedom (59), and this indicates the superiority of the experimental group students who studied using the cartoon and comics method over the students of the control group Those who studied the traditional way in answering the retention test, and in light of this result, the null hypothesis is rejected and accepted . The alternative hypothesis states that there is a statistically significant difference at the level of significance (0.05) between the average grades of second-graders average students who are studying in accordance with the cartoon and comics method and the average grades of second-graders average students who study according to the traditional method in test method.

## **Conclusion**

1 - Effectiveness of comics in teaching social studies for the second intermediate grade in raising the academic achievement of female students and raising retention.

2- The use of cartoons and comics raised the motivation the students have to participate in the lesson and stimulated the memory by retrieving stored information and linking ideas and thinking by giving the correct answers that support the reinforcement by the school, and this helped to absorb and retain information and thus achieve the goals of the educational process.

## **Recommendations**

1 - Adopting comics in teaching social studies for the second intermediate grade, as it has a role in raising the level of student achievement and raising retention.



2-The necessity for the teacher to prepare the appropriate educational situations or strategies that make the student discover the knowledge by him/herself.

### **Suggestions for Future Works**

1 - Conduct research to identify the effectiveness of comics in the subject of social studies in other dependent variables such as scientific and reflective thinking, and the development of geographical concepts.

2- Conducting a study similar to what the researcher did in other study stages and other subjects.

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