

# Comic Strips as Supplementary Instructional Materials in Reading

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**Abstract:** This study investigated the effectiveness of Comic Strips as supplementary instructional materials in enhancing reading comprehension and engagement among grade 4 pupils. The data from classroom observations further indicated that comic strips facilitated better understanding of complex text, improve visual literacy, and encouraged collaborative discussion among students. The objective of this study is to examine the potential impact of comic strips on the reading comprehension skills of grade 4 pupils. The teachers and pupils construct and negotiate discourses around comic strips as part of classroom interaction from a new literacy studies perspective. The combination of imaginary and text makes comics relevant tools for examining how literacy is socially constructed. The findings suggest that comic strips serve as valuable supplementary materials that can address diverse learning styles, reduce reading anxiety, and foster a positive attitude towards reading. This study recommends integrating age- appropriate comic strips into reading instruction to enhance both cognitive and affective outcomes for Grade 4 pupils.

**Keywords:** *Comic Strips, Supplementary Instructional Materials, Reading Instruction, Learner Engagement.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of the reading skills in English has reached new heights in the present context of the globalized world. Students' proficiency of reading English is very poor. A large majority of students in our country cannot Access English textbooks prescribed in their syllabus for their lack of required proficiency of reading skills in English. As a result, education in our country suffers miserably, it falls far below the international standard (Greenall, 2000). Reading as one of the components of English, focuses understanding word meaning and answering specific questions.

At no stage of the whole education system, students are encouraged to process the information through intellectual engagement, analysis, and interpretation of the text. Reading is not taught properly in scientific methods. Teachers also do not have necessary training for that. Greenwood (1998) rightly pointed out that teachers fail to recognize the potentiality of reading, for they neglect or ignore it in the classroom. According to him, the responsibility of this failure goes to the attitude of the teacher and of the students.

The most acknowledged cause of failure of the students in effective reading is the lack of vocabulary. Many students inspired by friends or guided by teachers sometimes try to read a book but soon they lose the eagerness and interest due to not understanding the text. Sometimes, they do not understand long sentences, and they miss the links between a

text. As a result, they lose their interest, and they give up reading. Sometimes they feel inspired to look for the words in the dictionaries, but checking the dictionary too many times proves boring, and at last, their enthusiasm for reading the text dies down (Lindsay, 2000).

In today's globalized society, graduates are prepared not only for the local market but also for the global workforce. Achieving international standards in education is impossible without proficiency in English reading skills. Moreover, in the age of the Internet—the fastest medium for accessing information and engaging with the world—reading literacy is indispensable.

Recognizing this, the Department of Education (DepEd) initiated programs to address reading difficulties. DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2015, known as the *Guidelines on the Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Program: Professional Development Competent and Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP)*, was designed to strengthen reading literacy.

These programs provide opportunities for students to read more while managing vocabulary growth and complexity. Similarly, DepEd Memo No. 345, s. 2010 mandated the maximum utilization of the *Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI)*, which supports ECARP by evaluating pupils' reading proficiency levels and guiding appropriate interventions. However, results from the National Achievement Test (NAT) and Phil-IRI reveal persistent

problems in reading comprehension. For instance, the NAT results for Grade 3 in school year 2013–2014 showed that Sorsogon City ranked last among the 13 divisions in Region 5, with a mean percentage score of 47.03, while Sorsogon Province ranked sixth with 58.04.

King (2008) emphasized the importance of individualized reading programs, declaring them “the right approach.” He argued that students should read according to their own interests and pace, since comprehension and reading speed vary. This approach allows students to select texts aligned with their comprehension levels and interests, rather than being forced to read materials mismatched to their schemata

In enhancing children’s reading skills, comics present another promising strategy. Chow (2014) noted that incomprehensible language can be intimidating, and both teachers and learners desire a pleasant language-learning experience. Comic books can serve as practical instructional materials, supporting vocabulary development and cultural knowledge. They expose learners to conversational language, including slang, idioms, onomatopoeia, and abbreviations—features often absent from conventional materials. Familiarity with these linguistic elements is essential for understanding and adapting to new cultural contexts.

These challenges prompted the researcher to develop and validate the effectiveness of comics in teaching reading to Grade IV pupils. As a Grade IV volunteer teacher, the researcher believes that instructional materials such as comics can improve pupils’ reading performance and comprehension. Given that some pupils remain at the frustration level or are considered non-readers, the researcher is motivated to design instructional materials that enhance reading comprehension. Finally, this effort supports the broader objective of teachers: to make every child a reader.

#### ➤ Objectives

This study has a goal to examine the effectiveness of comic strips as instructional tools in enhancing reading comprehension, motivation, and engagement among Grade 4 pupils, and to propose capacity-building strategies for teachers in integrating comics into reading instruction. The following are the adopted specific objectives:

- Determine how comic strips influence the reading comprehension skills of Grade 4 pupils, particularly in identifying main ideas and understanding central themes.
- Assess the impact of comic strips on the reading motivation and engagement of Grade 4 pupils during classroom activities.
- Explore pupils’ perceptions and reception of comic strips as a learning tool in reading classes.
- Identify the challenges teachers encounter when integrating comic strips into reading instruction for Grade 4 pupils.
- Design and propose a capacity-building activity plan for teachers that introduces innovative strategies for integrating comic strips into reading instruction.

## II. METHODS

This study aimed to know effectiveness of comic strips in teaching English to Grade IV pupils in Bolo Elementary School, Matnog District, School Year 2024-2025. The study employed a descriptive research design. According to Calderon (1993), descriptive research is a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying, and tabulating prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, trends, and cause-effect relationships and then making adequate and accurate interpretation about such data with or without the aid of statistical methods. This design was used to determine the curricular validity of the comic strips.

The respondents of the study were the Grade IV pupils of Section Gumamela in English, handled by the researcher. A total of forty-two (42) pupils were selected using purposive sampling. Of these, 18 were male, and 24 were female.

In addition, eight (8) teachers served as validators of the comic strips in terms of clarity, usefulness, language and style, illustrations, presentation, and suitability. These teachers also provided insights into the challenges of integrating comic strips into reading instruction.

## III. RESULTS

This presents the findings on the influence of comic strips as a learning tool in Grade 4 reading instruction. It covers the impact of comic strips on students’ reading comprehension skills, including identifying main ideas, making inferences, understanding vocabulary in context, sequencing events, summarizing texts, and answering both literal and interpretive questions. The chapter also explores how comic strips affect reading motivation and engagement, specifically in terms of interest and enjoyment, classroom participation, willingness to read independently, sustained attention, and positive attitudes toward reading. Additionally, the pupils’ reception of comic strips as a learning tool is examined, addressing their perceived usefulness, ease of comprehension, relatability of characters and stories, preference over traditional materials, and willingness to use them regularly. This chapter also highlights the challenges faced by teachers in integrating comic strips into their teaching practices and offers suggestions for more effective use of comic strips in reading instruction.

#### ➤ Influence of Comic Strips on Reading Comprehension Skills Identifying

##### • Identifying Main Ideas

The data reveal that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective tools for identifying and summarizing main ideas, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.16. The highest ratings were given to statements about distinguishing key information (3.34), confidence in summarizing main points (3.27), and the clarity provided by visuals (3.23), showing that comics are particularly valued for highlighting essential details and supporting concise summaries.

Table 1 Influence of Comic Strips in Identifying Main Ideas

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I can easily identify the main idea in a comic strip.	3.16	Agree
I can quickly pinpoint the central message in a comic.	3.14	Agree
Comic strips help me understand the main topic better.	3.05	Agree
I feel confident in summarizing the main points of comics.	3.27	Agree
I can distinguish key information in comics.	3.34	Agree
Comics help me find the main idea faster than text.	3.18	Agree
The use of visuals in comics makes the main idea clear.	3.23	Agree
I am able to identify the main idea even without text.	3.05	Agree
Comic strips allow me to see the main idea in context.	3.11	Agree
I can summarize the message of comic strips easily.	3.16	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.16</b>	Agree

Moderate scores, such as finding the main idea faster than text (3.18) and quickly pinpointing the central message (3.14), suggest that comics are seen as helpful but not overwhelmingly superior to text in efficiency. The lowest ratings, including understanding the main topic better (3.05) and identifying the main idea without text (3.05), indicate that while comics aid comprehension, respondents are less

confident in relying solely on visuals or in achieving deeper topic understanding through comics alone. Overall, the findings suggest that comic strips are perceived as supportive and engaging tools for clarifying and summarizing main ideas, though they are best used in combination with text to maximize comprehension.

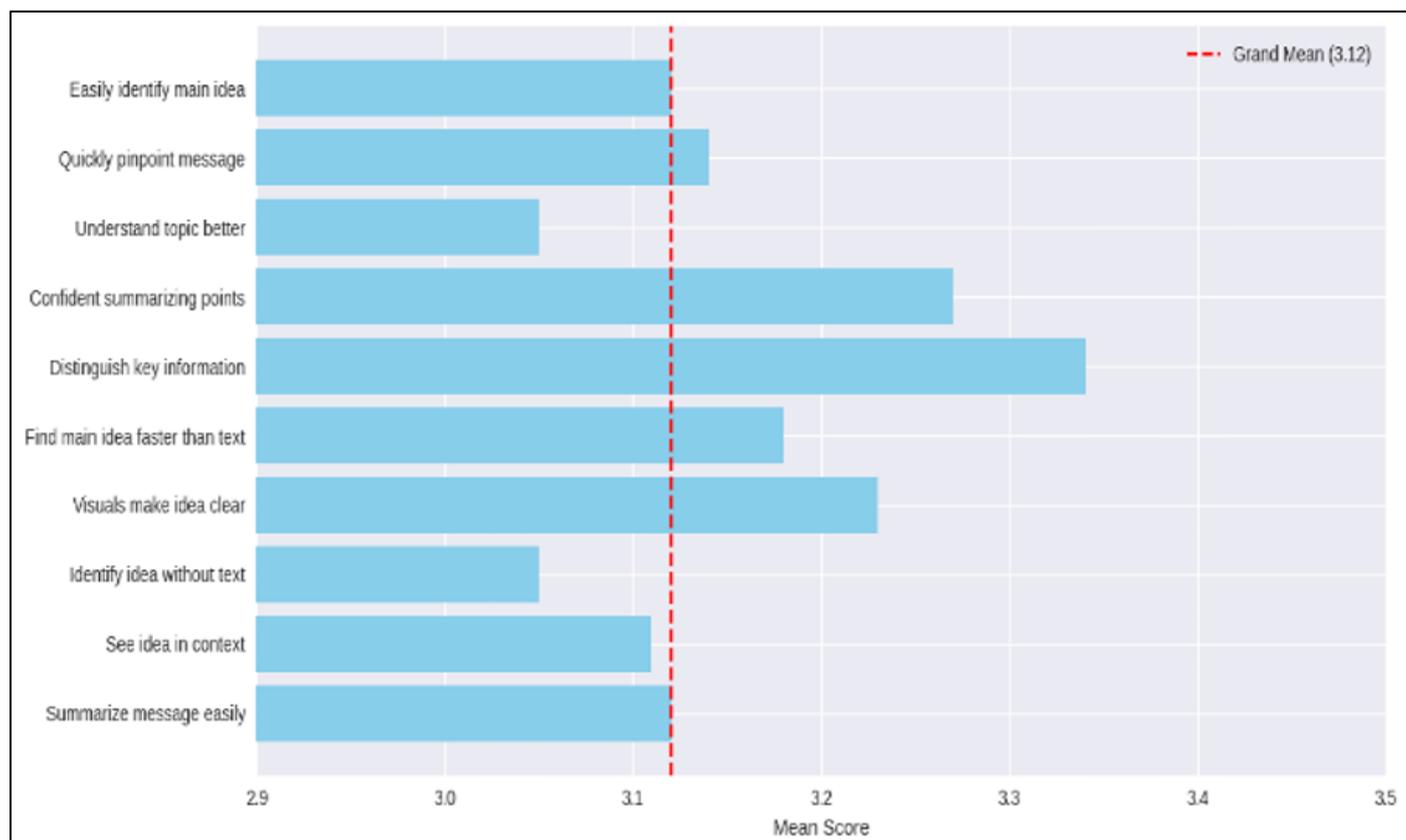


Fig 1 Influence of Comic Strip in Identifying Main Ideas

Comic strips are most effective for highlighting key details and supporting concise summaries, as shown by the highest ratings for distinguishing key information (3.34) and clarity provided by visuals (3.23). However, lower scores for understanding the main topic better (3.05) and identifying the main idea without text (3.05) suggest they work best when combined with text rather than used alone.

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective in supporting inferential thinking, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.14. The highest-rated statement, “Comics provide enough clues to make logical guesses” (3.38), indicates that visuals are perceived as strong sources of contextual hints that guide reasoning. Similarly, high scores were recorded for making inferences from images (3.32), understanding emotions of characters (3.32), and grasping deeper meaning through inferences (3.32),

suggesting that comics are particularly effective in conveying implied ideas and emotional depth. Moderate ratings, such as predicting what happens next (3.17), inferring plot details easily (3.18), and making connections to real life (3.23), show that while comics aid comprehension, they may not always provide complete narrative clarity. The lowest score, guessing the outcome of a story (3.14), reflects some

hesitation in relying solely on comics for predicting conclusions. Overall, the table highlights that comics are valued as engaging tools that enhance inferential skills, especially in interpreting emotions, motivations, and implied meanings, though they are best complemented by text or guided discussion to maximize understanding.

Table 2 Influence of Comic Strips in Making Inferences

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I can make inferences based on the images in the comics.	3.32	Agree
Comics provide enough clues to make logical guesses.	3.38	Agree
I can predict what happens next in a comic strip.	3.17	Agree
The visuals help me understand what is implied in comics.	3.18	Agree
I can understand the emotions of characters in comics.	3.32	Agree
I can make connections between comic characters and real life.	3.23	Agree
I can guess the outcome of a story based on the comic strip.	3.14	Agree
I can infer character motivations from the images in comics.	3.27	Agree
Comics help me infer things about the plot easily.	3.18	Agree
I can understand the story's deeper meaning through inferences.	3.32	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>Agree</b>

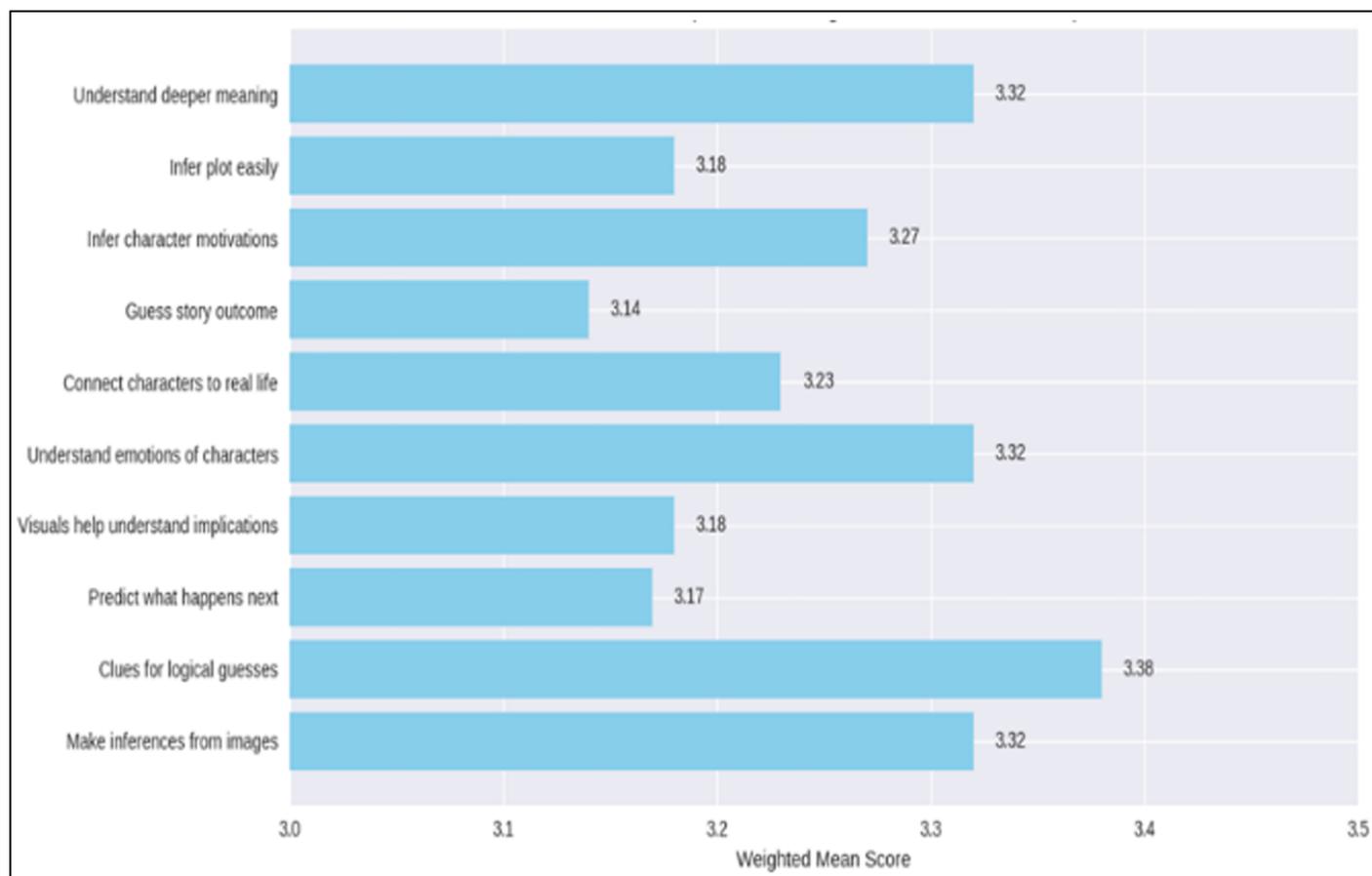


Fig 2 Influence of Comic Strips in Making Influence

The results show that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective tools for making inferences, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.14. The highest-rated indicator, “Comics provide enough clues to make logical guesses” (3.38), highlights that visuals offer strong contextual hints for reasoning. Similarly, high scores were observed in making inferences from images (3.32),

understanding emotions of characters (3.32), and grasping deeper meaning through inferences (3.32), suggesting that comics are particularly effective in conveying implied ideas and emotional depth. Moderate ratings, such as predicting what happens next (3.17) and inferring plot details easily (3.18), indicate that while comics aid comprehension, they may not always provide complete narrative clarity. The

lowest score, guessing the outcome of a story (3.14), shows some hesitation in relying solely on comics for predicting conclusions. Overall, the findings emphasize that comics are valued as engaging tools that enhance inferential thinking,

especially in interpreting emotions, motivations, and implied meanings, though they work best when complemented by text or guided discussion.

Table 3 Understanding Vocabulary in Context

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Comic strips help me understand new words through context.	3.27	Agree
The words used in comic strips are easy to understand.	3.23	Agree
I can learn new vocabulary by reading comic strips.	3.32	Agree
Comics provide enough context to figure out the meaning of words.	3.27	Agree
Comic strips help me remember new words better.	3.14	Agree
The characters in comics use words that I can easily understand.	3.23	Agree
I can guess the meaning of unfamiliar words in comics.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips make learning new words more fun.	3.14	Agree
I can use new words from comics in my own sentences.	3.23	Agree
Comics help me learn words that I don't encounter in regular texts.	3.27	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective in supporting vocabulary development, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.23. The highest-rated indicators, "I can learn new vocabulary by reading comic strips" (3.32) and "I can guess the meaning of unfamiliar words in comics" (3.32), suggest that comics are particularly valued for introducing new words and providing enough contextual clues to infer meaning. Other relatively high scores, such as understanding new words through context (3.27) and learning words not encountered in regular texts (3.27), highlight the role of comics in expanding vocabulary beyond traditional materials. Moderate ratings,

including words used in comics are easy to understand (3.23) and using new words in sentences (3.23), indicate that comics help learners apply vocabulary but may require reinforcement. The lowest scores, remembering new words better (3.14) and making learning new words more fun (3.14), show that while comics are engaging, they may not always guarantee long-term retention or enjoyment compared to other strategies. Overall, the findings emphasize that comic strips are perceived as effective tools for contextual vocabulary learning, especially in helping learners infer and acquire new words, though additional instructional support may be needed to strengthen retention and application.

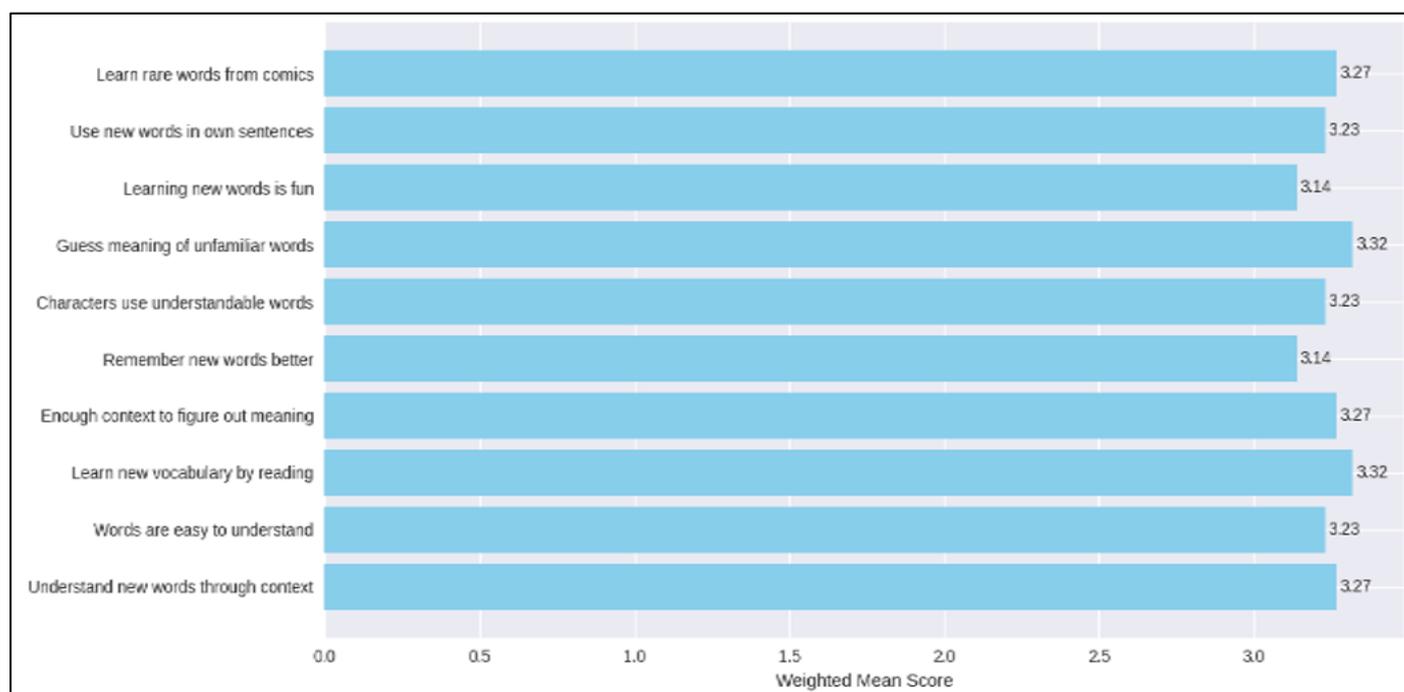


Fig 3 Understanding Vocabulary in Context

The bar graph highlights that respondents generally agree on the effectiveness of comic strips in supporting vocabulary development, with a grand mean of 3.23. The highest-rated indicators, learning new vocabulary by reading

comics (3.32) and guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words (3.32), show that comics are particularly valued for introducing new words and providing contextual clues for inference. Other strong areas include understanding new

words through context (3.27) and learning words not encountered in regular texts (3.27), which emphasize the role of comics in expanding vocabulary beyond traditional materials. Moderate scores, such as words are easy to understand (3.23) and using new words in sentences (3.23), suggest that comics help learners apply vocabulary but may require reinforcement. The lowest ratings, remembering new words better (3.14) and making learning new words more fun (3.14), indicate that while comics are engaging, they may not always guarantee long-term retention or enjoyment. Overall, the graph underscores that comic strips are effective tools for contextual vocabulary learning, especially in helping learners infer and acquire new words, though additional instructional

strategies may be needed to strengthen retention and application.

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective in helping them sequence and summarize events, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.38. The highest-rated indicator, “I can easily summarize the main events in a comic strip” (3.41), suggests that comics are particularly effective in enabling learners to condense stories into clear summaries. Other strong ratings include remembering the order of events (3.38), organizing ideas into a coherent sequence (3.38), and summarizing the story without difficulty (3.38), which highlight the role of comics in supporting logical sequencing and comprehension.

Table 4 Sequencing Events and Summarizing Texts

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I can easily sequence events in a comic strip.	3.32	Agree
Comics help me remember the order of events in a story.	3.38	Agree
I can summarize the plot of a comic strip clearly.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips help me organize ideas into a coherent sequence.	3.38	Agree
I can easily summarize the main events in a comic strip.	3.41	Agree
The order of events in comics is easy to understand.	3.32	Agree
I can summarize comic strips in a few sentences.	3.14	Agree
The visuals in comic strips help me keep track of events.	3.32	Agree
I can easily follow the sequence of events in a comic.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips allow me to summarize the story without difficulty.	3.38	Agree
Grand Mean	3.38	Agree

Moderate scores, such as sequencing events (3.32), summarizing the plot clearly (3.32), understanding the order of events (3.32), using visuals to track events (3.32), and following the sequence of events (3.32), show consistent agreement that comics aid in structuring narratives. The lowest score, summarizing comic strips in a few sentences (3.14), indicates some difficulty in condensing information

into very brief summaries, even though overall comprehension is strong.

In summary, the findings emphasize that comic strips are highly effective tools for enhancing sequencing skills and summarization, making them valuable instructional materials for teaching narrative structure and plot organization.

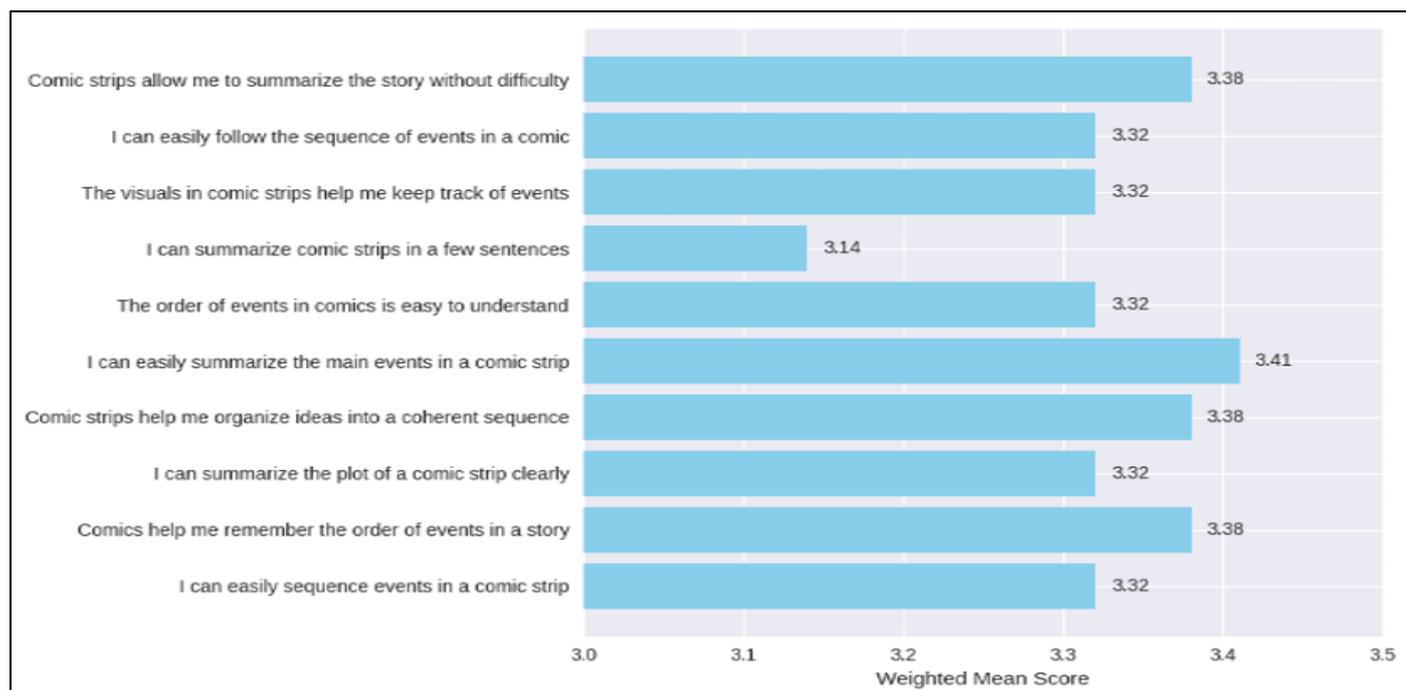


Fig 4 Sequencing Events and Summarizing Texts

The bar graph shows that respondents strongly agree that comic strips are effective in helping them sequence and summarize events, with a grand mean of 3.38. The highest-rated indicator, “I can easily summarize the main events in a comic strip” (3.41), highlights that comics are particularly effective in enabling learners to condense stories into clear summaries. Other strong ratings, such as remembering the order of events (3.38), organizing ideas into a coherent sequence (3.38), and summarizing the story without difficulty (3.38), emphasize the role of comics in supporting logical sequencing and comprehension. Moderate scores, including sequencing events (3.32), summarizing the plot clearly (3.32),

and using visuals to track events (3.32), show consistent agreement that comics aid in structuring narratives. The lowest score, summarizing comic strips in a few sentences (3.14), suggests some difficulty in condensing information into very brief summaries, even though overall comprehension remains strong.

In summary, the graph underscores that comic strips are highly effective instructional tools for enhancing sequencing skills and summarization, making them valuable for teaching narrative structure and plot organization in classrooms.

Table 5 Answering Literal and Interpretive Questions

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I can easily answer questions about the comic strip’s content.	3.32	Agree
I find it easy to answer questions that require me to interpret the comic strip.	3.38	Agree
I can recall specific details from the comic strip to answer questions.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips help me answer both direct and interpretive questions.	3.38	Agree
I can provide accurate answers based on the comic’s content.	3.41	Agree
The images help me answer questions in comics accurately.	3.32	Agree
I can differentiate between literal and interpretive questions in comics.	3.38	Agree
Comics help me answer deeper interpretive questions easily.	3.23	Agree
I am able to give my interpretation of the comic’s meaning.	3.14	Agree
I can answer questions about a comic strip without difficulty.	3.41	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table indicates that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective in helping them answer questions about content and interpretation, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.32. The highest-rated indicators, “I can provide accurate answers based on the comic’s content” (3.41) and “I can answer questions about a comic strip without difficulty” (3.41), suggest that comics are particularly effective in supporting comprehension and confidence when responding to questions. Other strong ratings include interpreting comic strips (3.38), answering both direct and interpretive questions (3.38), and differentiating between literal and interpretive questions (3.38), which highlight the usefulness of comics in developing higher-order thinking skills. Moderate scores, such as recalling specific details (3.32) and using images to

answer accurately (3.32), show consistent agreement that visuals aid recall and accuracy. The lowest ratings, giving personal interpretation of meaning (3.14) and answering deeper interpretive questions (3.23), indicate that while comics support comprehension, respondents are less confident in using them for deeper analysis or subjective interpretation.

Overall, the findings emphasize that comic strips are effective tools for enhancing comprehension and answering questions, particularly in recalling details and distinguishing between literal and interpretive meanings. However, they may require complementary strategies to strengthen learners’ ability to engage in deeper interpretive analysis.

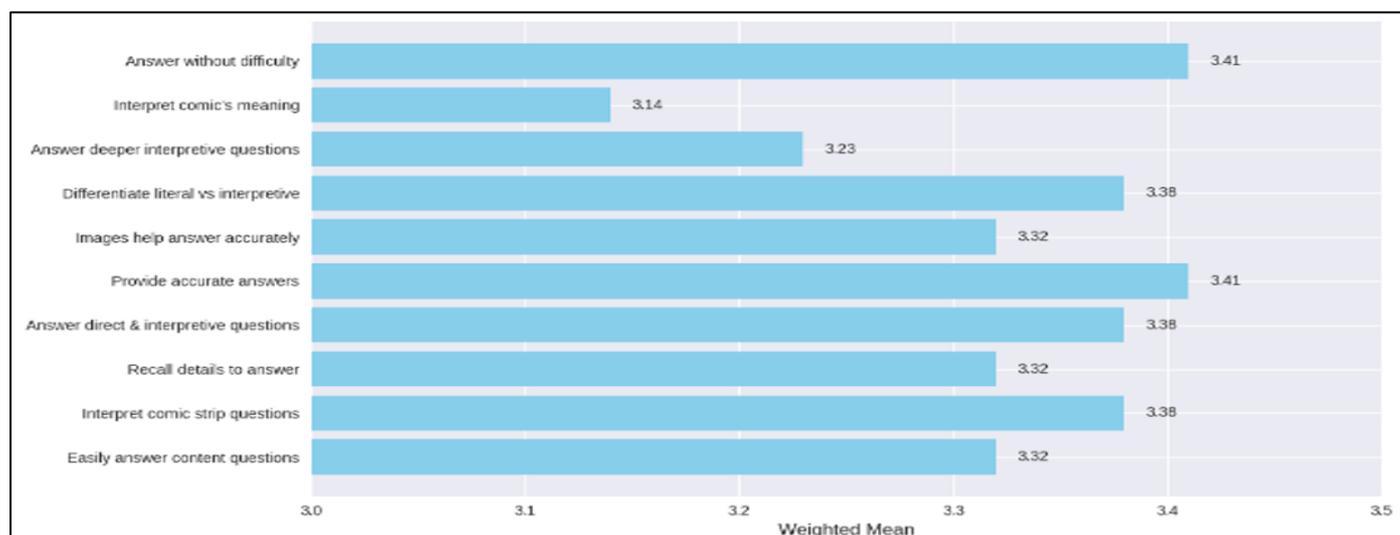


Fig 5 Answering Literal and Interpretive Questions

The results show that comic strips help learners answer questions with confidence and accuracy, especially for direct and literal comprehension. However, lower scores on deeper interpretive items suggest that while comics aid recall and understanding, additional support is needed to strengthen higher-order thinking skills.

➤ *Impact of Comic Strips on Reading Motivation and Engagement*

The results suggest that comic strips significantly enhance the interest and enjoyment of reading activities among Grade 4 pupils, with a weighted mean of 3.34. The majority of students expressed positive feedback, agreeing that comics make reading more enjoyable, exciting, and

motivating. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.71 indicates that there is a consensus among the students regarding the increased enjoyment and interest comic strips provide.

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips enhance their enjoyment and motivation in reading, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.34. The highest-rated indicators, *finding comic strips interesting and fun (3.38)*, *making reading more exciting (3.38)*, *grabbing attention more than regular text (3.38)*, and *enjoying discussions with classmates (3.38)*, suggest that comics are particularly effective in stimulating interest, engagement, and social interaction around reading.

Table 6 Interest and Enjoyment in Reading Activities

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I enjoy reading comic strips more than other reading materials.	3.32	Agree
I find comic strips interesting and fun to read.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips make reading more enjoyable for me.	3.27	Agree
I look forward to reading comic strips during class.	3.32	Agree
Comics make reading more exciting.	3.38	Agree
I feel more motivated to read when comics are included.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips grab my attention more than regular text.	3.38	Agree
I enjoy reading comics during my free time.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips make me want to read more often.	3.27	Agree
I enjoy discussing comic strips with my classmates.	3.38	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Moderate scores, such as enjoying reading comics more than other materials (3.32), looking forward to comics in class (3.32), feeling motivated when comics are included (3.32), and enjoying comics during free time (3.32), highlight that comics consistently sustain motivation both inside and

outside the classroom. The lowest ratings, making reading more enjoyable (3.27) and making learners want to read more often (3.27), indicate that while comics are engaging, they may not always translate into long-term reading habits or deeper enjoyment compared to other strategies.

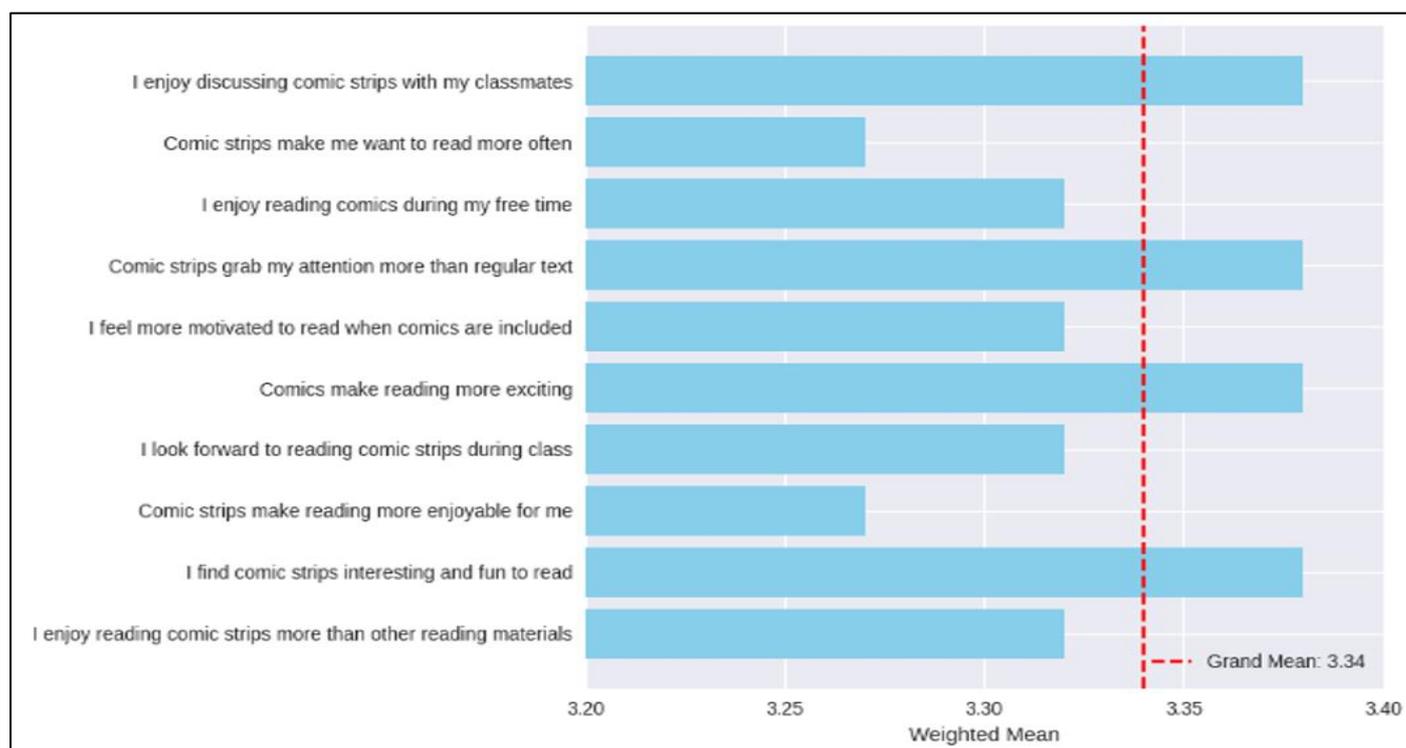


Fig 6 Interest and Enjoyment in Reading Activities

The results show that comic strips make reading more exciting, fun, and attention-grabbing, with a grand mean of 3.34. However, slightly lower scores on items like making reading more enjoyable (3.27) and wanting to read more often (3.27) suggest that while comics boost motivation, they may not always lead to sustained reading habits beyond the classroom.

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips enhance their participation and engagement in

classroom reading tasks, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.33. The highest-rated indicators, such as *actively participating in reading tasks (3.38)*, *looking forward to reading tasks with comics (3.38)*, *paying more attention in class (3.38)*, *finding it easier to join reading tasks (3.38)*, and *being more active in reading sessions (3.38)*, highlight that comics are particularly effective in stimulating classroom involvement and sustaining attention.

Table 7 Participation in Classroom Reading Tasks

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I actively participate in classroom reading tasks when comics are used.	3.38	Agree
I am more engaged in classroom activities when comic strips are involved.	3.32	Agree
I look forward to participating in reading tasks with comic strips.	3.38	Agree
I pay more attention in class when we read comic strips.	3.38	Agree
I feel more motivated to participate in reading tasks with comics.	3.32	Agree
I enjoy contributing to discussions about comic strips in class.	3.32	Agree
I find it easier to join reading tasks when comic strips are used.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips encourage me to be more active in reading sessions.	3.38	Agree
I am more confident in reading aloud when comic strips are included.	3.27	Agree
I participate more willingly in reading exercises with comics.	3.32	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Moderate scores, including being more engaged in activities (3.32), feeling motivated to participate (3.32), enjoying discussions (3.32), and participating more willingly in exercises (3.32), show consistent agreement that comics foster motivation and collaboration. The lowest rating, confidence in reading aloud when comics are included (3.27), suggests that while comics encourage participation, they may not fully address learners' confidence in oral reading.

Overall, the findings emphasize that comic strips are valuable instructional tools for promoting active participation, motivation, and attentiveness in classroom reading tasks, though additional strategies may be needed to strengthen learners' confidence in oral performance.

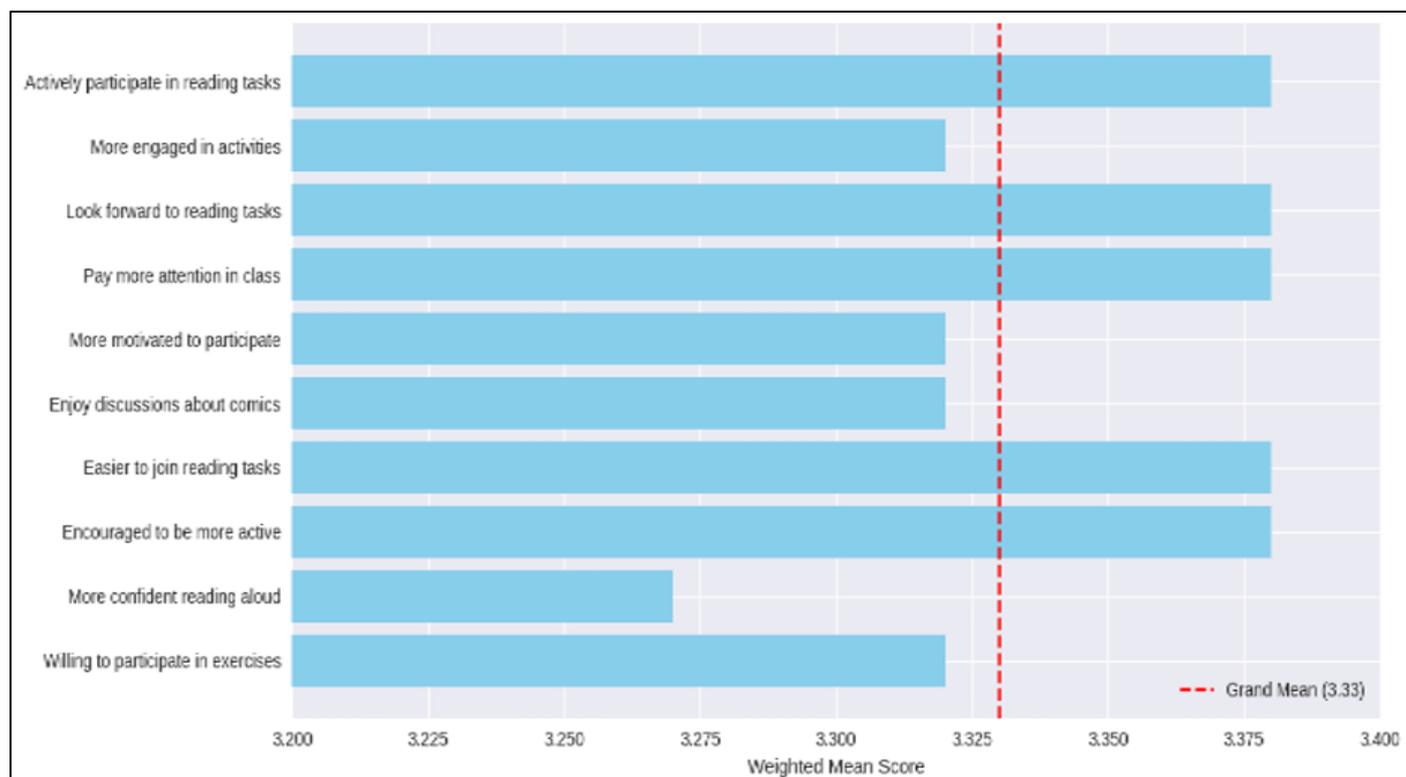


Fig 7 Participation in Classroom Reading Tasks

The bar graph indicates that comic strips effectively enhance classroom participation, engagement, and attention, with a grand mean of 3.33. However, the lowest score on

confidence in reading aloud (3.27) suggests that comics may not fully strengthen learners’ oral reading skills.

Table 8 Willingness to Read Independently

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I would read comic strips on my own during my free time.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips make me want to read more outside of class.	3.32	Agree
I would choose to read comic strips independently.	3.38	Agree
I feel motivated to read comic strips without being asked.	3.32	Agree
I prefer reading comic strips on my own over other reading materials.	3.27	Agree
I am excited to read comic strips during my free time.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips encourage me to read more frequently on my own.	3.32	Agree
I enjoy reading comic strips alone.	3.32	Agree
I feel confident reading comic strips independently.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips make me want to explore other books independently.	3.27	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table indicates that respondents generally agree that comic strips encourage independent reading, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.34. The highest-rated indicators—reading comic strips during free time (3.38), choosing to read comics independently (3.38), feeling excited to read comics during free time (3.38), and feeling confident reading comics independently (3.38)—suggest that comics are particularly effective in motivating learners to engage in self-directed reading. Moderate scores, such as wanting to read more outside of class (3.32), feeling motivated without being asked

(3.32), reading more frequently on their own (3.32), and enjoying reading comics alone (3.32), highlight that comics consistently sustain motivation and enjoyment in independent contexts. The lowest ratings, preferring comics over other materials (3.27) and wanting to explore other books independently (3.27), indicate that while comics stimulate interest, they may not always translate into a preference for comics over other texts or broaden reading habits beyond comics.

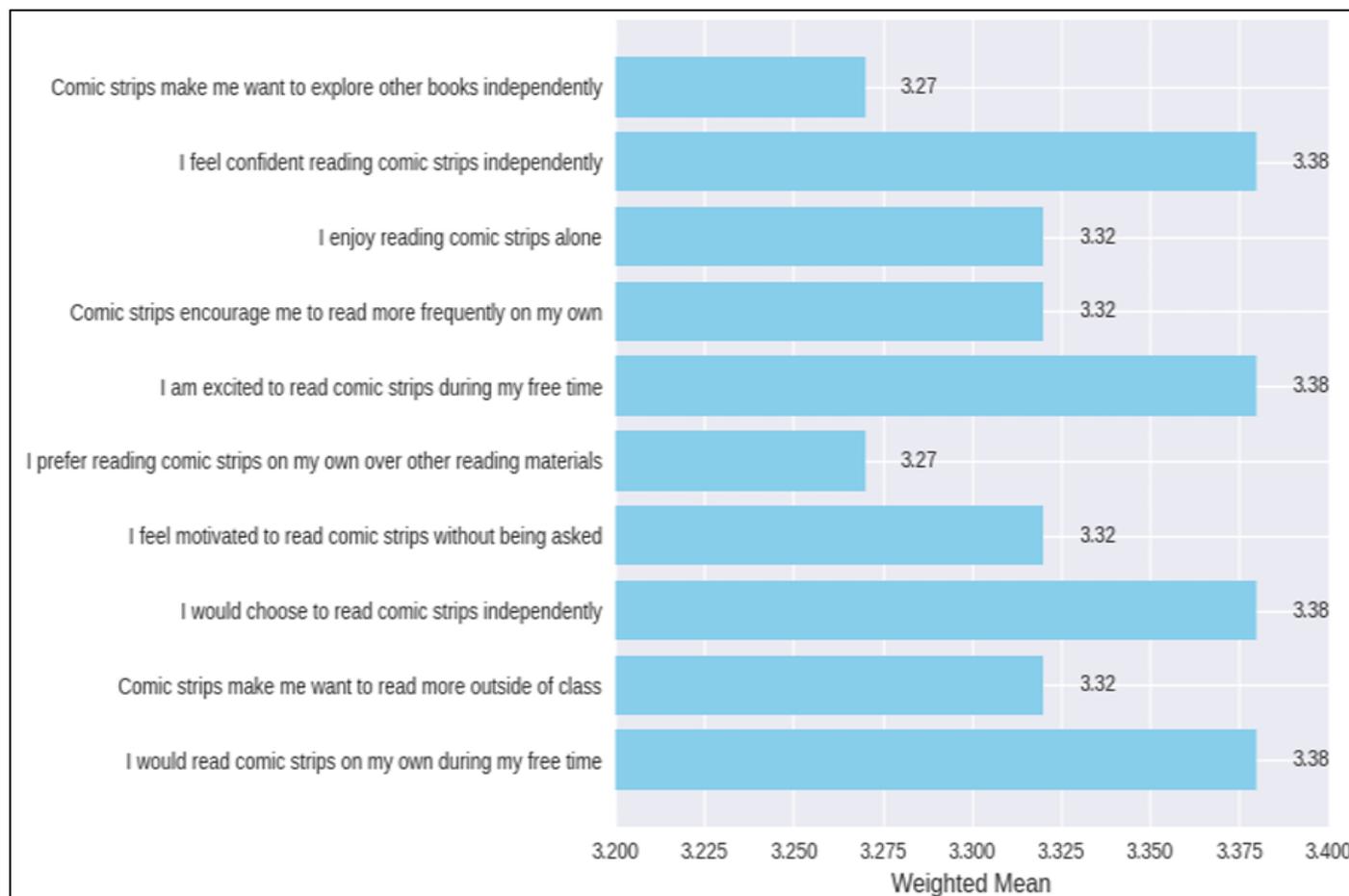


Fig 8 Willingness to Read Independently

The results show that comic strips encourage independent reading, with a grand mean of 3.34, especially in areas like confidence, enjoyment, and choosing comics freely (3.38). However, slightly lower scores on preferring comics

over other materials (3.27) and exploring other books independently (3.27) suggest that while comics boost motivation, they may not always translate into broader reading habits beyond comics.

Table 9 Sustained Attention and Focus During Reading Sessions

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Comic strips help me stay focused during reading sessions.	3.38	Agree
I can concentrate better when reading comic strips.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips hold my attention for longer periods.	3.38	Agree
I find it easier to stay engaged during comic strip reading sessions.	3.32	Agree
I can focus more on the reading task when comics are involved.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips help me maintain attention during class.	3.32	Agree
I pay attention for longer when comic strips are included in lessons.	3.38	Agree
I stay focused on the reading material when comics are used.	3.32	Agree
Comics help me stay on task during reading assignments.	3.38	Agree
I find comic strips to be more engaging than regular texts.	3.38	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective in sustaining focus and attention during reading tasks, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.35. The highest-rated indicators, including helping learners stay focused during reading sessions (3.38), holding attention for longer periods (3.38), supporting focus on reading tasks (3.38), helping maintain attention in class (3.38), encouraging longer attention spans in lessons (3.38), keeping learners on task during assignments (3.38), and being more engaging than

regular texts (3.38), highlight that comics are particularly effective in sustaining concentration and engagement. Moderate scores, such as concentrating better when reading comics (3.32), finding it easier to stay engaged (3.32), maintaining attention during class (3.32), and staying focused on reading material (3.32), show consistent agreement that comics aid attentiveness, though with slightly less intensity compared to the highest-rated items.

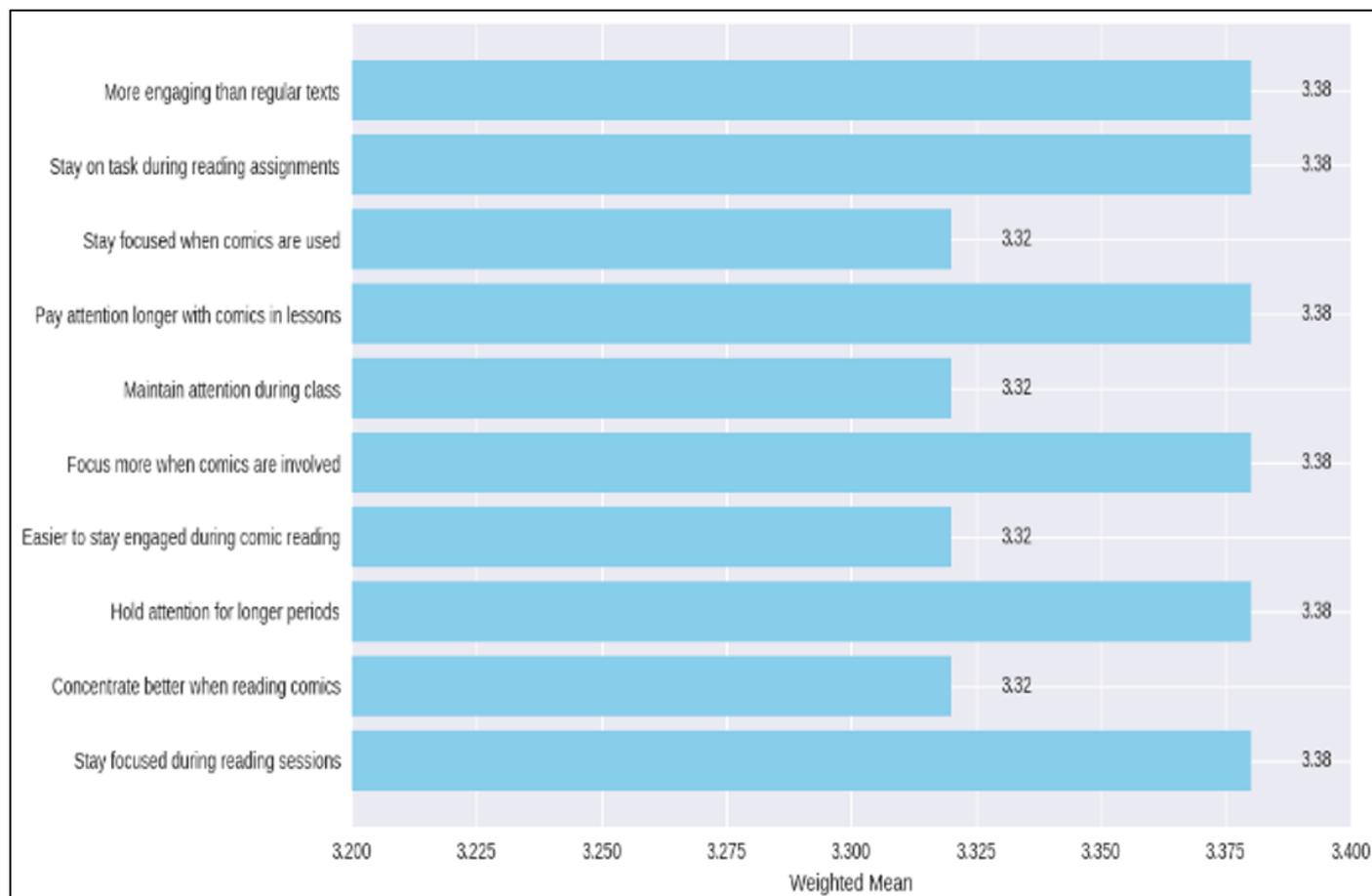


Fig 9 Sustained Attention and Focus During Reading Sessions

The bar graph shows that comic strips effectively sustain focus and attention, with a grand mean of 3.35. While most indicators scored highly at 3.38, moderate ratings around 3.32 suggest consistent but slightly less intense agreement.

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips foster positive attitudes toward reading, as

reflected in the grand mean of 3.34. The highest-rated indicators—enjoying reading more because of comics (3.38), liking reading more (3.38), making reading more enjoyable (3.38), increasing interest in reading (3.38), having a more positive perception of reading (3.38), and encouraging more frequent reading (3.38)—suggest that comics are particularly effective in stimulating enjoyment, interest, and motivation to read.

Table 10 Positive Attitudes Toward Reading

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I enjoy reading more because of comic strips.	3.38	Agree
I feel more positive about reading when comic strips are involved.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips make me like reading more.	3.38	Agree
I have a more favorable attitude toward reading when comics are included.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips make reading seem more enjoyable.	3.38	Agree
I feel more excited to read when comic strips are used.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips increase my interest in reading.	3.38	Agree
I am more likely to read when comic strips are included.	3.32	Agree
I have a more positive perception of reading due to comic strips.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips encourage me to read more often.	3.38	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Moderate scores, such as feeling more positive about reading when comics are involved (3.32), having a more favorable attitude toward reading (3.32), feeling excited to read when comics are used (3.32), and being more likely to

read when comics are included (3.32), highlight consistent agreement that comics sustain motivation and positive engagement, though with slightly less intensity compared to the highest-rated items.

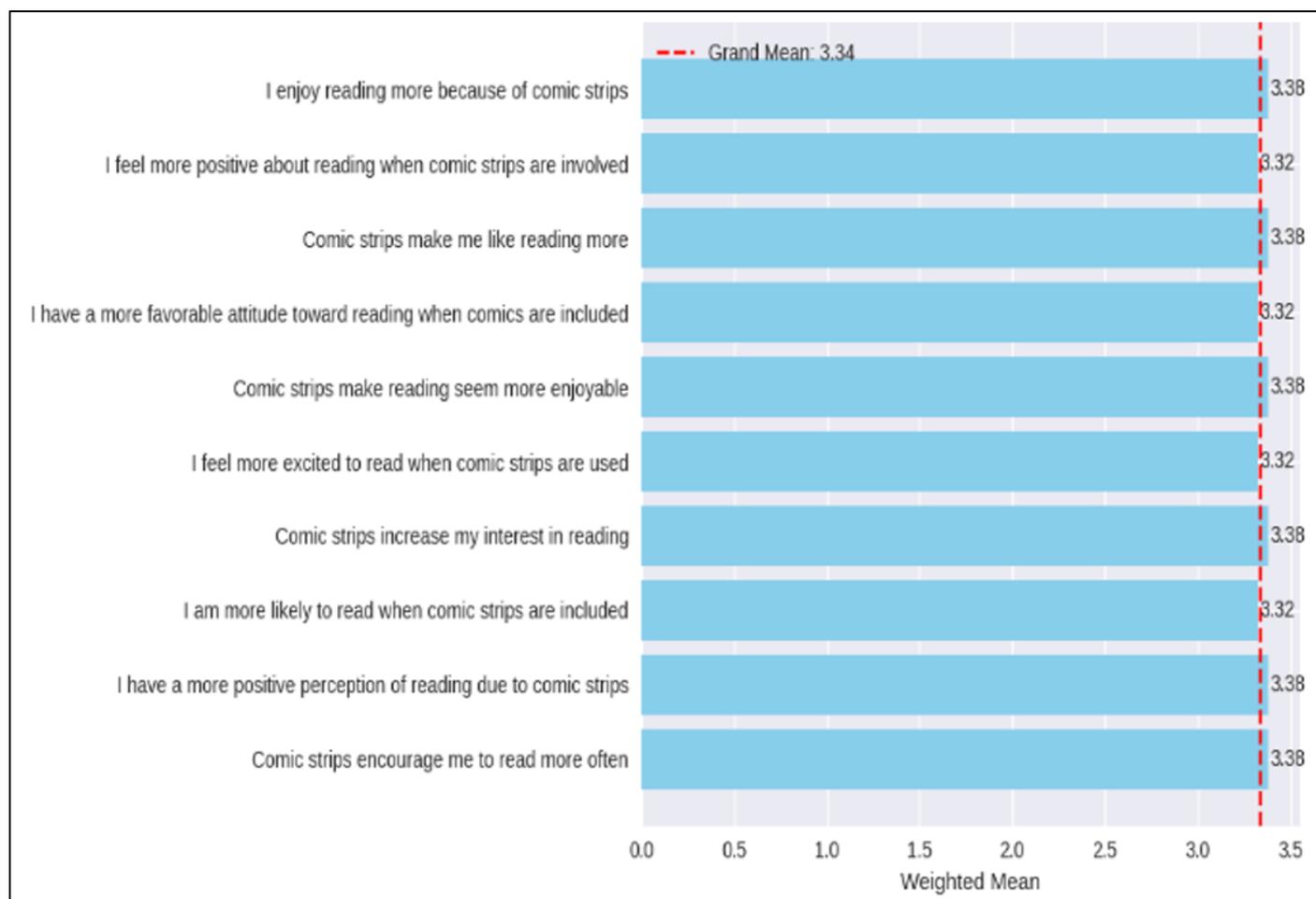


Fig 10 Positive Attitudes Toward Reading

The bar graph indicates that comic strips strongly foster positive attitudes toward reading, with a grand mean of 3.34 and several indicators rated at 3.38 showing their effectiveness in boosting enjoyment, interest, and motivation. Meanwhile, moderate scores around 3.32 reflect consistent agreement, though with slightly less intensity compared to the highest-rated items.

➤ *Pupils' Reception of Comic Strips as a Learning Tool*

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips are effective in supporting comprehension of

reading lessons, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.32. The highest-rated indicators—making reading lessons easier to follow (3.38) and making lessons more engaging and easier to comprehend (3.38)—suggest that comics are particularly valued for simplifying lessons and sustaining learner interest. Several items scored consistently at 3.32, including helping understand lessons better, making difficult lessons easier to understand, being useful for key concepts, helping remember lessons, using visuals to aid comprehension, and providing a better understanding of topics.

Table 11 Perceived Usefulness in Understanding Reading Lessons

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Comic strips help me understand reading lessons better.	3.32	Agree
The use of comic strips makes reading lessons easier for me to follow.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips make difficult lessons easier to understand.	3.32	Agree
I find comic strips useful for understanding key concepts in reading.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips help me grasp complex ideas in reading lessons.	3.27	Agree
I understand reading lessons better with the help of comic strips.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips make reading lessons more engaging and easier to comprehend.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips help me remember the lesson better.	3.32	Agree
The visuals in comic strips make it easier for me to understand reading material.	3.32	Agree
Comic strips provide a better understanding of reading topics.	3.32	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>Agree</b>

These results highlight the steady agreement that comics are reliable aids for lesson comprehension. The lowest score, helping grasp complex ideas (3.27), indicates that while

comics are helpful, they may not fully capture or explain more abstract or advanced concepts without additional instructional support.

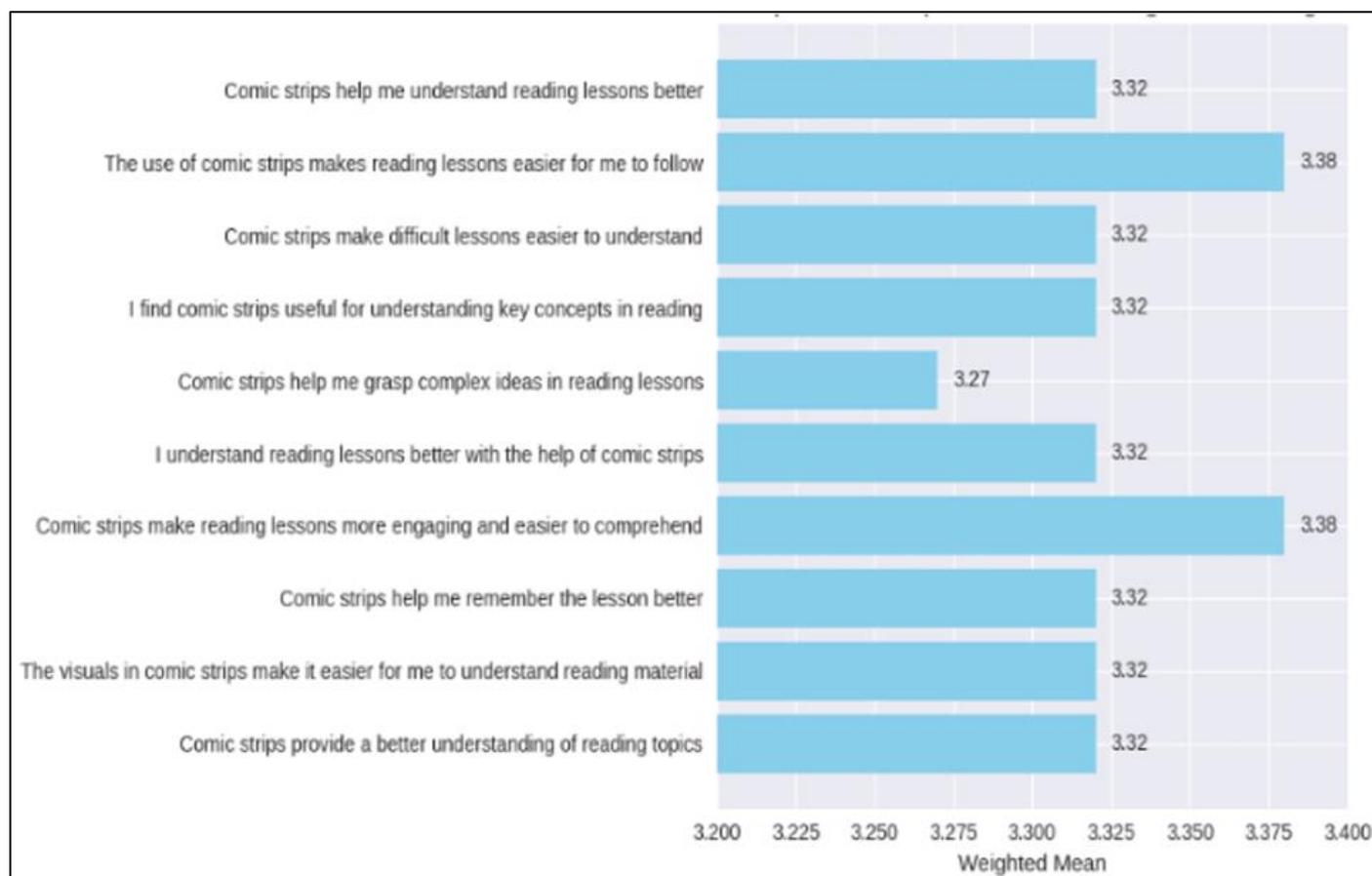


Fig 11 Perceived Usefulness in Understanding Reading Lessons

The bar graph indicates that comic strips are effective in simplifying lessons and sustaining learner interest, with a grand mean of 3.32. However, the lowest score of 3.27 on grasping complex ideas suggests that while comics aid comprehension, they may need to be paired with additional instructional strategies for abstract concepts.

The table exhibits that respondents generally agree that comic strips are easy to understand, as reflected in the grand

mean of 3.34. The highest-rated indicators—comic strips are easy to understand (3.38), easy to follow the story (3.38), language is easy to understand (3.38), no trouble understanding the message (3.38), and visual cues make the message easier to comprehend (3.38)—suggest that comics are particularly effective in simplifying narratives and making meaning accessible through both text and visuals.

Table 12 Ease of Use and Comprehension

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
The characters and visuals in comic strips make the story easy to understand.	3.32	Agree
I can easily interpret the meaning of the comic strip.	3.32	Agree
The language used in comic strips is easy for me to understand.	3.38	Agree
I have no trouble understanding the message of a comic strip.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips are straightforward to understand.	3.32	Agree
I can easily grasp the meaning of a comic without much effort.	3.32	Agree
The visual cues in comics make the message easier to comprehend.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips are easy for me to read and enjoy.	3.32	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Moderate scores, such as characters and visuals making the story easy to understand (3.32), interpreting meaning (3.32), straightforwardness (3.32), grasping meaning without effort (3.32), and ease of reading and enjoyment (3.32),

highlight consistent agreement that comics are clear and enjoyable, though slightly less emphasized compared to the top-rated items.

Table 13 Relatability and Appeal of Characters and Stories

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I find the characters in comic strips relatable.	3.32	Agree
The stories in comic strips are interesting to me.	3.38	Agree
I can relate to the situations in the comic strips.	3.32	Agree
The characters' actions in comic strips make sense to me.	3.38	Agree
I enjoy reading comic strips because of the characters.	3.32	Agree
I feel connected to the characters in the comic strips.	3.32	Agree
The characters in comic strips are similar to people I know.	3.27	Agree
The stories in comic strips reflect real-life experiences.	3.32	Agree
I enjoy the themes of the comic strips we read in class.	3.38	Agree
I find the comic strip characters appealing and fun.	3.32	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table presents that respondents generally agree that comic strips are relatable and engaging, as reflected in the grand mean of 3.34. The highest-rated indicators—stories in comic strips are interesting (3.38), characters' actions make sense (3.38), and themes of comic strips are enjoyable (3.38)—suggest that comics are particularly effective in capturing learners' interest and presenting meaningful, logical narratives. Moderate scores, such as finding characters relatable (3.32), relating to situations (3.32),

enjoying comics because of characters (3.32), feeling connected to characters (3.32), stories reflecting real-life experiences (3.32), and finding characters appealing and fun (3.32), highlight consistent agreement that comics foster emotional and cognitive connections. The lowest score, characters being similar to people learners know (3.27), indicates that while comics are relatable, they may not always mirror learners' personal realities or social contexts.

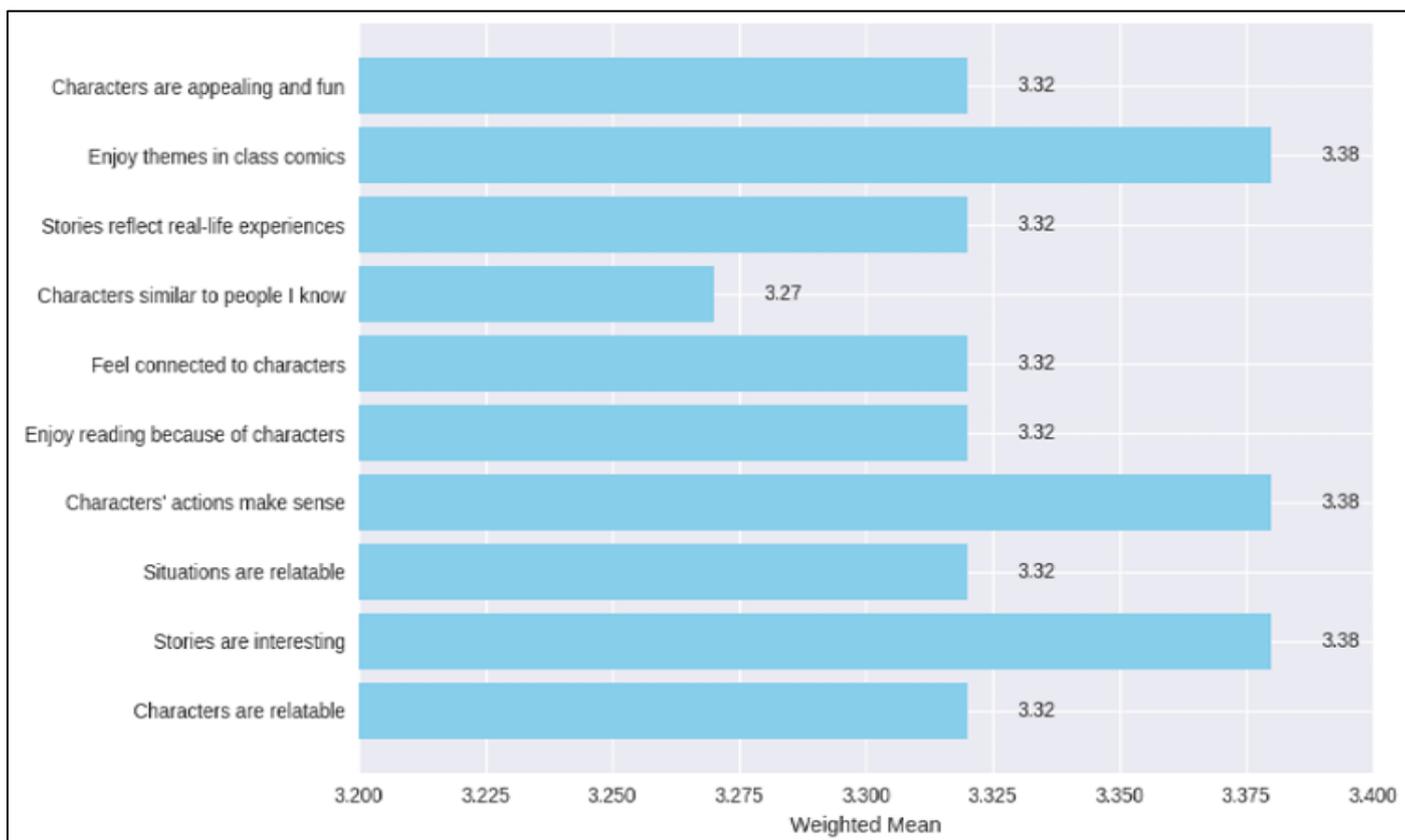


Fig 12 Relatability and Appeal of Characters and Stories

The bar graph indicates that comic strips are effective in engaging learners and fostering relatability, with a grand mean of 3.34. However, the lowest score of 3.27 shows that

while comics connect well with students, they may not always reflect their personal realities or social contexts.

Table 14 Preference Compared to Traditional Reading Materials

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I prefer comic strips over traditional reading materials.	3.32	Agree
I would rather read comic strips than regular books.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips are more enjoyable than traditional books.	3.32	Agree
I find comic strips more interesting than other reading materials.	3.38	Agree
I would choose comic strips over traditional stories for leisure.	3.32	Agree
I feel more excited to read comic strips than regular books.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips are my preferred reading material for entertainment.	3.32	Agree
I find comic strips easier to understand than regular books.	3.38	Agree
I would choose comic strips as a study tool over a traditional book.	3.32	Agree
I prefer reading comics in my free time compared to regular books.	3.38	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips are preferred over traditional reading materials, with ratings consistently between 3.32 and 3.38. The highest-rated indicators—preferring comics over regular books (3.38), finding comics more interesting (3.38), feeling more excited to read comics (3.38), finding comics easier to understand (3.38), and preferring comics during free time (3.38)—suggest that comics are particularly effective in

capturing interest, excitement, and accessibility compared to traditional texts. Moderate scores, such as preferring comics for leisure (3.32), choosing comics as a study tool (3.32), and enjoying comics more than traditional books (3.32), highlight consistent agreement but show that while comics are engaging, they may not fully replace traditional materials in all contexts.

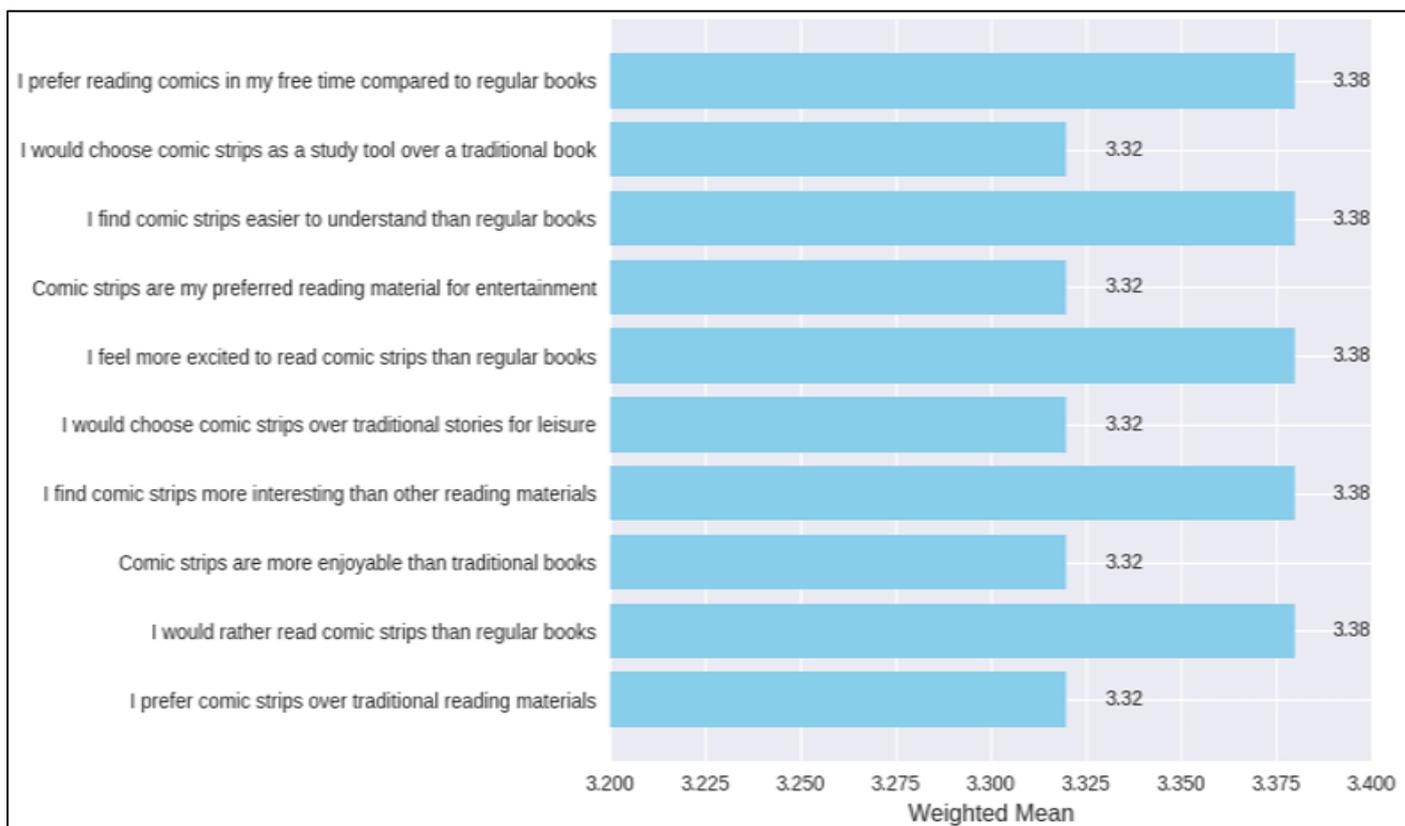


Fig 13 Preference Compared to Traditional Reading Materials

The bar graph indicates that all statements scored between 3.32 and 3.38, showing strong agreement that comic strips help sustain attention and focus during reading

sessions. The consistent ratings and a grand mean of 3.35 confirm that comic strips are widely perceived as effective tools for maintaining engagement and concentration.

Table 15 Willingness to Use Comic Strips Regularly

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I would like to read comic strips regularly in class.	3.38	Agree
I would enjoy using comic strips as a regular learning tool.	3.32	Agree
I would like comic strips to be a part of my regular reading routine.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips should be used regularly in class for learning.	3.32	Agree
I am willing to use comic strips regularly for reading lessons.	3.38	Agree
I would be happy to use comic strips as a regular study material.	3.32	Agree
I prefer using comic strips regularly in my reading activities.	3.38	Agree
I would choose comic strips as my regular reading material.	3.32	Agree
I would enjoy using comic strips every day for reading.	3.38	Agree
Comic strips should be a regular part of my reading assignments.	3.32	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The table shows that respondents generally agree that comic strips should be used regularly in class and integrated into their reading routines, with a grand mean of 3.34. The highest-rated indicators—reading comic strips regularly in class (3.38), making comic strips part of the reading routine (3.38), willingness to use comics for lessons (3.38), preferring comics in reading activities (3.38), and enjoying comics every day for reading (3.38)—highlight strong enthusiasm for consistent use of comics as learning tools.

Moderate scores at 3.32, such as enjoying comics as a learning tool, using comics in class for learning, being happy to use comics as study material, choosing comics as regular reading material, and including comics in assignments, show steady agreement but with slightly less intensity compared to the top-rated items.

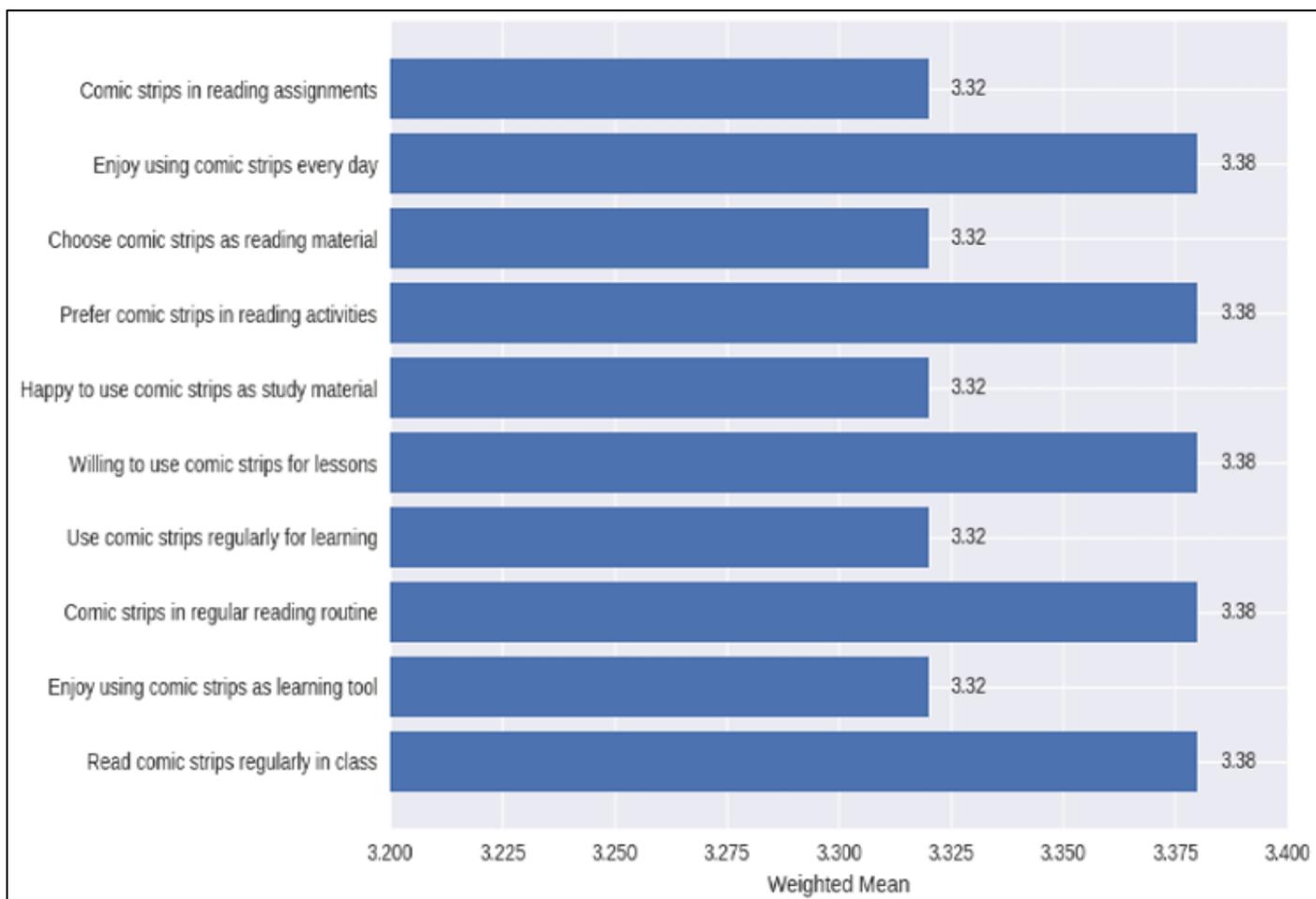


Fig 14 Willingness to Use Comic Strips Regularly

The results show that learners strongly agree on the regular use of comic strips in class, with a grand mean of 3.34. Slightly lower scores at 3.32 suggest steady agreement, though with less intensity compared to the highest-rated indicators at 3.38.

➤ *Challenges Faced by Teachers in Integrating Comic Strips into Reading Instruction*

The table shows that teachers generally agree that they face challenges in integrating comic strips into reading instruction, with a grand mean of 3.13. The highest-rated challenge—comic strips requiring extra preparation time (3.19)—indicates that workload and planning demands are the most pressing concern.

Table 16 Challenges Faced by Teachers in Integrating Comic Strips

Statement Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I find it difficult to select appropriate comic strips for my students.	3.13	Agree
I struggle with ensuring that the comic strips align with the lesson objectives.	3.13	Agree
It is challenging to assess student comprehension of comic strips.	3.15	Agree
Comic strips often require extra preparation time, which can be a challenge.	3.19	Agree
I face difficulties in adapting comic strips for different learning styles.	3.05	Agree
Some students find it hard to engage with the content of comic strips.	3.00	Agree
I find it hard to ensure that comic strips are culturally appropriate for all students.	3.13	Agree
Teachers have limited resources to create or access comic strips for classroom use.	3.00	Agree
I encounter resistance from some students who prefer traditional reading materials over comic strips.	3.13	Agree
I find it difficult to monitor all students' understanding when using comic strips.	3.13	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Other notable difficulties include assessing student comprehension (3.15) and ensuring alignment with lesson

objectives (3.13), cultural appropriateness (3.13), and monitoring student understanding (3.13), which highlight the

instructional and evaluative complexities of using comics. Moderate challenges, such as selecting appropriate comic strips (3.13), adapting comics for different learning styles (3.05), and student resistance to comics compared to traditional materials (3.13), suggest that while comics are engaging, they are not universally accessible or preferred.

The lowest scores—students finding it hard to engage with comics (3.00) and limited resources for creating or accessing comics (3.00)—show that resource availability and student interest are real but less critical compared to preparation and assessment issues.

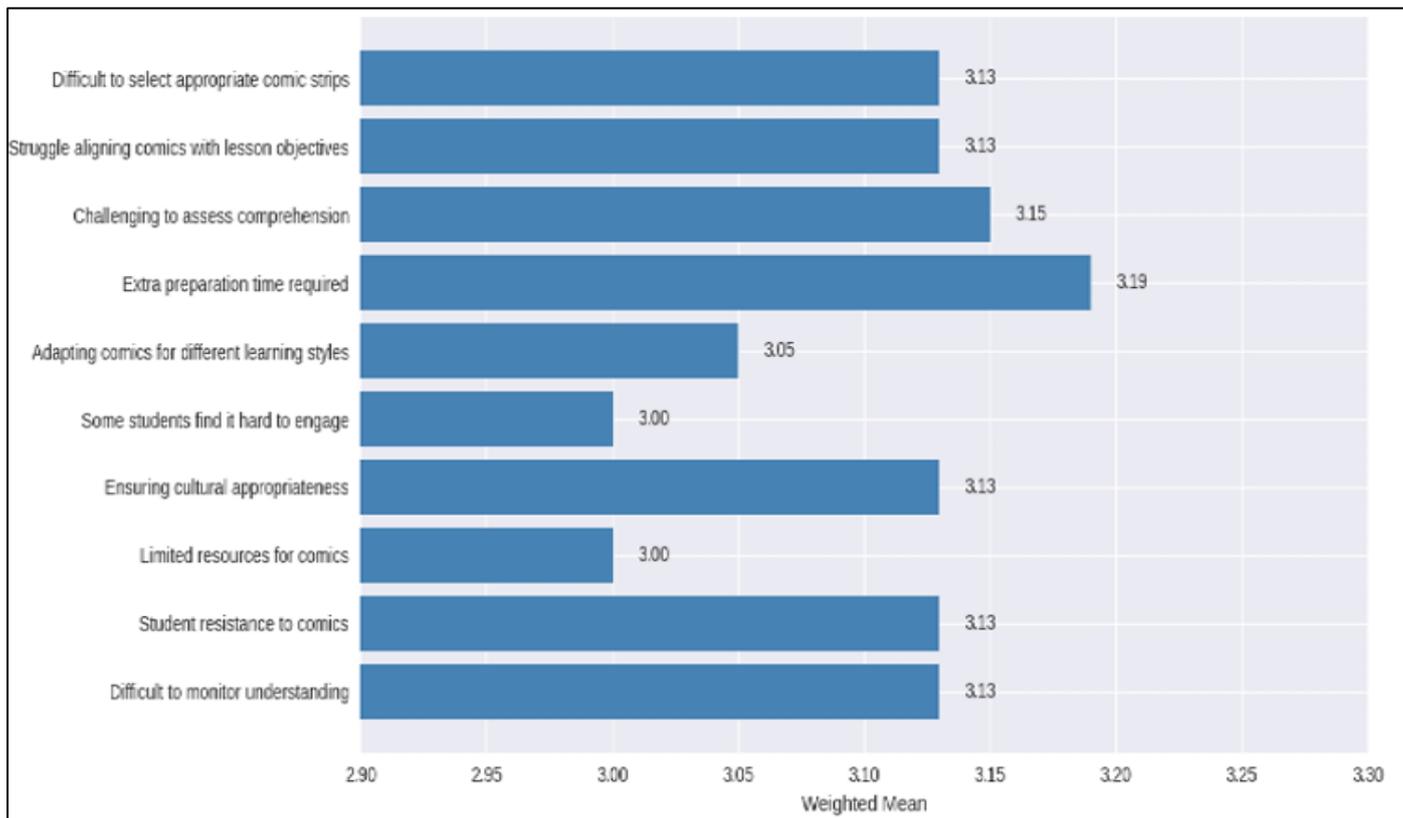


Fig 15 Challenges Faced by Teachers in Integrating Comic Strips

The results show that the greatest challenge teachers face is the extra preparation time required (3.19), followed closely by difficulties in assessing comprehension (3.15). Lower scores, such as limited resources (3.00) and student engagement issues (3.00), suggest these are concerns but less pressing compared to instructional and planning challenges.

➤ *A Capacity-Building Activity for Teachers on Innovative Strategies Integrating Comics into Reading Instruction*

A Capacity-Building Activity for Teachers on Innovative Strategies Integrating Comics into Reading Instruction is designed and proposed to enhance teachers’ pedagogical competence in using comic strips as multimodal tools for improving reading comprehension, motivation, and engagement among Grade 4 pupils. This activity aims to equip educators with research-based strategies, curriculum-aligned lesson designs, and assessment tools that leverage the visual and narrative strengths of comics. Through collaborative workshops, lesson study cycles, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, teachers will co-create instructional materials, reflect on classroom implementation, and build a sustainable repository of comic-based resources. Ultimately, the initiative seeks to foster inclusive, engaging, and effective reading instruction that supports diverse learners and promotes improved literacy outcomes.

This project proposes a structured capacity-building activity for teachers to enhance their skills in integrating comic strips into reading instruction. The activity aims to strengthen instructional design, improve student engagement, and align innovative strategies with curriculum standards. Outputs include lesson plans, assessment tools, and a school-level action plan for sustained integration.

➤ *Background/Rationale*

Reading comprehension remains a challenge for many learners, particularly in identifying main ideas and sustaining motivation. Research (Whitlock et al., 2025; Golding & Verrier, 2020) shows that comics, as multimodal texts, improve comprehension and engagement by combining visuals and text. Teachers, however, face challenges in alignment, preparation, and assessment. A capacity-building activity will address these gaps by equipping teachers with innovative strategies and resources.

Teachers lack structured training and resources to effectively integrate comic strips into reading instruction, resulting in limited classroom application and inconsistent outcomes.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

This chapter explores the influence and effectiveness of comic strips as a tool in enhancing reading comprehension, motivation, and engagement for Grade 4 pupils. The chapter also investigates the role of comic strips in boosting reading motivation and engagement, covering areas such as student interest and enjoyment, classroom participation, willingness to read independently, sustained attention during reading sessions, and the development of positive attitudes toward reading. Additionally, it evaluates how pupils perceive comic strips as a learning tool, considering their usefulness in understanding lessons, ease of comprehension, relatability of characters and stories, preference over traditional materials, and their willingness to use comic strips regularly.

##### ➤ *Influence of Comic Strips on Reading Comprehension Skills*

###### • *Identifying Main Ideas*

The results of the analysis on the influence of comic strips in identifying main ideas show a clear trend where the majority of Grade 4 pupils reported a favorable experience in recognizing central messages within comic strips. With a weighted mean of 3.12, the data suggest that students generally agree that comic strips are effective in helping them identify main ideas in reading materials. The high frequency of responses in the "Agree" category indicates that comic strips significantly support the process of comprehension, allowing students to grasp the central themes of a text more easily. This is particularly notable since identifying main ideas is often a challenging aspect of reading comprehension for young learners, especially when dealing with more complex textual formats. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.75 reflects a moderate level of consensus among students, suggesting that, overall, comic strips are viewed as a useful tool for enhancing comprehension in this domain.

Further inspection of the results reveals that comic strips, with their combination of visuals and minimal text, provide a unique way to present the main ideas in a more digestible and engaging format. The use of images allows students to make connections between the narrative and visual elements, which aids in forming a clearer understanding of the key points in the story. This format could also help pupils who struggle with traditional text-heavy reading materials, as the visual aids reduce cognitive load and allow them to focus on the primary ideas being conveyed. The responses suggest that pupils feel confident in summarizing the main points of comic strips, a skill closely linked to identifying main ideas. The result also indicates that comic strips facilitate not just understanding but also retention, as students reported being able to recall the central messages of the comics with greater ease compared to other forms of reading material.

Comic strips have been consistently validated in recent scholarship as effective tools for improving reading comprehension, particularly in identifying main ideas.

Research by Ahmad and Ma'rifatulloh (2022) demonstrated that comic strips significantly enhanced students' ability to comprehend narrative texts, with post-test scores showing marked improvement compared to traditional reading approaches. Their findings highlight that the integration of visuals with concise text reduces barriers posed by vocabulary and textual complexity, enabling learners to focus on the central themes of a passage. Similarly, Pablo (2025) found that Grade 1 learners exposed to comic strips exhibited stronger comprehension skills, as the format provided engaging and narratively rich contexts that supported early literacy development. These studies reinforce the idea that comics are not merely supplementary materials but can serve as structured pedagogical tools to scaffold comprehension and main idea identification across grade levels.

Further evidence comes from Whitlock, Yoder Kuhns, and Kersten-Parrish (2025), who analyzed the educational potential of TOON Books and emphasized that comics foster "comic literacy" by equipping learners with strategies to decode both textual and visual cues. Their work underscores that comics encourage active meaning-making, where students synthesize information from multiple modes of representation to identify key ideas. Golding and Verrier (2020) also reported that visual literacy interventions using comics improved learners' comprehension of educational texts, demonstrating that the multimodal nature of comics strengthens cognitive connections and aids retention. Together, these findings suggest that comic strips not only simplify the process of identifying main ideas but also cultivate transferable literacy skills that extend beyond comics into broader reading contexts.

Despite the generally positive feedback, there are some students who expressed less confidence in identifying the main ideas from comic strips. This lower confidence could be attributed to several factors, such as the complexity of the comic's content or the pupils' varying levels of familiarity with the comic format. A small proportion of the responses in the "Disagree" category point to the possibility that not all comic strips were equally effective in supporting comprehension. Some comics may have been too abstract or too subtle in their depiction of key ideas, leading to difficulty in identifying the main themes. Moreover, it is important to recognize that while comic strips offer a visual and textual combination, the effectiveness in conveying the central message can vary depending on the design and narrative structure of the comic itself. These challenges highlight the need for selecting appropriate comics that are aligned with the cognitive and developmental levels of the students.

Previous studies have shown that visual aids, such as comic strips, play an important role in reinforcing reading comprehension, especially for younger learners. Studies claim that images can help bridge the gap between abstract ideas and tangible understanding, as they offer students a direct, visual representation of the content. Additionally, researchers from previous studies argue that when students are presented with both visual and textual information, they engage more deeply with the material, improving their ability

to identify key ideas and details (Purba & Rini, 2021). The results of this study align with these findings, showing that comic strips, with their ability to merge both visuals and text, effectively support the process of identifying main ideas in a way that is more engaging than traditional reading materials.

This outcome is also supported by numerous studies claiming that students often find it easier to process information when it is presented in a multimedia format. The use of visuals in comics allows students to visually track the progression of the narrative, which aids in understanding the story's core themes (Losi, Wahyuni, & Rosida, 2023). This is consistent with findings from previous research that suggest younger readers, in particular, benefit from such formats as they help simplify complex texts. As comic strips are designed to communicate key information quickly and clearly, they serve as an effective tool for summarizing and reinforcing main ideas, which is critical in the development of reading comprehension skills at the elementary level. However, it is important to note some limitations in this study (Robbani & Khoirotunnisa, 2021).

While the general consensus points to comic strips as a helpful tool, the variability in responses, especially from the students who expressed difficulty in identifying main ideas, suggests that more research is needed to identify the specific factors that make certain comics more effective than others. It is likely that not all comic strips are equally beneficial for all learners, as some might find it challenging to interpret visual cues or may struggle with the brevity of the text. Additionally, the sample size, although substantial, was limited to one grade level, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Further studies could explore the impact of different types of comics on reading comprehension across various age groups and literacy levels.

To further enhance the integration of comic strips in reading instruction, educators may consider selecting comics that align more closely with the students' interests and cultural backgrounds. Tailoring the comics to students' preferences could increase engagement and improve their ability to identify and connect with the main ideas. Moreover, it might be beneficial to incorporate guided discussions or reflective activities that help students explicitly focus on the central themes within the comic strips. This approach could provide a more structured method for helping students navigate through the comic's content and enhance their overall comprehension of the material.

- *Making Inferences*

The results for the domain of making inferences show that comic strips are generally perceived by Grade 4 pupils as an effective tool for drawing inferences from a text, with a weighted mean of 3.14. This indicates that the majority of students agree that comic strips help them make logical guesses and connect implicit details in the story. The fact that most responses fall in the "Agree" category suggests that the combination of visuals and minimal text in comic strips provides enough context to allow students to infer meanings, emotions, and motivations of the characters. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.63 also indicates that there is a

moderate level of consistency in how students perceive comic strips as a tool for inference-making, reflecting a general understanding of the usefulness of this approach. The results suggest that the visual cues in comic strips, such as facial expressions, body language, and contextual imagery, play a critical role in helping students make inferences about the characters' emotions and the narrative's direction.

These visual elements provide clues that support the textual content, allowing students to fill in the gaps of the story, making it easier to understand things that are not explicitly stated. For instance, a character's gesture or facial expression can imply emotions like happiness, sadness, or anger, which can deepen students' understanding of the story. This type of inference goes beyond surface-level information and requires the students to interpret and connect various details within the comic strip. The majority of students agreeing with the effectiveness of comic strips in making inferences suggests that they are benefiting from these visual cues and gaining a deeper understanding of the material.

Despite the generally positive feedback, some students still expressed difficulty in making inferences from comic strips, as evidenced by the smaller proportion of responses in the "Disagree" category. These students may find it challenging to interpret the visual cues or may need more guidance in making connections between the images and the text. The variability in responses suggests that, although comic strips are a useful tool for most, they may not be as effective for all learners. This could be due to the complexity of the comics used in the study or the students' varying levels of familiarity with making inferences in general. The results also indicate that some students may need additional scaffolding or support in understanding how to use visual cues for inference-making. This reflects the broader challenge in education where certain students may struggle more with abstract thinking or interpreting non-verbal communication.

Previous studies have shown that visual aids, like comic strips, can help students develop stronger inference skills. Research suggests that the combination of text and visuals can enhance students' ability to read between the lines, as the visuals often provide subtle hints that prompt students to think beyond the literal meaning of the words (Golding & Verrier, 2021). Studies claim that when students are given both explicit textual information and implicit visual cues, they are better equipped to draw conclusions about characters' motives, emotions, and the underlying themes of the story (Lo, Lyu, Chen, & Lu, 2022). This is supported by research that indicates visual learning methods, including comic strips, engage students more actively and encourage them to make connections between what is explicitly stated and what is suggested in the story.

Moreover, research from previous studies highlights the importance of imagery in supporting comprehension and inference-making in young readers. Visuals help younger students, who may still be developing their cognitive and analytical skills, to better grasp abstract concepts that are often difficult to articulate with words alone (Selong, Ollie, & Rettob, 2021). Researchers have found that visual cues help

students with limited vocabulary or language proficiency to make inferences about the story's context and meaning. These findings align with the results of this study, as the use of visual elements in comic strips appears to assist Grade 4 pupils in making inferences and connecting the dots between the visual and textual aspects of the comics. However, there are limitations to the findings of this study.

While the overall results are positive, the variability in student responses indicates that the effectiveness of comic strips in supporting inference-making may depend on individual differences in learning styles, cognitive abilities, and prior experiences with comics. It is possible that some students may require more explicit instruction on how to use visual clues to make inferences, especially if they have not been exposed to this type of learning format before. Additionally, the sample size in this study was limited to a specific grade level, and future research could explore whether the findings hold true across different age groups or literacy levels.

To better integrate comic strips into reading instruction and further improve students' inference-making abilities, teachers may consider providing more targeted activities that guide students in making inferences. For example, teachers could engage students in discussions about the visual cues present in a comic strip and ask them to justify their inferences. By prompting students to explicitly reference the images and text when making inferences, teachers can help them develop stronger critical thinking and analytical skills. This type of guided practice would help students move beyond surface-level understanding and encourage deeper engagement with the material. Furthermore, incorporating a variety of comic strips that cover a wide range of genres and themes may allow students to practice making inferences in different contexts, thereby strengthening their overall comprehension skills.

- *Understanding Vocabulary in Context*

The results for understanding vocabulary in context indicate that comic strips have a positive impact on Grade 4 pupils' ability to understand and retain new words, with a weighted mean of 3.23. This suggests that the majority of students feel that comic strips help them understand vocabulary through the context provided by both the visuals and the minimal text. The high frequency of responses in the "Agree" category highlights that students are able to derive meaning from unfamiliar words by looking at the surrounding elements in the comic strips. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.74 further confirms that there is a general agreement among students regarding the effectiveness of comic strips in enhancing their vocabulary comprehension. This reflects the notion that the visual context within the comic strips provides enough clues to help students infer the meaning of new words, making it easier for them to understand and retain these words in their vocabulary.

The results suggest that the combination of images and text in comic strips helps students make sense of words they might not otherwise fully understand. When encountering new words in a comic strip, students are not just presented

with abstract definitions but are instead given contextual clues through visual elements like facial expressions, actions, and settings. These visual cues help clarify the meaning of the word in context, making it easier for students to understand how the word functions within the story. For example, if a character is shown "jumping" or "flying," the visual representation of the action can provide context for words like "leap" or "soar," which might otherwise be unfamiliar to students. This type of context-based learning is essential for vocabulary development, as it allows students to grasp not only the dictionary definition of a word but also how it is used in real-life situations.

However, despite the positive results, some students expressed difficulty in understanding vocabulary through comic strips, as indicated by the smaller proportion of responses in the "Disagree" category. This may suggest that certain students struggled to make the necessary connections between the words and the visual context, particularly if the comic strip used more complex or abstract language. The variability in responses implies that while comic strips are effective for many students, they may not work equally well for all learners, especially for those who have difficulty interpreting visual cues or those with limited vocabulary. Some students may require additional support in learning to make inferences based on context, which may include direct teaching strategies or explicit vocabulary lessons to reinforce the meaning of new words encountered in comic strips. Previous studies have shown that using context to understand vocabulary can be more effective than relying solely on dictionary definitions, particularly for young learners (Matuk, Hurwich, Spiegel, & Diamond, 2021). Studies claim that when students encounter new words in a meaningful context, such as through storytelling or comics, they are better able to understand and remember those words. Research indicates that context-based learning helps students connect words to real-world experiences, making them more likely to retain and use the vocabulary in the future (Arafik, Putra, Putro, & Nisa, 2021). This is particularly important for Grade 4 students, who are in the process of expanding their vocabulary and learning to use words more effectively in various contexts. The findings from this study align with previous research, which suggests that comic strips, as a context-rich learning tool, can enhance students' vocabulary comprehension by providing them with the opportunity to see how words function in a specific narrative context.

Additionally, studies have shown that visual aids, such as those found in comic strips, can be particularly helpful for students with limited language proficiency or for those who struggle with traditional text-based vocabulary learning (Jian, 2023). Researchers from previous studies state that visual representations of words help students make connections between the word's meaning and its use in everyday life, thus enhancing their ability to remember and apply new vocabulary (Damopolii, Paiki, & Nunaki, 2022). These findings support the current study's results, as the combination of images and text in comic strips offers a dual mode of learning that reinforces vocabulary acquisition through both visual and linguistic channels. This approach is particularly beneficial for young learners, who often rely on

visual and contextual clues to understand and retain new language. However, there are limitations to this study that should be considered. While the results show that comic strips are helpful for understanding vocabulary in context, the variability in responses suggests that this approach may not work equally well for all students. Factors such as the complexity of the vocabulary used in the comics, the students' individual learning styles, or their prior knowledge of the words could all influence how effectively they understand and retain the vocabulary presented. Additionally, the study's sample was limited to a single grade level, so further research is needed to determine if the results hold true across different age groups or literacy levels. Expanding the sample size and testing the effectiveness of different types of comics (e.g., those with more or less text) could provide a clearer picture of how comic strips impact vocabulary learning for various types of learners.

To make the use of comic strips more effective in teaching vocabulary, teachers could incorporate specific activities that focus on the vocabulary within the comic strips. For instance, after reading a comic strip, teachers could ask students to identify new words and discuss their meanings in the context of the story. Teachers could also provide additional support by offering vocabulary quizzes, flashcards, or word maps that connect the new words to their definitions, synonyms, and images. By explicitly focusing on the vocabulary and providing students with opportunities to practice using the words in different contexts, teachers can help reinforce vocabulary learning and ensure that students fully comprehend and retain the new terms they encounter in comic strips. Additionally, teachers could consider using a variety of comics that feature different genres, topics, and language levels to expose students to a wide range of vocabulary in different contexts, further enhancing their vocabulary comprehension skills.

- *Sequencing Events and Summarizing Texts*

The results for sequencing events and summarizing texts reveal that comic strips are an effective tool for enhancing Grade 4 pupils' ability to organize and summarize the events in a story. With a weighted mean of 3.38, the data suggest that most students find comic strips helpful for identifying the order of events and condensing the key points of a narrative. This outcome indicates that the combination of visual and textual elements in comic strips provides clear cues that guide students through the sequence of events. The visual depiction of actions, characters, and settings allows students to more easily follow the flow of the story, making it simpler for them to recall the events in chronological order. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.69 suggests a consistent understanding among the pupils, meaning that the majority find comic strips beneficial for sequencing and summarizing texts.

The results highlight that comic strips, with their combination of brief text and clear visual cues, serve as an excellent medium for guiding students through the process of summarizing a story. In particular, the structured nature of comic strips—where events unfold in a sequential manner through frames—helps students understand the order in

which events occur and identify the most important aspects of the narrative. These sequential illustrations serve as a roadmap for students, enabling them to focus on the main events without getting distracted by unnecessary details. As students move through the comic, they are guided step-by-step through the plot, which makes it easier for them to summarize the story afterward. The high level of agreement among the students about the usefulness of comic strips in sequencing events and summarizing texts suggests that the format supports these essential reading skills well.

Despite the overall positive feedback, a small proportion of students indicated difficulty with sequencing events and summarizing the story from comic strips, as reflected in the "Disagree" category. These responses may indicate that some pupils struggle with interpreting the order of events or identifying which elements are most important for a summary. The variability in responses suggests that while comic strips are a helpful tool for most, they may not be as effective for all learners. This could be due to differences in how students interpret the visuals or their ability to condense a story into its essential parts. Some students may also find it challenging to focus on the key events, especially if the comic uses complex narratives or abstract storylines. These challenges suggest the need for additional support and guidance in helping students identify and organize the main events in a comic strip.

Previous studies have shown that using graphic organizers and visual aids, such as comic strips, can greatly improve students' ability to sequence events and summarize texts (Reis, Palermo, Acantis, & Nogueira, 2022). Studies claim that visuals help students break down complex narratives into manageable pieces, allowing them to more easily identify the beginning, middle, and end of a story (Badeo & Koc, 2021). These visual cues not only provide students with a clear representation of the sequence of events but also make it easier for them to identify the key moments of the story that should be included in a summary. Researchers from previous studies suggest that when students engage with both text and visuals, they are able to process information more effectively, making it easier to organize events and produce coherent summaries (Widyasari & Nurcahyani, 2021). The current study's findings align with these results, confirming that comic strips, with their blend of visuals and text, support students in organizing the plot and summarizing the story effectively.

In line with previous research, several studies have demonstrated the benefits of using comic strips as tools for improving reading comprehension, especially in the areas of sequencing and summarization (Calafato & Gudim, 2022). Researchers have found that students who are exposed to comic strips as part of their reading instruction are better able to retain information about the plot and summarize key events. This is particularly important for younger learners, who may struggle with traditional narrative forms that require them to process long passages of text without visual cues (Vasques & Silva, 2021). The use of visual elements in comic strips allows students to engage with the material in a more dynamic way, making it easier for them to recall the sequence

of events and identify the key points for summarization. These findings are consistent with the results of this study, which suggest that comic strips provide an engaging and effective way to practice sequencing and summarizing stories. Despite the positive results, there are limitations to this study that should be acknowledged.

While the overall findings indicate that comic strips are an effective tool for sequencing and summarizing texts, the variability in responses highlights the importance of considering individual learning differences. Some students may have difficulty interpreting the visual cues in the comic strips, which could hinder their ability to sequence events or identify the main points for summarization. Additionally, the complexity of the comic strips used in the study may have contributed to the variability in responses. Comic strips with more intricate plots or abstract visual elements might be harder for some students to follow, making it more difficult for them to organize the events or produce a concise summary. Further research with a larger sample size and a broader range of comic strip types could provide more insights into how different kinds of comics impact sequencing and summarizing skills.

To further enhance the effectiveness of comic strips in developing sequencing and summarization skills, teachers could integrate activities that explicitly focus on these skills. For instance, after reading a comic strip, teachers could ask students to create a timeline of events, helping them visualize the order of the story's progression. Teachers could also encourage students to work in pairs or small groups to discuss and summarize the comic, which would allow them to practice articulating the main events in their own words. Additionally, providing students with clear guidelines on how to identify key events and prioritize information could help them refine their ability to produce concise summaries. By combining comic strips with structured activities that target sequencing and summarization, teachers can maximize the potential of this medium in supporting students' reading comprehension development. Furthermore, using a variety of comic strips that feature different genres or story types could allow students to practice these skills in diverse contexts, strengthening their overall ability to sequence events and summarize texts in any reading material.

- *Answering Literal and Interpretive Questions*

The results for answering literal and interpretive questions indicate that comic strips are an effective tool for helping Grade 4 pupils respond to both factual and inferential questions about a text, with a weighted mean of 3.32. This suggests that the majority of students find comic strips useful in answering questions that require recalling specific details (literal questions) as well as those that involve interpreting the meaning behind the events or actions (interpretive questions). The high agreement in the "Agree" category reflects the students' ability to engage with the content of the comic strips and accurately answer both types of questions. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.71 also indicates a consensus among the students, meaning that the majority feel confident using comic strips to answer questions based on both explicit content and inferred meanings.

The ability to answer both literal and interpretive questions effectively is largely due to the structure of comic strips, which provide students with clear, concise visual and textual information. Literal questions typically ask students to recall specific details from the text, such as the actions of characters or events in the story. The visual elements in comic strips make it easier for students to locate these details quickly, as the pictures serve as direct cues that align with the text. For example, a question about what a character did in a specific scene can be answered by referring to the visual representation of the action. On the other hand, interpretive questions require students to analyze the meaning behind these actions or events. The visual context in comic strips, including character expressions, body language, and settings, provides important clues that allow students to make inferences about the emotions, motivations, and deeper meanings of the story. This combination of text and visuals helps students move beyond literal understanding and engage with the material at a more complex, interpretive level.

However, while the majority of students found comic strips helpful for answering both literal and interpretive questions, there were some who expressed difficulty with interpretive questions, as reflected in the smaller proportion of responses in the "Disagree" category. This may suggest that some pupils are still developing their ability to read beyond the surface level and make inferences based on visual and textual clues. Interpretive questions often require a level of abstraction and critical thinking that might be challenging for some students, especially if they have limited experience in analyzing stories in this way. Additionally, the complexity of the comic strips used in the study could have influenced the students' ability to engage with the interpretive aspects of the questions. Comics that rely heavily on subtle visual cues or abstract storytelling may have been harder for some students to interpret, leading to difficulty in answering questions that go beyond the literal content.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the use of visuals in reading materials can significantly improve students' ability to answer both literal and interpretive questions. Studies claim that students often find it easier to answer literal questions when they are presented with visual aids because the visuals help them locate specific details more quickly (Matuk, Hurwich, Spiegel, & Diamond, 2021). Moreover, research suggests that the combination of text and visuals can enhance students' ability to answer interpretive questions, as the visuals provide a richer context that helps them make inferences about character motivations, emotions, and the broader themes of the story (Arafik, Putra, Putro, & Nisa, 2021). The findings from this study align with these claims, as the results show that comic strips facilitate students' ability to answer both types of questions, making them a valuable tool in reading comprehension.

Furthermore, previous studies indicate that comic strips can be particularly helpful for students who struggle with traditional text-based learning, as the combination of text and visuals offers them multiple ways to engage with the material (Mamolo, 2022). Researchers have found that when students are exposed to visual content alongside written text, they are

better able to recall specific details (literal comprehension) and interpret underlying meanings (inferential comprehension) (Mamolo, 2022). This approach helps bridge the gap between simple recall and deeper understanding, encouraging students to think critically about the material. The positive results in this study, where students were able to answer both literal and interpretive questions, reflect the broader findings of such research, which emphasize the benefits of using comic strips as an instructional tool to support various aspects of reading comprehension.

However, the study does have limitations that should be considered. The variability in responses, especially from students who struggled with interpretive questions, suggests that the effectiveness of comic strips may depend on individual factors such as cognitive development, familiarity with the comic format, and prior experience with making inferences. Some students may require additional support in learning how to analyze visual and textual clues to answer interpretive questions. Furthermore, while the sample size in this study was relatively large, it was limited to one grade level, which means that the findings may not necessarily apply to other age groups or literacy levels. Future research could explore the impact of comic strips on different age groups or compare the effectiveness of various comic strip formats in enhancing students' ability to answer literal and interpretive questions.

To improve the use of comic strips in helping students answer both literal and interpretive questions, teachers could provide more targeted instruction on how to interpret the visuals and connect them to the text. For example, after reading a comic strip, teachers could engage students in guided discussions about the characters' actions, emotions, and motivations, helping them practice making inferences based on the clues provided by the visuals. Teachers could also encourage students to create their own comic strips, focusing on incorporating key details and subtle cues that invite interpretive thinking. This type of creative exercise would not only reinforce students' ability to answer questions but also encourage them to think critically about how visual and textual elements work together to communicate meaning. By integrating these strategies, teachers can enhance the effectiveness of comic strips as a tool for improving students' literal and interpretive comprehension skills.

#### ➤ *Impact of Comic Strips on Reading Motivation and Engagement*

##### • *Interest and Enjoyment in Reading Activities*

The results for interest and enjoyment in reading activities suggest that comic strips have a highly positive impact on Grade 4 pupils' engagement with reading. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the data indicate that the majority of students strongly agree that comic strips make reading more enjoyable. The responses overwhelmingly fall into the "Agree" category, reflecting the widespread appeal of comic strips as an engaging and fun reading format. This outcome suggests that comic strips, with their combination of visuals and concise text, provide a dynamic and accessible way to capture students' attention. The relatively low standard

deviation of 0.71 further supports the consistency of these responses, indicating that most students share the sentiment that comic strips are an enjoyable medium for reading activities. The results demonstrate that comic strips are an effective tool in fostering a positive attitude toward reading, which is essential in cultivating long-term reading habits.

The high level of interest and enjoyment can likely be attributed to the engaging nature of comic strips, which blend colorful visuals with narrative text. This combination creates a visually appealing reading experience that captures students' attention and maintains their interest. For young learners, the use of images to complement text makes the story more accessible and enjoyable, as it provides immediate context and reinforces the narrative. The comic strip format allows students to easily follow the story through visual cues and facial expressions, making it easier for them to connect emotionally with the characters and events. Additionally, the relatively short length of most comic strips makes them less intimidating than longer texts, allowing students to experience a sense of accomplishment after completing a reading task. These features likely contribute to the high levels of enjoyment reported by the students.

However, while most students found comic strips enjoyable, a small portion of responses in the "Disagree" category suggests that not all students feel the same way about this format. These students may not be as drawn to comics as others or may prefer more traditional forms of reading materials, such as books with more text and fewer visuals. It is possible that some students find the minimal text in comic strips limiting or may have difficulty following the narrative if the visuals do not provide enough clarity. This variation in preferences highlights the importance of considering individual differences in reading preferences and how students engage with various forms of literature. The variability in responses implies that, although comic strips are highly enjoyable for many, they may not be universally appealing for all students, and alternative formats may need to be provided for those who are less enthusiastic about comics.

Studies have shown that the use of visual elements in reading materials can significantly increase students' interest in reading. Research suggests that comic strips, due to their combination of visuals and text, are particularly effective in engaging reluctant readers. Studies claim that visuals help break up the text and provide a more dynamic reading experience, which is especially appealing for younger learners who might otherwise struggle with traditional text-heavy books. This aligns with the results of this study, which indicate that the visual appeal of comic strips plays a major role in capturing students' attention and fostering interest in reading. Moreover, previous research has shown that when students enjoy the reading material, they are more likely to engage with it, leading to improved reading habits and a greater willingness to participate in reading activities. The findings from this study corroborate these claims, suggesting that comic strips can play a significant role in motivating students to read.

In line with previous studies, several researchers have explored the connection between visual storytelling and students' enjoyment of reading. Previous studies highlight that comic strips are especially beneficial for students who are more visually oriented and may struggle with traditional reading materials (Nobre, Sousa, & Silva, 2021). Researchers have found that students who are exposed to comics as part of their reading instruction show increased levels of enjoyment and engagement with the material. The combination of images and short bursts of text in comics helps maintain the students' focus and provides them with a clearer understanding of the content (Anggito & Sartono, 2022). This study's results support these findings, as they show that comic strips are an effective tool for increasing enjoyment and interest in reading, which are crucial factors for fostering a positive relationship with reading. However, it is important to recognize the limitations of this study. While the majority of students reported increased interest and enjoyment from comic strips, the variability in responses indicates that this approach may not be equally effective for all students. Some students may have a preference for different types of reading materials, such as books with more text and fewer visual elements. Additionally, the specific type of comic strip used in the study may have influenced the results. For example, comic strips with certain genres or themes may appeal more to some students than others, leading to a difference in enjoyment levels. Future research could explore the specific types of comic strips that are most engaging for different groups of students, as well as how individual preferences affect the impact of comics on reading enjoyment.

To enhance the use of comic strips in fostering interest and enjoyment in reading, teachers could carefully select comics that align with the students' interests and developmental levels. By choosing comic strips with themes that resonate with students or reflect their personal experiences, teachers can increase engagement and help foster a deeper connection to the material. Furthermore, integrating comics into a broader reading curriculum that includes a variety of reading formats could provide a more balanced and inclusive approach to reading instruction. Teachers could also encourage students to create their own comic strips as part of a creative writing exercise, allowing them to explore storytelling in a format they find engaging. This approach would not only help reinforce reading comprehension but also foster students' creativity and interest in reading activities. By using comics strategically and ensuring they align with students' interests and needs, educators can maximize the effectiveness of this medium in promoting a love of reading.

- *Participation in Classroom Reading Tasks*

The results for participation in classroom reading tasks suggest that comic strips have a positive influence on Grade 4 pupils' willingness to engage in reading activities. With a weighted mean of 3.33, the data show that most students agree that comic strips encourage them to participate more actively in reading tasks. This outcome indicates that comic strips serve as a motivating factor for students, prompting them to take part in classroom discussions and activities

related to reading. The responses in the "Agree" category are predominant, reflecting the belief that comic strips help create an interactive and dynamic classroom environment. The standard deviation of 0.67, being relatively low, further supports this interpretation, showing that there is a strong consensus among the students about the positive influence of comic strips on their participation in reading tasks.

One of the key reasons comic strips enhance participation is their ability to combine visuals and text, which provides a multi-sensory experience for students. The inclusion of images alongside the text helps make the material more engaging, allowing students to better connect with the content and feel more motivated to engage in classroom activities. For younger learners, especially in the early stages of literacy development, visual elements in comics can help break down complex ideas and make the material more accessible. The bright and colorful illustrations grab students' attention, and the relatively short nature of most comic strips makes them less overwhelming compared to longer reading assignments. As a result, students are more likely to participate in tasks that involve comic strips, as they find the material easier to engage with and more enjoyable than traditional reading texts. The high level of participation can also be attributed to the way comic strips stimulate discussion in the classroom. Given the visual and textual elements, comic strips invite students to interpret the meaning behind the images and text, encouraging conversations about character motivations, events, and plot development. This fosters an interactive learning environment where students feel encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.67 indicates that the positive influence of comic strips on participation is not limited to a few students but is a widespread effect. However, the small number of "Disagree" responses suggests that, while comic strips are generally helpful, there may be some students who do not feel as engaged or motivated by this format, which could be due to differences in learning styles or personal preferences.

Despite the general trend of increased participation, a few students in the "Disagree" category may find it difficult to engage with comic strips in the classroom. This could be attributed to factors such as a lack of interest in the comic strip's content or difficulty interpreting the visual elements. Some students may prefer traditional reading materials, such as books with more text and fewer images, which could affect their willingness to participate in reading tasks that use comics. The results indicate that while comic strips are effective for many students, they are not universally engaging for all learners, and some may need alternative or supplementary materials to stimulate their participation in classroom activities.

Previous studies have consistently shown that the inclusion of visual aids, such as comic strips, enhances student participation in classroom reading tasks. Studies claim that comic strips, with their combination of engaging visuals and concise text, provide an interactive platform for students to discuss and analyze the material (Ekayani & Suwedawati, 2023). Research suggests that students are more

likely to participate in discussions when the reading material is accessible and visually stimulating (Inaoka, Octawijaya, & Mamahit, 2022). This finding is supported by the results of this study, where comic strips were found to increase student participation in reading tasks. Additionally, studies claim that comic strips can foster critical thinking and collaboration in the classroom, as students engage with the visual and textual components of the story and share their interpretations with their peers. Moreover, studies have shown that using comic strips in the classroom can help boost the confidence of students who may otherwise feel hesitant to participate in traditional reading activities (Ferrer-Albero & Diez-Domingo, 2021). Researchers have found that students who are less confident in their reading abilities often feel more comfortable participating in tasks involving comic strips because the visuals provide additional context and support for their understanding. This is especially beneficial for students with varying literacy levels, as comic strips offer a more accessible form of reading material that encourages engagement without overwhelming them with lengthy passages of text. These findings align with the results of the current study, suggesting that comic strips are an effective way to increase participation and foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

However, the study does have some limitations that should be considered. The variability in student responses, particularly among those who did not find comic strips engaging, suggests that individual preferences and learning styles play a significant role in how students engage with reading tasks. While comic strips are effective for many students, they may not resonate with all learners, especially those who prefer traditional, text-heavy materials. Furthermore, the comics used in the study may not have appealed to all students, as the content, genre, or theme of the comic strip could influence the level of interest and participation. Future research could explore how different types of comic strips or themes affect participation, and whether incorporating a variety of formats could further enhance engagement for a broader range of students.

To enhance the use of comic strips in increasing student participation, teachers could incorporate more interactive activities that encourage students to explore the content in depth. For example, after reading a comic strip, teachers could facilitate group discussions where students are asked to interpret the story's meaning, discuss character motivations, or predict what might happen next. Teachers could also encourage students to create their own comic strips as part of a creative exercise, allowing them to express their understanding of a story in a format they enjoy. By making comic strips a more integral part of the reading curriculum and integrating them with other teaching strategies, educators can further promote student participation and create a more dynamic, engaging learning environment. Additionally, offering a variety of comic strip genres and themes could help ensure that all students find something that resonates with them, thus increasing their overall engagement and participation in reading tasks.

- *Willingness to Read Independently*

The results for willingness to read independently indicate that comic strips have a significant positive influence on Grade 4 pupils' motivation to engage in independent reading. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the data suggest that most students agree that comic strips make them more willing to read on their own outside of the classroom setting. The majority of students, as reflected in the "Agree" category, express a heightened interest in reading comic strips independently, which aligns with the notion that comics offer a more approachable and enjoyable format for young readers. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.68 further emphasizes the consistency of these results, showing that the vast majority of students share the sentiment that comic strips encourage them to read more on their own. This finding is important as it underscores the potential of comic strips in fostering independent reading habits, which are crucial for developing lifelong reading skills.

Comic strips, with their engaging visuals and shorter, more digestible content, provide an ideal reading format for young learners who may feel intimidated by longer, text-heavy materials. The visuals in comics serve to contextualize the story and provide immediate clarity, making it easier for students to follow along and comprehend the narrative. As students are able to decode the meaning behind the images quickly, they can focus on enjoying the reading experience without feeling overwhelmed by complex vocabulary or lengthy paragraphs. Furthermore, the results suggest that comic strips play an important role in sparking students' curiosity to read more and explore other materials independently. The "Agree" responses indicate that comic strips not only increase students' motivation to read on their own but also promote an interest in reading beyond the classroom context. The ability to connect with the characters, storylines, and themes within comic strips may encourage students to seek out more books or comics that align with their personal interests. For many students, the enjoyment they experience from reading comics can serve as a gateway to developing a broader love for reading, as they may begin to explore other genres or formats. The positive influence of comic strips on independent reading reflects the broader trend where enjoyable reading materials help foster a long-term interest in reading.

However, despite the positive results, a small percentage of students expressed less enthusiasm for reading comic strips independently, as indicated by the responses in the "Disagree" category. This may be due to personal preferences, as some students might not find comic strips as engaging or might prefer other types of reading materials. Additionally, students who struggle with reading or have lower levels of reading confidence may feel hesitant to read independently, even if the material is visually appealing. This variability in responses highlights the importance of considering individual differences in reading preferences and abilities. While comic strips may encourage independent reading for many students, those who are less confident or have different interests may need additional support or exposure to different reading formats.

Previous studies have highlighted the role of visual aids, such as comic strips, in encouraging independent reading among young learners. Studies claim that comic strips, due to their engaging visuals and concise text, are more accessible and less intimidating for reluctant readers (Anggito & Sartono, 2022). By providing a reading format that is visually stimulating and easier to understand, comic strips can help students build confidence in their reading skills, making them more likely to read independently. Research also suggests that when students enjoy the material they are reading, they are more likely to engage with it outside of the classroom, leading to an increase in independent reading. This aligns with the findings of this study, which show that comic strips significantly enhance students' willingness to read on their own. Research on reading motivation further supports the findings of this study. Researchers have found that materials that students enjoy are more likely to be read independently, as students are more motivated to engage with content they find interesting and fun. Studies suggest that comic strips, with their combination of humor, visuals, and compelling storylines, provide an enjoyable reading experience that encourages students to seek out similar materials on their own. The positive responses in this study reinforce these claims, demonstrating that comic strips can effectively spark an interest in independent reading by providing students with an enjoyable and accessible reading experience. This, in turn, may foster a lifelong love of reading and improve students' overall literacy skills.

Despite the overall positive impact, there are limitations to the study. While most students found comic strips motivating for independent reading, the responses showed some variability, suggesting that comic strips may not appeal to all students equally. Personal preferences and learning styles likely influence students' interest in comics, and some students may prefer more traditional forms of reading material. Furthermore, the study did not explore the impact of different types of comic strips, such as those with varying genres or levels of complexity. Future research could investigate how different types of comics (e.g., adventure, fantasy, educational) impact students' willingness to read independently. Additionally, further studies could consider how factors like reading proficiency, age, and prior exposure to comics influence students' interest in reading comic strips outside of the classroom.

To enhance the effectiveness of comic strips in promoting independent reading, teachers could consider incorporating them into a broader reading program that includes a variety of reading materials. By offering students a diverse selection of comic strips that align with their interests and reading levels, teachers can increase engagement and motivate students to read more on their own. Teachers might also encourage students to share their favorite comics with peers or discuss the storylines in small groups, fostering a community of independent readers. Furthermore, teachers could create activities that encourage students to explore the themes and characters in greater depth, helping them connect with the material in a more meaningful way. By strategically using comic strips as part of a well-rounded reading program, educators can maximize their impact on

students' willingness to read independently and cultivate a lasting love for reading.

- *Sustained Attention and Focus During Reading Sessions*

The results for sustained attention and focus during reading sessions suggest that comic strips play a significant role in helping Grade 4 pupils maintain their attention and focus while reading. With a weighted mean of 3.35, the data indicate that a majority of students feel that comic strips help them stay engaged and attentive throughout reading activities. The high percentage of responses in the "Agree" category reflects that comic strips, due to their engaging visuals and concise narratives, successfully capture students' attention and keep them focused on the material. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.67 further reinforces the consistency of these responses, suggesting that most students share the perception that comic strips enhance their ability to concentrate during reading sessions. This result highlights the potential of comic strips to support sustained focus in young learners, particularly in an age group that often struggles with maintaining attention for longer periods of time.

Comic strips are inherently dynamic and interactive, as they combine both textual and visual elements, which naturally draw students' attention. The vibrant colors, expressive characters, and dramatic scenes all serve to engage students visually, while the brief text encourages them to read attentively in order to follow the story. This format can be particularly helpful for students who may find traditional text-heavy reading materials dull or overwhelming. The visual cues in comic strips guide students through the content, making it easier to stay on track and maintain focus without losing the thread of the narrative. The combination of visuals and text also reduces cognitive load, as students can rely on both modes of information to comprehend the material. As a result, students are able to stay focused for longer periods, which is crucial for developing sustained attention during reading sessions.

Additionally, the results suggest that the concise nature of comic strips contributes to better focus during reading sessions. Since comic strips typically consist of shorter passages of text and a limited number of frames, students are not overwhelmed by lengthy reading assignments. This brevity encourages them to read in a focused manner, as the task does not seem too daunting or tedious. The clear structure of comic strips, with each frame progressing the story in a logical sequence, also helps students stay focused on the material without getting distracted. This is particularly important for young learners, who may have shorter attention spans and find it difficult to engage with longer, more complex texts. The findings demonstrate that comic strips, by offering a manageable and visually stimulating reading experience, can effectively support sustained attention during reading tasks. Despite the overall positive response, a small proportion of students expressed difficulty with maintaining attention while reading comic strips, as indicated by the responses in the "Disagree" category. These students may find the visual elements distracting or may not connect with the comic's format, leading to a lack of focus. It is possible that certain types of comic strips, particularly those with

complex or abstract storylines, may challenge students to stay focused on the task. Additionally, students who are less familiar with the comic format or who struggle with reading in general may find it harder to concentrate. The variability in responses suggests that while comic strips are effective for most students, they may not be universally appealing for all learners, especially those who have difficulty interpreting visual cues or prefer more traditional reading formats.

Previous studies have shown that comic strips, due to their interactive nature, are effective in improving students' attention and focus during reading activities. Studies claim that when students engage with reading material that incorporates both visual and textual elements, they are more likely to remain focused, as the visuals help guide their attention and make the content more engaging (Apostolou & Linardatos, 2023). Research has also found that comics' brevity and structure make them particularly suited to capturing students' focus, especially for those who may struggle with longer or more text-heavy reading materials (Arafah, Rofikah, & Ahmad, 2025). These findings align with the results of this study, which demonstrate that comic strips play an important role in supporting sustained attention and focus during reading tasks. The visually appealing nature of comic strips and their concise narratives make them an effective tool for keeping students engaged throughout the reading process.

Furthermore, studies have suggested that comics help improve attention and focus by providing students with immediate, relevant visual feedback that supports comprehension. Researchers have found that the use of visual elements in reading materials helps students process information more efficiently, as they can connect the visuals to the text and reinforce their understanding (Lenhart, Richter, Appel, & Mar, 2023). This multimodal approach to learning helps keep students on track and engaged with the material, making it easier for them to stay focused for longer periods of time. These findings are supported by the results of this study, which show that comic strips are highly effective in fostering sustained attention during reading sessions. The ability to connect visual elements with textual content ensures that students remain engaged, even as they work through more complex parts of the story. However, it is important to recognize the limitations of this study. While the overall results suggest that comic strips help maintain focus, the variability in student responses indicates that individual preferences and learning styles play a significant role in how students engage with the material. Some students may find the visual elements of comic strips distracting or may not feel as connected to the format as others. Additionally, the specific types of comic strips used in the study may have influenced the results, as different genres or styles of comics may appeal to different groups of students. Future research could explore the impact of various comic strip types on student attention and focus, and whether certain genres or visual styles are more effective in engaging a wider range of learners.

To enhance the use of comic strips in promoting sustained attention, teachers could integrate them with other

reading strategies that help students maintain focus. For example, teachers could pair comic strips with activities that require students to reflect on the content, such as group discussions or comprehension questions. These activities could help students stay focused on the material while also encouraging them to think critically about the story and its characters. Additionally, teachers could select comic strips that are age-appropriate and aligned with students' interests, which would further increase engagement and improve focus. By incorporating comic strips into a broader, interactive reading curriculum, teachers can create a more engaging and focused learning environment that fosters sustained attention and supports the development of reading skills.

- *Positive Attitudes Toward Reading*

The results for positive attitudes toward reading show that comic strips have a substantial impact on fostering a love for reading among Grade 4 pupils. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the data suggest that the majority of students express a positive attitude toward reading when comic strips are included as part of the reading material. The high frequency of responses in the "Agree" category indicates that comic strips significantly contribute to shaping a positive perception of reading. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.67 further underscores the consistency of these results, suggesting that the majority of students share the same view that comic strips enhance their overall attitude toward reading. This outcome reflects the potential of comic strips to make reading a more enjoyable and appealing activity, especially for younger learners. One of the key reasons comic strips may promote a positive attitude toward reading is the combination of engaging visuals and concise storytelling. Comic strips, by design, are visually stimulating and offer an enjoyable reading experience that combines entertainment with education. For young readers, the bright illustrations, relatable characters, and short, digestible text create a more enjoyable reading experience compared to traditional books with dense text. The narrative style of comics also makes reading feel less like a task and more like an enjoyable experience. This type of reading material not only helps students become more comfortable with reading but also encourages them to view reading as a fun and rewarding activity, rather than a chore. The results suggest that by incorporating comics into reading sessions, students develop a more positive outlook on reading in general.

In addition to making reading more enjoyable, comic strips provide students with a sense of accomplishment after completing a reading task. Given that comic strips typically consist of fewer words and shorter storylines, students may find it easier to finish a comic strip than a longer, more text-heavy book. This sense of completion and the visual nature of comics help reinforce a positive attitude, as students are able to quickly see the progression of the story and understand the key points without feeling overwhelmed. Moreover, the visual elements in comics—such as facial expressions, character actions, and settings—allow students to form emotional connections with the content, which can enhance their enjoyment and further foster a positive attitude toward reading. The positive reactions to comic strips indicate that

this format is particularly effective in making reading accessible, enjoyable, and meaningful for students.

Despite the general positive feedback, a small proportion of students indicated less enthusiasm for reading comics, as evidenced by the responses in the "Disagree" category. These students may not connect with the comic strip format or may prefer more traditional forms of reading material, such as books with more text. The variability in responses suggests that while comic strips are effective for many students in promoting positive attitudes toward reading, they may not be as appealing to all. Some students might prefer genres or reading formats that offer more detailed plots, or they may find the visual nature of comics distracting rather than engaging. This variation points to the importance of considering individual preferences and learning styles when integrating different types of reading materials into the curriculum.

Studies have consistently shown that the use of comics in reading instruction helps foster a positive attitude toward reading. Studies claim that visual reading materials, such as comic strips, engage students more actively, as they provide a break from traditional text-heavy materials (Fikri, Darmayanti, & Hussain, 2023). The visual appeal of comic strips makes reading feel less like an academic task and more like a form of entertainment, encouraging students to see reading as an enjoyable activity. Researchers have found that when students are introduced to comics, they develop more positive attitudes toward reading because comics are perceived as fun, creative, and less intimidating than traditional books. The findings of this study align with these claims, as comic strips have been shown to help shift students' perception of reading from a compulsory task to an enjoyable pastime.

Furthermore, previous studies emphasize the importance of student engagement in shaping their attitude toward reading. Researchers have found that materials that engage students visually and emotionally—such as comic strips—play a crucial role in enhancing their interest in reading (Anggito & Sartono, 2022). When students are provided with reading material that resonates with them, they are more likely to engage with it, leading to improved attitudes toward reading overall. This is consistent with the results of the current study, where the positive visual and narrative aspects of comic strips contribute to students' enjoyment and willingness to read. As students engage with comics, they are more likely to develop a love for reading that extends beyond the classroom setting. However, there are limitations to the findings of this study. While the majority of students reported positive attitudes toward reading comics, the variability in responses indicates that comics may not be universally effective for fostering positive attitudes in all students. The preferences of some students, especially those who are less visually oriented or who prefer traditional books, might not align with the format of comic strips. Additionally, the types of comics used in this study may have influenced the results, as certain genres or themes might appeal more to some students than others. Future research could explore how different types of comic strips—such as educational comics

versus entertainment-focused ones—impact students' attitudes toward reading. Additionally, understanding the role of prior exposure to comics and the genre preferences of students could help tailor comic strip use in classrooms more effectively.

To further enhance the effectiveness of comic strips in promoting a positive attitude toward reading, teachers could incorporate comics that align with students' interests and backgrounds. Selecting comics with themes that reflect students' lives, cultures, or current interests may increase their engagement and foster a more positive attitude. Teachers could also integrate comic strips into a broader reading program that includes various formats, such as picture books, graphic novels, and traditional texts. By providing students with a range of reading materials, educators can cater to diverse preferences and ensure that all students are encouraged to read. Additionally, encouraging students to create their own comics or discuss the themes and characters in class can deepen their connection to the material and further reinforce positive attitudes toward reading. By carefully selecting comics and using them creatively, teachers can maximize their potential to promote a love of reading in students.

#### ➤ *Pupils' Reception of Comic Strips as a Learning Tool*

- *Perceived Usefulness in Understanding Reading Lessons*  
The results for perceived usefulness in understanding reading lessons indicate that comic strips are seen as highly effective in helping Grade 4 pupils comprehend reading material. With a weighted mean of 3.32, the majority of students agree that comic strips aid in understanding the content of their lessons. This finding suggests that students recognize comic strips as a useful tool for clarifying and reinforcing the concepts taught in class. The responses in the "Agree" category reflect the students' belief that the visual and textual elements of comic strips enhance their ability to grasp key ideas and details from the reading material. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.71 further supports the interpretation that comic strips are widely perceived as a valuable resource in improving reading comprehension, with little variation in how students feel about their usefulness.

The effectiveness of comic strips in helping students understand reading lessons can be attributed to the combination of visual and verbal cues. Comic strips, by their nature, provide a clear and engaging visual representation of the narrative, which makes it easier for students to process and retain information. The pictures serve as contextual clues that help students decode the meaning of the text, particularly when the material involves abstract or complex concepts. For example, the visual depiction of a character's actions or emotions helps clarify the meaning of words or ideas that might be difficult to understand through text alone. As a result, students are able to connect with the content more deeply and comprehend the key messages of the lesson. This visual support helps break down the reading into manageable pieces, allowing students to follow the storyline more easily and understand the lesson's main points. The responses from students also suggest that comic strips are especially helpful

in understanding complex concepts that may be difficult to explain through text alone. Since comic strips simplify narratives into a series of events or actions, students can more easily track the progression of the story and identify key concepts. This can be particularly useful in subjects that require students to make connections between ideas or think critically about abstract concepts. Comic strips reduce the cognitive load on students by providing a clear, structured way to visualize information, allowing them to focus more on understanding the lesson rather than struggling with text-heavy explanations. Therefore, comic strips appear to be a highly effective means of breaking down and presenting complex information in an engaging and accessible format.

However, while the majority of students found comic strips helpful, a small portion of students expressed difficulty in perceiving their usefulness in understanding reading lessons, as reflected in the "Disagree" category. These students may struggle with interpreting the visual cues in the comic strips or may find it challenging to connect the visuals with the lesson's content. Some students might prefer more traditional, text-based methods of learning, especially if they are more comfortable with reading long-form narratives or detailed explanations. The variation in responses suggests that, while comic strips are effective for many students, they may not resonate equally with all learners, particularly those who prefer more linear, textual learning formats. This highlights the importance of using diverse teaching materials to accommodate different learning preferences and abilities.

Previous studies have consistently shown that comics and graphic novels can significantly enhance students' understanding of reading lessons. Studies claim that visual texts, such as comic strips, provide students with alternative ways of processing and understanding information. These studies emphasize the role of visuals in helping students grasp abstract concepts by providing concrete representations that make the material more accessible (Skedsmo, 2021). Furthermore, research suggests that the combination of images and text allows students to engage with the content more actively, improving their comprehension and retention (Lee, Joh, Yoo, & Oh, 2021). The results of this study align with these findings, as comic strips were found to help students better understand the material by offering both visual and textual cues that support comprehension.

Additionally, numerous studies have demonstrated the advantages of using comic strips in reading comprehension, especially for young learners. Researchers from previous studies state that comic strips are particularly effective in helping students break down complex ideas into simpler, more digestible pieces (Octaviana, Sari, & Agustina, 2021). The visual nature of comic strips allows students to better organize and retain the information presented, as they can refer to the images to reinforce their understanding of the text. This approach is particularly beneficial for visual learners, who are able to make connections between the words and the images to enhance their comprehension. These findings are consistent with the results of this study, where comic strips were found to significantly improve students' ability to understand reading lessons by providing a clear, structured,

and engaging format. Despite the overall positive impact, there are some limitations to the study that should be considered. While comic strips were generally helpful for students in understanding the material, the variability in student responses suggests that the effectiveness of comic strips may depend on individual learning preferences. Some students may find the visual format distracting or may struggle with interpreting the images in a way that enhances their understanding of the lesson. Additionally, the specific content or complexity of the comic strips used in the study could influence how well they support comprehension. Future research could explore whether different types of comic strips, such as those with more or less complex visuals, have different levels of effectiveness in helping students understand reading material.

To make comic strips even more effective as supplementary instructional materials, teachers could provide more guidance on how to interpret the visual and textual elements of the comics. For example, after reading a comic strip, teachers could engage students in discussions about how the images and text work together to convey the lesson's message. Teachers could also encourage students to use comic strips as a springboard for further exploration of the lesson's themes, fostering a deeper understanding of the content. Additionally, incorporating comic strips into collaborative activities, where students work together to analyze and discuss the comic, could enhance their comprehension and make the lesson more interactive. By integrating comic strips with other instructional strategies, teachers can maximize their potential to improve students' understanding of reading lessons and make learning more engaging and accessible for all students.

#### ➤ *Ease of Use and Comprehension*

The results for ease of use and comprehension indicate that comic strips are generally perceived as a highly accessible and effective tool for Grade 4 pupils in understanding reading material. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the data show that most students agree that comic strips make it easier for them to comprehend the material. This result suggests that the combination of visual elements and concise text in comic strips aids students in grasping the key points of the story or lesson, making it more understandable. The high percentage of responses in the "Agree" category reflects the students' recognition of the simplicity and effectiveness of comic strips in facilitating comprehension. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.66 further supports the conclusion that comic strips are widely seen as an easy-to-understand format, with minimal variation in students' responses. This highlights the broad appeal of comic strips as a tool for simplifying complex ideas and enhancing reading comprehension. One of the primary reasons comic strips are seen as easy to use and comprehend is the integration of visual cues with the text. For many young learners, especially those in Grade 4, the visuals in comic strips provide immediate context that helps to clarify the meaning of the text. Images such as character expressions, settings, and actions provide a visual representation of the narrative, allowing students to better understand the plot and the emotions of the characters without having to rely solely on words. These visual cues

reduce cognitive load, making it easier for students to follow the story and comprehend the material. The simplicity of the comic strip format, which often presents ideas in a clear, step-by-step manner, further enhances the ease of comprehension, as students can focus on the main points without being overwhelmed by lengthy descriptions or complex language.

Additionally, the brevity of comic strips is another factor that contributes to their ease of use and comprehension. The concise nature of comic strips allows students to process information in manageable chunks, which can be particularly beneficial for younger readers who might struggle with longer texts. The structured format of comic strips, with its clear division of scenes and actions, makes it easier for students to track the progression of the story and retain important details. The short length of comic strips also provides students with a sense of accomplishment upon completing a reading task, which can further motivate them to engage with the material. Overall, the simplicity, clarity, and brevity of comic strips make them an excellent tool for helping students understand reading material with ease.

Despite the positive findings, a small proportion of students still reported difficulty with the ease of use and comprehension of comic strips, as reflected in the "Disagree" responses. These students may struggle with interpreting the visual cues in the comics or may find it difficult to connect the images to the text. Additionally, some students might prefer more traditional forms of reading material, such as books with more detailed text and fewer visual elements. This suggests that while comic strips are an effective tool for many students, they may not be equally helpful for all learners. Students who are less comfortable with the comic format or who struggle with abstract thinking might find it more difficult to extract meaning from the visuals or follow the narrative flow. These differences in individual preferences and abilities highlight the importance of using diverse instructional materials to cater to the needs of all learners.

Studies on the effectiveness of visual learning tools consistently support the idea that comic strips enhance comprehension by providing students with visual aids that simplify complex ideas. Studies claim that students, particularly those in the early stages of literacy development, benefit greatly from the combination of images and text in reading materials (Damopolii, Paiki, & Nunaki, 2022). The visual cues in comic strips help students connect the narrative with real-world concepts, making it easier for them to understand the context and meaning of the words. Previous research has shown that visual learners, in particular, are more likely to comprehend and retain information when it is presented through a combination of pictures and words. This aligns with the findings from this study, which suggest that comic strips help improve students' comprehension by providing a clear and accessible format that caters to different learning styles.

Moreover, previous studies have emphasized the role of graphic novels and comic strips in helping students with lower reading proficiency understand complex content. Researchers state that the use of visuals in reading materials

reduces barriers to comprehension, allowing struggling readers to follow along more easily and gain a deeper understanding of the material (Ferrer-Albero & Diez-Domingo, 2021). Studies have found that visual aids, such as those used in comic strips, help students with limited vocabulary or language skills make connections between words and images, thereby improving their comprehension. These findings are consistent with the results of this study, where comic strips were found to help a wide range of students comprehend reading material more easily and effectively. However, the study does have some limitations that should be considered. The variability in responses, particularly from students who struggled with the ease of use and comprehension of comic strips, suggests that the effectiveness of this tool may depend on individual learning preferences. Some students may find visual representations helpful, while others may prefer traditional text-based materials. Furthermore, the complexity of the comic strips used in the study may have influenced the results. Comics that include more abstract themes or complex narratives may pose more challenges for students, making them harder to comprehend. Future research could explore how different types of comics, with varying levels of complexity, affect students' ability to comprehend and engage with the material.

To make comic strips even more effective in supporting comprehension, teachers could incorporate activities that help students engage with both the visual and textual components of the comics. For example, teachers could guide students in analyzing the visual cues and asking them to connect the pictures to the narrative in the text. Teachers might also encourage students to summarize the comic strips in their own words, which would further reinforce their understanding of the content. Providing students with opportunities to discuss the comics in small groups or pairs could also enhance their comprehension, as they would be able to share their interpretations and gain insights from their peers. By integrating comic strips with other instructional strategies, such as group discussions and independent reflection, teachers can maximize their potential to help students better understand reading material and improve overall comprehension.

- *Relatability and Appeal of Characters and Stories*

The results for relatability and appeal of characters and stories suggest that comic strips are highly effective in engaging Grade 4 pupils through relatable characters and engaging narratives. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the data indicate that most students agree that comic strips feature characters and stories that resonate with them. This reflects the widespread belief among students that the characters and their experiences in comic strips are relevant and enjoyable, thus making the reading experience more engaging. The responses in the "Agree" category strongly suggest that the characters' personalities, emotions, and storylines play a crucial role in making comic strips appealing. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.68 further reinforces the consistency of these responses, indicating that students across the board find the characters and stories in comic strips to be an essential factor in their enjoyment and engagement with the material.

The high level of relatability in comic strips can be attributed to the way they present characters and situations that students can easily relate to. In many cases, comic strips feature characters who face challenges, express emotions, or encounter experiences that are familiar to the students' own lives. Whether it's a character dealing with school issues, friendships, or personal growth, students often see themselves in the characters and can connect with their struggles and triumphs. This relatability helps students feel more engaged with the material, as they are not just reading a story—they are actively identifying with the characters and their experiences. The illustrations also serve to emphasize the emotions of the characters, making it easier for students to empathize with them. This emotional connection enhances students' enjoyment of the story and motivates them to continue reading.

The appeal of the characters and stories is also enhanced by the dynamic nature of comic strips. The visual format allows for expressive illustrations that capture the characters' actions, emotions, and interactions in a vivid and engaging way. This visual representation makes the story more captivating and adds depth to the narrative. Characters in comic strips often have distinctive personalities, and their visual portrayal through facial expressions, body language, and other artistic details helps students understand their motivations and emotions more clearly. These elements make the characters more memorable and relatable, which in turn increases students' engagement with the story. The results show that students are drawn to the characters and their stories, which play a significant role in making comic strips an appealing format for reading.

Despite the overall positive feedback, a small proportion of students expressed that they did not find the characters or stories in comic strips as relatable or appealing, as indicated by the responses in the "Disagree" category. These students may have different tastes or interests, which could influence how they relate to the characters or stories presented in the comics. For example, some students might prefer stories that are more serious or complex, while others might find the humor or simplicity of comic strips less engaging. The variability in responses highlights the importance of considering individual differences in students' interests and preferences when selecting reading materials. While comic strips are highly appealing for many students, they may not be as effective in engaging those who have different reading preferences or those who prefer more traditional or text-heavy books.

Previous studies have highlighted the impact of relatable characters and engaging narratives on students' reading experiences. Studies claim that when students are able to relate to the characters in a story, they are more likely to engage with the material and enjoy the reading process (Dugger, Anderson, & Miller, 2021). Research suggests that characters who reflect students' own experiences, emotions, or challenges make the reading more meaningful and enjoyable. This is particularly true for younger readers, who are still in the process of developing empathy and understanding different perspectives. By using characters that

students can identify with, comic strips effectively enhance students' emotional engagement with the material, which is crucial for fostering a positive attitude toward reading. The findings of this study support these claims, as the relatable characters in comic strips were found to significantly contribute to students' enjoyment and engagement in reading.

Furthermore, previous research has emphasized the importance of appealing storylines in increasing students' interest in reading. Studies have found that stories that are fun, exciting, and emotionally engaging motivate students to continue reading and explore new materials (Manurung, Saputra, & Oktaviani, 2024). Researchers have noted that when students find the storylines in a reading material appealing, they are more likely to stay engaged and participate in classroom discussions or activities related to the text. The results from this study are consistent with these findings, as students indicated that the appealing characters and storylines in comic strips played a crucial role in maintaining their interest and enhancing their overall reading experience (Apostolou & Linardatos, 2023). This underscores the importance of selecting reading materials that are not only educational but also enjoyable and engaging for students. However, despite the overall positive impact of comic strips, there are limitations to this study that should be acknowledged. While most students found the characters and stories relatable and appealing, the variability in responses suggests that comic strips may not resonate with all learners. Factors such as personal preferences, cultural background, and reading habits can influence how students relate to the characters and stories in comic strips. Additionally, the specific comic strips used in this study may not have appealed to all students equally. Future research could explore how different genres of comics or themes in the stories affect students' engagement and whether some genres (e.g., adventure, humor, fantasy) are more universally appealing than others. Expanding the range of comic strips used in studies could provide a more nuanced understanding of how different types of characters and stories influence students' interest in reading.

To enhance the use of comic strips in fostering relatability and appeal, teachers could select comics that reflect students' interests, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences. By incorporating a variety of comics that cover diverse themes—such as friendship, school life, family dynamics, and personal challenges—teachers can ensure that students find characters and stories they can relate to. Furthermore, teachers could involve students in the process of selecting comic strips or even creating their own comics, allowing them to bring their personal experiences and creativity into the reading process.

- *Preference Compared to Traditional Reading Materials*

The results for preference compared to traditional reading materials show that comic strips are generally preferred by Grade 4 pupils over more traditional reading formats. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the majority of students expressed a preference for comic strips, indicating that they find them more engaging and enjoyable than conventional text-heavy books. This suggests that the visual

appeal of comic strips, combined with the concise and interactive nature of the text, makes them a more attractive option for young learners. The responses overwhelmingly fall into the "Agree" category, reflecting the students' positive view of comic strips as a preferred format for reading activities. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.67 further supports this interpretation, showing that the preference for comic strips is consistent across the majority of students, without much variation in how students feel about the format.

One of the key reasons comic strips are preferred over traditional reading materials is the visual nature of the format. For many young readers, especially those in Grade 4, traditional books with lengthy paragraphs and dense text can be overwhelming or less appealing. Comic strips, with their combination of colorful illustrations and shorter, more digestible text, provide an easier and more enjoyable reading experience. The visuals help break up the text, making it less intimidating and more accessible. This format allows students to engage with the material in a way that feels more interactive and dynamic compared to reading a traditional book. The students' preference for comic strips reflects a broader trend where visual formats are more engaging and stimulating for young readers, especially those still developing their reading skills. Furthermore, the brevity and straightforward nature of comic strips make them an ideal format for maintaining students' attention.

Despite the overwhelming preference for comic strips, a small percentage of students indicated that they still prefer traditional reading materials, as shown in the "Disagree" category. These students may find traditional books more appealing due to their familiarity or personal preference for longer, more detailed narratives. For some students, traditional reading materials might provide a deeper sense of immersion and complexity that comic strips, with their more simplified plots and limited text, may not offer.

Previous studies have shown that young readers often have a stronger preference for visual materials like comic strips over traditional texts. Studies claim that visual texts are more engaging and easier to process, particularly for students who may struggle with reading dense text. Research suggests that comic strips, due to their combination of visuals and concise text, capture students' attention more effectively than traditional reading materials, which can feel overwhelming or disengaging for young learners (Anggito & Sartono, 2022). The findings of this study align with these claims, as comic strips were found to be more preferred by students than traditional books, supporting the idea that visual aids help foster a more engaging and enjoyable reading experience for children. Moreover, studies have demonstrated that when students are provided with a variety of reading formats, such as comic strips alongside traditional books, they develop a broader interest in reading. Researchers state that offering a mix of visual and textual reading materials helps cater to diverse learning preferences and keeps students engaged. The preference for comic strips, as shown in the current study, supports the idea that students benefit from having multiple types of reading materials available to them. By incorporating

comics into the reading curriculum, educators can diversify the types of reading experiences students encounter, which not only increases their interest in reading but also promotes a more comprehensive approach to literacy development.

However, there are limitations to this study that should be considered. While the overall preference for comic strips is clear, the variability in responses indicates that individual learning preferences play a significant role in shaping students' attitudes toward reading materials. Some students may prefer more traditional books because they are more familiar with them or because they offer a different reading experience that comics do not. Additionally, the study focused on a specific grade level, and preferences for comic strips may vary across different age groups or developmental stages. Further research could explore whether the preference for comic strips holds true for older or younger students and whether their engagement with comic strips changes as their reading skills develop.

To enhance the integration of comic strips in reading instruction, teachers could consider offering a mix of both comic strips and traditional texts, allowing students to explore different formats and discover which works best for them. By providing a variety of reading materials that cater to diverse learning styles, teachers can ensure that all students remain engaged and motivated to read. Additionally, teachers could create opportunities for students to discuss and compare comic strips with traditional texts, helping them analyze the different ways stories are told across formats. This approach would not only support students' preferences but also enhance their overall reading experience, fostering a well-rounded and enjoyable relationship with reading. By offering a variety of reading formats and encouraging discussion, educators can help students develop a deeper appreciation for both comic strips and traditional reading materials.

- *Willingness to Use Comic Strips Regularly*

The results for willingness to use comic strips regularly indicate that Grade 4 pupils are generally open to incorporating comic strips into their routine reading activities. With a weighted mean of 3.34, the data suggest that most students are willing to use comic strips as a regular part of their reading experiences. The responses predominantly fall into the "Agree" category, demonstrating that comic strips are seen as an enjoyable and valuable tool for reading. This outcome reflects a strong positive attitude toward the use of comic strips, as students expressed a consistent willingness to engage with them regularly. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.67 further suggests that there is minimal variation in how students view the idea of using comic strips regularly, reinforcing the notion that the majority of students find them appealing and beneficial for ongoing reading practice.

One of the main reasons students expressed a willingness to use comic strips regularly is their engaging nature. Comic strips, with their colorful visuals, dynamic characters, and concise narratives, offer an exciting alternative to traditional reading materials. The visual appeal of comic strips draws students in, making the reading

experience more enjoyable and less intimidating than longer, text-heavy books. For young learners, especially those in Grade 4, comic strips provide an interactive and accessible way to practice reading skills. Their brevity allows students to feel a sense of accomplishment after completing a reading task, which further enhances their motivation to engage in regular reading. These factors likely contribute to the high level of willingness among students to use comic strips regularly in their reading activities.

Furthermore, the results suggest that comic strips' ability to break down complex ideas into manageable segments makes them an attractive choice for regular use. The format of comic strips, which combines both visual and textual elements, makes it easier for students to follow the story and understand key concepts. The clear and concise nature of comic strips allows students to engage with the material without feeling overwhelmed, which can be particularly important for struggling readers. The fact that comic strips are perceived as an enjoyable and accessible way to practice reading reinforces the students' willingness to incorporate them into their regular reading activities. The positive response from students indicates that they see comic strips not only as a fun way to read but also as a helpful tool in improving their literacy skills.

While the majority of students expressed a desire to use comic strips regularly, a small proportion of responses in the "Disagree" category suggests that some students are less enthusiastic about the idea. These students may prefer more traditional forms of reading, such as novels or chapter books, that provide a more in-depth exploration of characters and storylines. Some students may also feel that comic strips, with their brief and often simplified narratives, lack the complexity and depth they enjoy in longer reading materials. Additionally, students who are less visually oriented may not find the image-based storytelling as engaging, which could affect their willingness to use comic strips regularly. The variability in responses indicates that, while comic strips are effective and appealing for many students, they may not be universally preferred by all learners, particularly those who favor more text-based forms of reading.

Previous studies have consistently supported the idea that comic strips can foster greater interest and engagement in reading, making students more willing to read regularly. Studies claim that the combination of text and images in comic strips makes reading more appealing, especially for reluctant readers. Research indicates that when students enjoy the reading material, they are more likely to engage with it regularly, leading to better reading habits over time. The results of this study align with these claims, as students expressed a strong interest in using comic strips as part of their regular reading activities (Anggito & Sartono, 2022).

The engaging nature of comic strips, which combines visual stimulation with narrative structure, makes them an effective tool for encouraging ongoing reading habits. Moreover, researchers from previous studies have found that comic strips offer an accessible format for improving literacy, particularly for young readers who may struggle with more

traditional texts. Studies suggest that comics provide a low-stakes entry point into reading, where students can practice their skills without feeling overwhelmed by long passages of text (Sukma & Setyasto, 2024). The visual elements in comic strips support comprehension by offering additional context for understanding the story, which can be especially beneficial for students with lower reading proficiency. These findings align with the results of this study, where students indicated a strong willingness to use comic strips regularly as a way to engage in reading without the challenges that longer texts might present. However, there are limitations to this study that should be acknowledged. While the overall response suggests a high level of willingness to use comic strips regularly, the variability in student preferences suggests that the effectiveness of this tool may depend on individual interests and learning styles. Some students may prefer more traditional forms of reading, particularly those who enjoy deeper narratives or complex storylines. Furthermore, the types of comic strips used in this study may have influenced the students' willingness to use them regularly. Comics with different genres or themes may appeal more to certain students, and future research could explore the impact of genre and content on students' willingness to read comic strips regularly.

To make comic strips an even more effective and regular part of students' reading experiences, teachers could offer a variety of comic strips that appeal to different interests and reading levels. By providing students with comic strips on topics they are passionate about—such as sports, fantasy, or real-world adventures—teachers can increase engagement and motivate students to read more regularly. Additionally, incorporating comic strips into a broader reading curriculum that includes diverse materials such as books, graphic novels, and online content can ensure that all students remain engaged with reading. Teachers could also encourage students to create their own comic strips as part of a creative writing activity, further fostering a sense of ownership and engagement in their reading practice. By incorporating comic strips strategically and offering diverse options, educators can promote regular reading habits and help students develop a deeper love for reading.

#### ➤ *Challenges Faced by Teachers in Integrating Comic Strips into Reading Instruction*

The results for challenges faced by teachers in integrating comic strips into reading instruction reveal several barriers that educators experience when trying to incorporate comics into their teaching practices. The weighted mean of 3.13 indicates that teachers generally acknowledge the usefulness of comic strips, but they also face significant challenges when trying to integrate them into their reading lessons. The responses in the "Agree" category suggest that while teachers recognize the potential benefits of comic strips in enhancing reading comprehension, they are also confronted with practical difficulties in making comics a consistent part of their teaching strategy.

The standard deviation of 0.81 shows that these challenges are widely recognized across the sample, with little variation in the types of difficulties faced, indicating a

consensus among teachers regarding the obstacles in utilizing comic strips effectively.

One of the main challenges identified by teachers is the difficulty in selecting appropriate comic strips that align with the learning objectives. Teachers often find it challenging to find comics that are not only engaging but also educational and aligned with the curriculum. The process of selecting suitable comics requires a careful balance between ensuring that the content is age-appropriate, relatable, and relevant to the lesson objectives. This can be particularly difficult given the vast range of comic strip genres and themes, which may not always match the subject matter of the reading lesson. Moreover, some comics may present cultural or language issues that make them less suitable for diverse classrooms. As a result, teachers are left with the difficult task of either creating their own comics or searching for existing ones that fit within specific academic goals, which can be time-consuming and resource-intensive. Another challenge highlighted in the results is the time required for preparation and adaptation. Teachers often face time constraints in their lesson planning, and incorporating comic strips into reading instruction requires additional effort. Preparing comic strips for classroom use may involve modifying the comics to fit the lesson context, such as adding questions, discussion points, or additional materials to reinforce comprehension. Teachers may also need to adjust the difficulty level of the comics to suit the reading proficiency of their students. This extra workload can be overwhelming, especially for teachers already managing a full curriculum.

Additionally, adapting comic strips for classroom use may require technical skills, such as using digital tools to create or modify comics, which may not be readily available in every classroom.

The difficulty in assessing students' understanding of comic strips is also a significant challenge identified by teachers. While comic strips can be engaging, they often require a level of interpretation that goes beyond recalling explicit facts. This makes it difficult for teachers to accurately assess whether students truly understand the content or are simply making surface-level inferences based on the visuals. Teachers may struggle to create effective assessments that measure both comprehension and interpretive skills when using comics as a primary teaching tool. For example, determining whether students grasp the deeper meanings or themes of the comic strip can be challenging, as comics often leave room for interpretation. This makes it harder to assess the true educational impact of comic strips and their ability to support critical thinking and comprehension skills.

Furthermore, some teachers face resistance from students who may not be as receptive to comic strips as others. While many students enjoy comic strips, others may feel that they are not a serious form of reading material or may be reluctant to engage with comics due to personal preferences. Some students may prefer traditional text-based materials, which they view as more challenging or intellectually stimulating. This can create difficulties in the classroom, as teachers may find it challenging to encourage

full participation from all students in activities involving comic strips. Additionally, some students may struggle with interpreting the visual cues in the comics, which can hinder their understanding and engagement with the material. This reluctance to embrace comic strips could pose a barrier to their effective integration into the reading curriculum.

Previous studies have identified similar challenges when integrating comic strips into classroom instruction. Studies claim that selecting appropriate comics for educational purposes can be a time-consuming and difficult task for teachers (Kaharuddin, 2021). Researchers have found that while comic strips are highly engaging, teachers often struggle to find comics that are both educational and aligned with curricular goals. This is particularly true when trying to find comics that address complex academic topics in a way that is both accessible and engaging for students.

Research also highlights the challenge of assessing students' comprehension when using comic strips. Studies have shown that while comic strips can enhance engagement, they also present unique challenges when it comes to assessing deeper levels of understanding (Mahmudah & Nurhanifansyah, 2024). Researchers state that assessing comprehension in comic strips often requires teachers to move beyond literal questions and incorporate more interpretive and analytical tasks. This is consistent with the challenges reported by teachers in this study, who indicated that assessing students' understanding of the material presented in comic strips can be difficult. The need for more complex and nuanced assessments when using comic strips is a common issue highlighted in the literature on visual learning tools.

Despite these challenges, there are several strategies that teachers can use to overcome these barriers. One solution is for teachers to collaborate and share resources, such as finding or creating comic strips that align with the curriculum. Schools could also provide professional development to help teachers build skills in selecting, adapting, and assessing comic strips in their teaching practices. By investing in resources and training, teachers can become more efficient in incorporating comic strips into their lessons. Additionally, encouraging student feedback on the types of comics they enjoy and find engaging can help teachers make better choices when selecting materials. Teachers can also address resistance by introducing comic strips gradually and explaining their educational benefits to students. Through these strategies, teachers can mitigate the challenges they face and more effectively integrate comic strips into their reading instruction.

To further improve the use of comic strips in the classroom, teachers could focus on activities that allow students to engage more deeply with the content. For example, teachers could use comic strips as a starting point for group discussions, where students analyze the characters' emotions, motivations, and decisions. Teachers could also assign creative projects, such as having students create their own comics based on the lessons learned in class, to reinforce comprehension and critical thinking. By using comic strips as

a tool for interactive and collaborative learning, teachers can enhance their students' reading comprehension while making the process enjoyable and accessible. With the right strategies and support, teachers can effectively overcome the challenges of integrating comic strips into reading instruction, making them a valuable resource for fostering a love of reading and enhancing literacy skills.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of this study reflect the insights drawn from the findings and offer a final synthesis of the overall impact of using comic strips in reading instruction for Grade 4 pupils. Based on the key results, the conclusions emphasize the effectiveness of comic strips in enhancing reading comprehension, engagement, and motivation, as well as the challenges teachers face in integrating them into their lessons.

- Comic strips enhance Grade 4 pupils' reading comprehension, especially in sequencing and summarizing texts.
- Comic strips effectively boost pupils' motivation and engagement, sustaining attention and enjoyment during reading activities.
- Pupils favor comic strips as accessible, engaging, and preferable tools for reading instruction.
- Teachers face notable challenges in integrating comics, highlighting the need for targeted support and resources.
- A capacity-building activity plan is essential to guide teachers with strategies for sustainable comic-based reading instruction.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made to further enhance the use of comic strips in reading instruction for Grade 4 pupils:

- Comic strips be used by teachers with guided text-based activities (e.g., main idea mapping worksheets) to strengthen pupils' ability to identify central themes while benefiting from comics' strengths in sequencing and summarizing.
- Encourage Schools to integrate comics regularly into reading lessons and independent reading programs to sustain pupils' attention and enjoyment, making literacy activities more engaging and participatory.
- Educators to select culturally relevant and age-appropriate comics that reflect pupils' interests and experiences, ensuring comics remain relatable and appealing as instructional tools.
- Capacity-building programs be provided to teachers with ready-to-use comic resources, assessment rubrics, and lesson exemplars to reduce preparation time and address alignment and evaluation difficulties.
- A structured training program with workshops, collaborative lesson design, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions should be institutionalized to equip teachers with innovative strategies and sustain the integration of comics into reading instruction.
- Future researchers are encouraged to conduct the following research titles:

- ✓ “Enhancing Reading Comprehension through Comic Strips: An Analysis of Grade 4 Pupils' Literacy Outcomes.”
- ✓ “Comic Strips as Catalysts for Motivation and Engagement in Reading Instruction: A Classroom-Based Study.”
- ✓ “Innovative Strategies for Integrating Comic Strips into Reading Instruction: A Capacity-Building Framework for Teachers.”

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