

Utilising Comics in Bullying Prevention Education for Primary School Pupils

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Received: 07/07/2025 | Accepted: 11/09/2025 | Published: 20/10/2025

Abstract: Bullying among primary school pupils remains a critical concern, affecting students' emotional well-being, social development, and academic performance. Early intervention is essential to cultivate empathy, respect, and positive social behaviours, thereby fostering a safe and inclusive school environment. This study explores the use of comics as an educational medium for bullying prevention, emphasising their suitability for young learners due to their visual, narrative-based, and reflective nature. Drawing on theoretical frameworks including Bandura's social learning theory, Piaget's constructivism, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, and Mayer's multimedia learning theory, the study highlights how comics can model positive behaviours, contextualise anti-bullying messages, and support cognitive and emotional engagement. The research discusses principles for selecting appropriate comics, strategies for integration into lesson plans and counselling sessions, and the use of both physical and digital platforms to maximise reach and effectiveness. Evaluation methods, including formative assessments, reflective activities, and behavioural observations, are proposed to measure comprehension, value internalisation, and behavioural change. While comics offer advantages such as enhanced engagement, emotional resonance, and visual literacy, limitations related to content depth, learning preferences, and implementation support are acknowledged. Ultimately, this study underscores the potential of comics as a practical, theory-driven, and age-appropriate tool for bullying prevention, promoting ethical character development, empathy, and pro-social behaviours among primary school pupils.

Keywords: Bullying Prevention, Primary School Education, Comics as a Learning Tool, Social and Emotional Development, Character Education, Visual Narrative, Pro-social Behaviour.

Cite this article:

Hashim, A. F. M.; (2025). Utilising Comics in Bullying Prevention Education for Primary School Pupils. *World Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2(10), 1-7.

Introduction

Bullying is a pervasive issue in educational settings, characterized by repeated aggressive behavior from an individual or group toward someone perceived as more vulnerable—physically, emotionally, or socially—with the deliberate intent to cause harm, intimidation, or humiliation (Olweus, 1993). It manifests in various forms, including physical, verbal, social, and cyber, each exerting significant and lasting effects on victims. Physical bullying involves direct acts such as hitting, pushing, or damaging property, resulting in both bodily injury and emotional trauma (Olweus, 1993), while verbal bullying employs name-calling, mocking, or belittling to inflict psychological harm and lower self-esteem (Rigby, 2002). Social or relational bullying targets an individual's reputation through exclusion or rumor spreading, leading to social isolation and a loss of peer support (Coloroso, 2008). With the rise of technology, cyberbullying has become increasingly prevalent, occurring through digital platforms to humiliate, threaten, or defame victims, often amplifying harm due to its persistent and far-reaching nature (Willard, 2007). Collectively, these forms of bullying highlight its complex and multifaceted nature, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive understanding and effective intervention within school environments.

Bullying Among School Students

Recent data from the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2025) indicate a significant escalation in bullying incidents among school students, with reported cases rising from 3,883 in 2022 to 7,681 in 2024. Notably, over 70% of these cases occurred in secondary schools, underscoring the heightened vulnerability of adolescents to peer aggression within increasingly complex social environments.

Bullying behaviors manifest in various forms, including physical aggression, verbal harassment, social exclusion, and cyberbullying perpetrated via digital platforms. Although empirical data on bullying at the tertiary level remain limited, anecdotal reports suggest the presence of hierarchical abuse, wherein senior students engage in physical intimidation, threats, and public humiliation of junior peers within residential college settings. Academic and social bullying have also been documented, encompassing behaviors such as sabotaging coursework, excluding individuals from collaborative tasks, and exerting coercive influence within student organizations.

The psychosocial consequences for victims are profound. Exposure to bullying is associated with elevated risks of anxiety, depression, insecurity, and, in severe cases, suicidal ideation (Ahmed et al.,

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2022; Siu et al., 2025; Zhao et al., 2023). These psychological disturbances often disrupt sleep patterns, erode self-confidence, and impair overall mental health functioning. Academically, victims may experience diminished concentration, reduced classroom participation, and declining academic performance, which may culminate in absenteeism and disengagement from formal education (Evans et al., 2018). Social withdrawal and difficulty forming supportive peer relationships are common, further exacerbating emotional isolation (Shiba et al., 2023). Physical bullying may result in bodily harm, while cyberbullying poses sustained psychological threats that extend beyond the confines of the school environment (Schneider et al., 2012).

Perpetrators of bullying are not immune to adverse outcomes. Engagement in bullying behavior is correlated with increased aggression, diminished empathy, antisocial tendencies, and a heightened risk of delinquency and violent conduct in later life (Jankowiak et al., 2024; StopBullying.gov, 2025). These individuals frequently exhibit poor academic performance, elevated absenteeism, and recurrent disciplinary infractions. Underlying psychological distress, often rooted in familial dysfunction or exposure to violence, may contribute to the perpetuation of maladaptive behavioral patterns if left unaddressed (Ahmed et al., 2022; Evans et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2023).

Problem Statement

Bullying among school students in Malaysia has emerged as a pressing social and educational issue, manifesting in multiple forms such as physical aggression, verbal harassment, social exclusion, and cyberbullying (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2024; Olweus, 1993; Willard, 2007). Despite various preventive efforts, the persistence of bullying indicates limitations in the effectiveness of existing interventions. Conventional approaches—such as lectures, exhibitions, workshops, and short-term courses—are frequently implemented but often fail to achieve sustainable behavioural change, particularly among primary and secondary school students, when they are not adapted to learners' developmental stages, cognitive abilities, and interests (Coloroso, 2009; Piaget, 1972; Rigby, 2002). One-way delivery methods, such as didactic lectures or passive workshops, tend to offer minimal engagement, while sporadic or stand-alone programmes without follow-up mechanisms such as classroom integration, counselling sessions, or peer support systems seldom lead to enduring attitudinal or behavioural transformation (Evans et al., 2018; Moore, 2017; Shiba et al., 2023). This gap highlights the urgent need for more interactive, developmentally appropriate, and sustained anti-bullying initiatives within Malaysian schools.

Aims of the Study

Based on the identified research problem, there is an urgent need for bullying prevention strategies that are developmentally appropriate, contextually relevant, and emotionally engaging. Effective interventions should not only address behavioural outcomes but also promote reflection, empathy, and moral reasoning among students. In this regard, approaches that integrate interactive, narrative-based, and creative methods—such as comics, role-playing, and social simulations—offer promising potential for enhancing student engagement and understanding (Al Ali et al., 2025; Kaloeti et al., 2021; Coloroso, 2009; Paul et al., 2024). Accordingly, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of using comics as an educational tool to mitigate bullying, with particular attention to primary school students. This focus is

intentional, as children in the primary years are at a crucial stage of cognitive and social development, during which visual learning, storytelling, and participatory activities can effectively shape positive values and prosocial behaviour. Early intervention through such approaches may cultivate empathy, strengthen moral awareness, and reduce the likelihood of involvement in bullying as children progress through later stages of schooling (Piaget, 1972; Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 2002).

Significance of this Study

This study holds significant implications for educators, school counsellors, and policymakers engaged in primary education, as it offers evidence-based insights into the use of comics as an innovative and effective medium for bullying prevention. For teachers, the findings provide practical guidance on integrating comics into classroom instruction and social-emotional learning activities, thereby fostering empathy, moral reasoning, and prosocial behaviour among students. School counsellors may utilize the outcomes to design intervention programmes that are developmentally appropriate, reflective, and engaging, enabling children to better understand the emotional and social consequences of bullying while cultivating positive peer relationships. Furthermore, policymakers and curriculum developers can draw upon the study's findings to incorporate narrative-driven and visually oriented pedagogical approaches, such as comics, into broader frameworks of character education and social development. Ultimately, the study contributes to creating safer, more inclusive, and supportive learning environments, directly benefiting primary school students by promoting early awareness, empathy, and social responsibility.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design focusing on the systematic analysis and synthesis of existing literature related to bullying prevention and the educational application of comics. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of previous empirical findings, theoretical perspectives, and practical interventions, particularly those relevant to the primary school context. The literature review integrates diverse and credible scholarly sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, official reports from governmental and international bodies, theses, dissertations, and reputable online databases. These sources collectively inform the study's conceptual and theoretical foundations, identify existing research gaps, and substantiate the relevance of using comics as a pedagogical tool for promoting social-emotional learning and anti-bullying education. The careful selection and critical evaluation of sources ensure that the review is methodologically rigorous, coherent, and grounded in evidence, thereby strengthening the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions.

Definition of Comics

Comics are a visual narrative medium that combines illustrations, text, and panel arrangements to convey stories, ideas, or messages sequentially and clearly (McCloud, 1995). They typically use characters, dialogue, and visual expressions to construct scenarios that may be dramatic, humorous, educational, or reflective. This medium is particularly effective for primary school students, as it aligns with their predominantly visual and intuitive cognitive development (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978). At this stage, children

understand concepts more readily through images, colors, character expressions, and simple dialogues reflecting everyday interactions.

Through sequential narratives and relatable characters, comics allow students to recognise positive and negative behaviours indirectly. They create a non-threatening and engaging learning environment, making it easier to convey values such as empathy, respect, courage, and honesty (Topkaya, Yavuz, et al., 2023). By employing reflective and interactive storytelling, comics not only capture students' attention but also promote critical thinking, discussion, and thoughtful responses to social issues, including bullying (Wahyuni, Erly, 2025).

Furthermore, comics offer a contextualised approach to learning: students can identify bullying behaviours, understand their impact on victims, and model positive responses such as empathy, courage, and peer support (Bandura, 1977). According to Mayer's multimedia theory (2001), the combination of text and imagery enhances comprehension and engagement, making comics an effective, age-appropriate, and ethically impactful medium for anti-bullying education.

Prevention at the Primary School Level

Bullying prevention should begin at the primary school level, as this stage represents a critical phase in the development of pupils' character, social values, and emotional skills. At this age, children are forming their self-identity, learning to interact socially, and beginning to understand the concepts of right and wrong. Early intervention enables pupils to recognise bullying behaviours, understand their impact on victims, and develop empathy and peaceful conflict resolution skills. Such an approach also helps prevent the establishment of aggressive behavioural patterns that may persist into adolescence and adulthood.

Primary school pupils are particularly responsive to visual, narrative-based, and reflective educational approaches, such as comics, simulations, and group activities. Age-appropriate and contextual interventions allow anti-bullying messages to be conveyed in a non-threatening manner, facilitating the natural internalisation of values. According to principles of social and emotional development, early intervention enhances psychological resilience, fosters peer support, and contributes to a safe and inclusive school climate.

Moreover, early prevention enables teachers and counsellors to identify pupils at risk of becoming either perpetrators or victims of bullying and provide timely support before behaviours become entrenched. Through the systematic and sustained implementation of prevention programmes, primary schools serve as foundational spaces for cultivating respect, empathy, and social responsibility—values that pupils are likely to carry forward into later stages of life.

Literature Review: The Use of Comics in Education and Bullying Prevention

The use of comics in education has demonstrated significant benefits, particularly in the context of bullying prevention. Previous studies indicate that comics contribute to cognitive development, strengthen emotional literacy, and foster positive social values among students (Şentürk, 2022; Topkaya & Yavuz, 2016; Balbaa et al., 2023). As a visual narrative medium, comics encourage students to think reflectively, recognise negative behaviours, and develop healthy strategies for responding to social challenges. Through structured storytelling that depicts bullying

scenarios and conflict resolution, comics enhance empathy and social awareness, supporting the creation of safe and inclusive learning environments.

Comics also reinforce literacy, particularly for students with lower language proficiency or special educational needs. Research by Merç (2023), Raharja (2023), and Huang et al. (2024) suggests that comic-based approaches improve understanding and information retention. In bullying prevention education, comics introduce key concepts such as “empathy,” “respect,” and “peer support” in a contextualised and incremental manner, making anti-bullying messages easier to comprehend, internalise, and apply. The incorporation of fictional, dramatic, or humorous elements stimulates imagination and emotional engagement, promoting reflective thinking and enabling students to reconsider their roles in conflict situations safely and constructively (Bertella & Tomassini, 2024; McGarr et al., 2021; Sofowora, 2007; Tsortanidou et al., 2020).

From a theoretical perspective, comics align with Bandura's social learning theory (1977), which posits that learning occurs through observation and imitation of models. By presenting relatable characters, comics allow students to emulate positive behaviours while recognising the consequences of negative actions. Studies by Mazid & Sukron (2024) and Wallner & Eriksson Barajas (2020) demonstrate that contextual and dramatic comic narratives can foster empathy and social awareness. Multimodal analyses further highlight comics' capacity to develop self-reflection and identity formation (Alshiban, 2025; David et al., 2018; Earle, 2021). Pedagogically, Mayer's multimedia theory (2001) underscores the benefit of integrating text and images, showing that visual narratives enhance comprehension of abstract concepts (McCloud, 1993; Nagata, 1999; Tatalovic, 2009).

In the local and regional context, studies in Malaysia and the broader Nusantara region corroborate the effectiveness of comics in conveying moral values and promoting mental health in an age-appropriate and non-threatening manner (Vitiello, 2023; Widyasari et al., 2022; Yusof et al., 2022). Research by Oktaviana & Rusnilawati (2022) highlights comics as an effective psychoeducational tool in bullying prevention, emphasising empathy and peer support. Additional studies by Kutok et al. (2023) and Drakatos et al. (2023) indicate that visual media like comics significantly enhance students' emotional and social awareness.

Overall, the literature suggests that comics are not merely instructional aids but serve as a systematic and theory-based intervention for increasing awareness of bullying. By combining contextualised characters, sequential narratives, and reflective elements, comics illustrate the negative consequences of bullying, foster empathy, and encourage students to evaluate and adjust their behaviours. Humorous, dramatic, and reflective components allow students to express emotions safely while learning conflict resolution strategies. These findings reinforce Bandura's social learning theory (1977) and Mayer's multimedia theory (2001), demonstrating that the integration of visual, textual, and behavioural models in comics can effectively convey anti-bullying messages and promote proactive engagement in school environments.

Theoretical Framework

The use of comics as an educational medium is increasingly recognised as an approach grounded in established learning

theories, particularly in addressing bullying among primary school students. Bandura's social learning theory (1977) posits that student behaviour is shaped through observation and imitation of relevant social models. Comics provide relatable characters that act as role models, enabling students to observe and emulate positive behaviours such as empathy, courage, and peaceful conflict resolution. Through dramatic and contextual visual narratives, comics also illustrate the impact of bullying on victims and the importance of peer support, conveying these messages indirectly yet effectively (Anders, 2023; Dixon, 2024).

In parallel, Piaget's constructivist theory (1972) emphasises that young learners construct understanding through active engagement with materials appropriate to their cognitive development. Comics designed for primary students facilitate this process by combining narratives and illustrations that allow learners to actively interpret, reflect upon, and internalise social behaviours and anti-bullying messages in an accessible, enjoyable, and non-threatening manner.

Vygotsky's social development theory (1978) further highlights the importance of social interaction and guidance within the zone of proximal development. Comics function as scaffolding tools, offering contextualised dialogue and scenarios that reflect students' everyday experiences, thereby guiding them to understand social norms and internalise positive values.

Integrating these three theories provides a comprehensive framework for the educational use of comics. Bandura addresses what students can observe and emulate, Piaget explains how students actively construct understanding, and Vygotsky clarifies how social guidance and interaction facilitate learning. Together, they demonstrate how comics can simultaneously support observational learning, active cognitive engagement, and socially guided understanding.

From a pedagogical perspective, this theory-based approach enables teachers and school counsellors to design interventions tailored to students' cognitive, emotional, and social development. Activities such as simulations, role-playing, and engagement with visual narratives through comics encourage active and reflective exploration of social values. Beyond supporting major learning theories, comics serve as an effective intervention strategy for cultivating anti-bullying attitudes. Through visual, emotional, and social storytelling, comics help students identify, understand, and reject bullying behaviours, thereby contributing to the creation of a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

Implementation and Evaluation of Comics in Bullying Prevention Education

The use of comics as an educational medium for bullying prevention among primary school students requires careful planning, a theory-based approach, and systematic evaluation. Comics function not only as visual aids but also as intervention tools that convey social messages in a reflective, non-threatening manner. Their effectiveness depends on selecting appropriate materials, designing engaging strategies, displaying them through accessible mediums, and evaluating their impact on students' cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Principles for Selecting Comics

Selecting comics for anti-bullying education should be guided by principles that ensure relevance, accessibility, and effectiveness. Firstly, comics must be age- and developmentally-appropriate, tailored to the cognitive, emotional, and social levels of primary

school learners, who respond well to visual and intuitive materials (Piaget, 1972). Secondly, they should incorporate positive values, such as empathy, respect, courage, and peaceful conflict resolution, delivering anti-bullying messages constructively. Thirdly, comics should feature a clear and contextualised narrative, allowing students to relate the storyline to their daily experiences, which facilitates internalisation of values. Fourthly, role-model characters should demonstrate positive behaviours consistent with social learning principles (Bandura, 1977).

Illustrations should be meaningful and supportive, conveying characters' emotions visually rather than serving as mere decoration. Language should be simple and concise, avoiding stereotypes or violent content that could reinforce stigma or aggression. Comics should also encourage reflection and discussion, providing opportunities for critical thinking, guided dialogue, and exploration of social issues. Finally, they should align with learning objectives and be adaptable for follow-up activities, such as role-playing, empathy simulations, reflective journals, or student-created comics, ensuring messages are internalised and applied.

Strategies for Using Comics

Effective strategies for using comics in bullying prevention education are reflective, contextual, and developmentally appropriate. One key approach is the integration of comics into the Daily Lesson Plan (Rancangan Pengajaran Harian, RPH), particularly within sessions on social values, character education, or emotional health. Teachers should set learning objectives aligned with comic messages, such as fostering empathy, recognising bullying behaviours, or promoting peaceful conflict resolution. Comics can also be used in guided reading sessions, individually or in groups, with open-ended questions prompting discussion on character behaviour, bullying consequences, and portrayed values, reflecting Vygotsky's (1978) guided dialogue principle.

Another strategy is simulation and role-playing, allowing students to enact scenarios from comics to understand the perspectives of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. These activities foster empathy and reinforce peaceful conflict resolution, consistent with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. Students can also create their own comics, promoting self-expression and reinforcing internalisation of anti-bullying values. In counselling sessions, comics serve as psychoeducational tools, helping students understand the consequences of bullying and develop self-protection strategies.

Comics may also be combined with multimedia resources, including audio, video, or animation, to enhance engagement and accommodate diverse learning styles, in line with Mayer's (2001) multimedia learning theory.

Locations and Mediums for Displaying Comics

Comics can be exhibited through physical and digital channels to maximise accessibility and impact (McCloud, 1995; Toh et al., 2017). Physically, they can be displayed on notice boards in classrooms, corridors, canteens, or counselling rooms, and printed as banners or posters for events such as Anti-Bullying Week, Counselling Day, or Education Carnivals (Coloroso, 2009; Olweus, 1993). Short comics may be distributed as flyers or handouts for home reflection or discussion with parents (McCloud, 1995).

Digitally, comics can be uploaded to learning portals such as Frog VLE, DELIMa, or the school's website, or included as special reading materials in the library, organised by themes such as empathy, courage, or peer support (Bandura, 1977; Piaget, 1972; McVicker, 2018). Students may incorporate comics into reflective journals or scrapbooks (Vygotsky, 1978). Interactive exhibitions, mini-galleries, or multimedia displays during school events further enhance engagement.

Schools can also share comics via official social media channels to advocate positive behaviour within the wider educational community (Willard, 2007). Student-created comics may be exhibited in classrooms or club activities, while comics integrated into intervention modules or student workbooks support counselling sessions and character education (Topkaya et al., 2023; Oktaviana & Rusnilawati, 2022; Putri et al., 2024). Through these diverse mediums, comics function not only as instructional materials but also as advocacy tools that foster a safe, inclusive, and ethical school culture (Chatzakou et al., 2017; El Refaie, 2009).

Evaluation of the Impact of Comics

A systematic evaluation approach is essential to determine the effectiveness of comics in educating students about bullying prevention (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Assessment should extend beyond content comprehension to include changes in students' attitudes, emotional reflection, and behavioural responses to bullying (Patton, 2015).

Both formative and summative assessments can be employed. Comprehension tests, questionnaires, or quizzes following comic-reading activities may cover topics such as types of bullying, the roles of perpetrators and victims, and conflict-resolution strategies (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2019). Observation of student behaviour within classrooms and school environments provides further insight into whether the comic's messages have translated into practice, for example, through increased empathy, peer support, or decreased bullying incidents (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).

Reflective activities, including personal journals, emotional drawings, or the creation of original comics, allow assessment of the depth to which students internalise the values conveyed (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). Teachers and counsellors can evaluate these narratives based on clarity of message, social awareness, and proposed strategies for conflict resolution (Patton, 2015). Group discussions and interviews provide a qualitative perspective, enabling students to share their experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding bullying and social behaviour (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Feedback from teachers, counsellors, and parents is also critical for evaluating the long-term impact of comic-based interventions. Evidence of positive changes in social interactions, emotional regulation, and participation in value-driven activities indicates successful outcomes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). By employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, educators can conduct a comprehensive and contextualised evaluation of comics as an educational tool, highlighting their potential to foster empathy, moral understanding, and pro-social behaviour among primary school students (Patton, 2015; Fraenkel et al., 2019).

Advantages and Limitations of Comics in Bullying Prevention Education

Comics offer multiple advantages as an intervention medium in bullying prevention education, particularly for primary school students. From a cognitive and imaginative development perspective, comics are highly suitable, as children at this stage comprehend information more effectively through visual and intuitive elements such as images, colours, and character expressions (Piaget, 1972). The delivery of anti-bullying messages through comics is gentle and non-threatening, enabling students to internalise social values such as empathy and respect without emotional pressure (Bandura, 1977). Dramatic and contextual narratives allow students to perceive the impact of bullying on victims, thereby encouraging reflective thinking and discussion about appropriate behaviours. Moreover, comics support the principles of multimedia learning theory, which asserts that learning is enhanced when information is presented through a combination of text and images, improving engagement and understanding of social issues such as bullying (Mayer, 2001).

Despite their potential, several limitations must be acknowledged. The content of comics is often concise and may not fully address the psychosocial or legal dimensions of bullying. Without guidance from a teacher or facilitator, students may misinterpret the messages, undermining the development of intended values (Vygotsky, 1978). The effectiveness of comics also depends on the quality of illustrations and narrative; poorly designed or irrelevant comics can diminish educational impact. Additionally, not all students respond equally to visual materials, with some preferring kinesthetic or auditory learning approaches, which may reduce the medium's effectiveness. Therefore, comics should be accompanied by contextual support, including reflective activities, guided discussions, and value-based assessments, to ensure that anti-bullying messages are fully understood, internalised, and applied.

Factors Contributing to the Failure of Comics in Addressing Bullying

Several factors can contribute to the failure of comics as an educational tool, particularly when they are not designed or implemented within an appropriate pedagogical and contextual framework. Firstly, overly simplistic or superficial content may result in an inadequate understanding of anti-bullying messages, especially if the psychosocial aspects, victims' emotional experiences, or legal implications are not addressed (Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978). Comics that merely depict surface-level scenarios without reflective or moral depth risk becoming mere entertainment rather than educational tools.

Secondly, misinterpretation by pupils is a major challenge, particularly when comics are read without the guidance of a teacher or counsellor. Pupils may fail to grasp the intended moral message or, in some cases, may imitate undesirable behaviours portrayed by characters (Piaget, 1972). Thirdly, poor visual or narrative quality can hinder message delivery; unengaging illustrations or illogical storylines may cause pupils to lose interest and fail to internalise the intended lessons (Mayer, 2001).

Furthermore, comics may be less effective for pupils who are less responsive to visual media, such as those who prefer kinesthetic or auditory learning approaches. In such cases, comics should be integrated with complementary activities to ensure inclusivity and engagement (Bruner, 1996). Finally, the absence of contextual support, such as guided discussions, reflective exercises, or follow-

up activities, can prevent pupils from internalising values. Without reinforcement through social interaction and reflection, comics risk becoming passive materials that fail to promote behavioural change (Kolb, 1984).

Overall, the effectiveness of comics depends on careful planning, pedagogical support, and contextual appropriateness. When these factors are neglected, comics may fail to function as constructive and transformative intervention tools.

Sustainability of Bullying Prevention Education

Bullying prevention education initiated at the primary school level has the potential to produce lasting effects that extend into secondary and higher education, provided it is implemented consistently and grounded in core values. Early education on bullying not only raises pupils' awareness of negative behaviours but also establishes foundational character traits such as empathy, respect, and social responsibility. When these values are instilled from a young age, they become integrated into pupils' self-identity and influence their interactions in increasingly complex social environments during adolescence and adulthood (Bandura, 1977; Piaget, 1972).

When interventions are supported through reflective approaches, experiential activities, and peer support, pupils are better prepared to navigate social challenges in secondary school, such as peer pressure, identity conflicts, and disagreements. At the tertiary level, individuals who have undergone robust character education tend to demonstrate social maturity, effective conflict resolution skills, and heightened sensitivity to peers' mental well-being (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1996).

However, the sustainability of these outcomes requires systemic support, including a progressive curriculum, a school culture that promotes respect and empathy, and active involvement from teachers, counsellors, and the wider community. If bullying prevention is delivered episodically or as a short-term campaign, its impact may be limited and short-lived. Therefore, an integrated, staged approach is essential to ensure that values instilled in primary school continue to develop and are practised throughout an individual's educational journey (Mayer, 2001; Kolb, 1984).

Conclusion

Comics can serve as a comprehensive, age-appropriate, and contextually reflective educational tool, functioning as visual narratives that convey concepts, values, and social messages tailored to the developmental needs of primary school students. Through relatable characters who model empathy, courage, and peaceful conflict resolution, comics foster emotional and social awareness, helping students understand the impact of bullying, recognise negative behaviours, and internalise peer-support values. When integrated into counselling sessions, simulations, guided discussions, and creative activities, they encourage self-expression, active engagement, and reflective learning. By combining text and imagery, comics enhance comprehension and retention, making them an effective medium for cultivating values, developing visual literacy, and supporting ethical character growth.

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