

## INTRODUCTION

The word manga originates from the combination of two Chinese characters, 漫 (man) and 画 (hua), which if we translate it, it means “irresponsible drawing” in Japanese. Based on current interpretation, the term “manga” refers to comics or graphic novels that originated from Japan. Today’s manga is written in any of the four modern Japanese scripts: hiragana, katakana, kanji, and romaji (Casey, 2016). Its narrative can be compared to Western novels or comics in that they portray detailed human tragedies, and its pictures are typically rendered in black and white (Toku, 2001). Manga usually contains different genres, just like novels in general. However, in contrast to American children’s comics, manga are meant for an adult audience as well as youngsters. Stories in it cover a wide range of significant themes, such as feminism, bullying, friendship, and heroism. Manga gives a unique reading experience through the combination of verbal and visual aspects to explore how its characters manage relationship dynamics, social expectations, and personal struggles in order to build a sense of self. Characters in it frequently undergo changes as they grow, mirroring the process of identity formation and self-discovery. Manga is therefore a valuable resource for studying how identity is created in response to internal and external influences.

*Jujutsu Kaisen 0* (2021) is one manga that provides readers with the previously mentioned elements. It is a manga written by Gege Akutami. The world *Jujutsu Kaisen 0* (2021) presents to the reader is one in which a number of dominating curses have been created from negative human emotions, and Jujutsu sorcery has been relied on to both eliminate and save mankind from the menace of curses. In the prequel series, *Jujutsu Kaisen 0* (2021), Yuta Okkotsu makes an appearance as a main character. This manga starts with a scene of Yuta being bullied by his classmates. The bullying was stopped by Rika Orimoto, Yuta’s childhood friend who turned into a terrible curse after her death several years ago. The curse caused Rika to keep following Yuta wherever he went intending to protect him. However, even though her intentions were good, over time it turned out to be a disaster for the people around Yuta. Finally, Yuta decided to transfer to Jujutsu High School, a special school for

people who can see, fight, and even control curses.

In *Jujutsu Kaisen 0* (2021), Yuta's journey as a sorcerer at Jujutsu High and his relationships with other characters are described as significant development moments that support the growth of a sense of self and belonging in the jujutsu community. According to Tajfel & Turner (1979), both interpersonal and intergroup interactions have an impact on a person's identity or sense of self. It means that a person's interactions with both their in-group and out-group influenced the person's identity. It is possible for certain people to interact with others more than they interact with their own groups or vice versa. An individual's socially constructed interpersonal-intergroup continuum can be located with the use of the social identity theory.

In addition to that, Yuta underwent a number of transformations and journeys, such as being called to adventure, facing challenges, and coming to terms with his identity, and these all embody three of the stages identified in hero's journey theory by Campbell (1949). The hero's journey, also known as the monomyth, comprises stages that are divided into three main sections: separation or departure, initiation, and return, as stated by Campbell (1949). Some of these stages include the call to adventure, where the hero departs from their normal world; the road of trials, in which the hero encounters a number of obstacles; and the return,, in which the hero combines their newfound knowledge and skills with their previous world, symbolizing the journey of the hero of self-discovery. The stages similarly depicts Yuta Okkotsu's journey, supporting this notion by showing how he faces obstacles, which serve to highlight the universal hero story that characterizes most hero stories.

Although Yuta Okkotsu's strength originates from the curse of his childhood friend rather than from himself, he is nevertheless recognized as a hero. According to Campbell (1949), a hero leaves the everyday world and enters a realm of supernatural wonder, encounters extraordinary powers and wins a decisive victory, before finally returning from the adventure with the ability to bestow blessings on other people. This statement additionally corresponds with Yuta's journey, in which he started out as an ordinary student before stepping outside of it to become a jujutsu sorcerer at

Jujutsu High School. He finally gained and controlled his power, and eventually defeated a villain who was stronger than him.

According to Salvador Minuchin, quoted in Resnik (2017), individual identity consists of both a sense of separateness and a sense of belonging. These two contrasting dynamics of identity development serve as the foundation for the hero's journey. The hero must venture away from their family in order to discover who they are, and they must also return to their world in order to maintain their identity during the journey. They gain the courage to ultimately return as a helper because of the separation. In the process, they would transform themselves, not just for the sake of people around them, but also for themselves (Resnik, 2017). This combines the ideas of identity formation and the hero's journey theory, in which the heroic character sets out on a journey of discovering themselves.