

CINEMATHERAPY: GOING BEYOND BOOKS, ENGAGING VIDEO CONTENTS AS INTERVENTION ON MORAL DECADENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG GENERATION Z

Owolabi, Sola Ph.D.

Centre for Learning Resources

Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State

sola.prince.owolabi2@gmail.com ; owolabi.sola@lmu.edu.ng

+2348062917955

Idiegbeyan-ose, Jerome Ph.D

Polytechnic Librarian, Federal Polytechnic, Ile-Oluji, Ondo State

+2347068185190, +2348055648704

jidiegbeyanose@gmail.com

Iyare, Christopher Abraham

Elizade University, Ilara Mokin, Ondo State

abraham.chistopher@elizadeuniversity.edu.ng ; christopherabraham99@mail.com

Suliman, Abiola Moyosore

Fatiu Akesode Library, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos

biola1000@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Generation Z is inclined towards technology. Precisely, the media allures the 21st century youth and they are positively disposed to media contents. The proliferation of toxic media contents occasioned by the internet and social media poses a challenge to the Generation Z and this has led to issues bothering on moral decadence. Cinematherapy as an intervention has been presented in this paper with specific focus on improving emotional intelligence of youths. Guidelines to administering cinematherapy are also presented. There are recommendations on the review of collection development policy to cater for subscription of video contents; proactive approaches by librarians; and constant self-development.

Keywords: Cinematherapy, Generation Z, Emotional Intelligence, Post Millennials, Media

INTRODUCTION

Development is all-encompassing as human development is not only characterized by technological and economic development alone but social advancement which has a lot to do with moral stability. No matter how well a society has developed in terms of technology, infrastructure and economy, if morality is not given attention, the tendency for such society to collapse could be very high. The library which serves as the point of convergence for all human ideas, projections and inventions has a major role to play in ensuring infusion of sound morals and ethics that could guarantee social stability.

Asserting the importance of library to societal development, Mohammed (2015) pointed out that the library is paramount in educating the society. The library is most needed at this period when youths are faced with several issues that could corrupt their sense of morality. For instance, same sex marriage was legalized in some states in America in 2015 under the administration of President Barack Obama (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). The influence of this on the youth in Nigeria was immediate due to proliferation of content creators and social media influencers on the internet. Uncontrolled access to these platforms constitutes great challenge to youths who are referred to as Generation Z.

The term 'Generation Z' is used for children born around the year 2000 (the millennium). They possess certain characteristics that distinguish them from earlier generations such as Baby Boomers that were born after the second World War; the Generation X that was born in the late 60s and early 70s; the Generation Y that was born in the 80s and 90s. The Generation Z has peculiar characteristics that set them apart from the previous generations that have some forms of similarities (Singh, A. P., & Dangmei, J., 2016). The generation is referred to as Digital Natives, Post Millennials, iGeneration, Net generation, Facebook Generation and several other coined names. The birth of this category of persons took place around the millennium; they are not familiar with the world lacking internet; they are high users of internet and social media; they connect globally; they are multicultural, flexible and smart; they communicate mostly through social media; they consume and provide information; they are highly mobile; they multitask; and they are quick at making decisions.

GENERATION Z AND CHALLENGES

Some of the challenges confronting the Generation Z as found by Annamária Tari (2011) are paraphrased below:

Generation Z does not enjoy closely knitted family relationships like the previous generations due to physical separation caused by information and communication technologies; they have low emotional intelligence despite the fact that they are smart; they are losing capacity to memorize due to overdependence on apps that do several brain works for them; they are egoistical and competitive due to exposure to social media; they are fast losing empathy and sense of morality due to virtual games and TV shows; they esteem opinion of the peers above parental advice; visual reasoning has become foremost against creativity and imagination; they suffer from sleep deprivation because they are getting addicted to social media platforms; they are losing values while enjoying popularity and glamour; they respect opinions and lifestyles of celebrities and stars as their idols; they are attracted to new forms of relationships and sexuality; they prefer fast approach to education, lacking patience for rudiments (Petry, 2014).

Generation Z is also in an era where the issue of transgender is high. They are confronted by the need to make choices of gender against the norm that recognizes male and female which did not require making choices (Twenge, 2017). The rate at which they receive information (negative and positive) is very high. Atrocities of militants, fundamentalists, robbers that are captured through phones are circulated through social media tools. Witnessing live events such as this could affect them psychologically. Washburn (2016) pointed out the negative and positive

imports of access to social media tools. Reference was made to Shawnee Park mass shooting that was recorded live and shown on Facebook. The positive side of it is that it alerted police and the community of the happenings, it however had negative effect on underage and hypertensive persons that witnessed the live broadcast. It is also dangerous in the sense that constant viewing of such events could make individuals lose sense of empathy.

EVIDENCES OF MORAL DECADENCE AMONG GENERATION Z

Arguments subsist that modernization plays a major role in decadence of morality among youths in the twenty-first century. Kenyatta (2015) argued that doing away with African traditions and cultures with high morals tend to reflect in the language, dressing and general disposition to humans. A study by Ibrahim (2018) rated certain features as evidences of moral decadence among undergraduates in Nigerian institutions. The table below shows the rating.

S/N	Types of moral decadence	Mean	Rank
1	Lack of respect for constituted authority	3.67	1st
2	Truancy	3.60	2 nd
3	Examination malpractices	3.55	3 rd
4	Sexual harassment	3.36	4 th
5	Indecent dressing	3.34	5 th
6	Reckless display of wealth	3.32	6 th
7	Bribing lecturers with money and gifts for mark	3.30	7 th
8	Searching for examination questions ('expo')	3.26	8 th
9	Illegal payment to secure admission	3.24	9th
10	Thuggery	3.20	10th
11	Plagiarizing other students' projects	3.10	11th
12	Stealing	2.98	12th
13	Bullying	2.96	13th
14	Arrogance	2.94	14th
15	Alcoholism	2.92	15th
16	Drug Abuse	2.88	16 th
17	Fetish practice	2.70	17 th
18	Forgery	2.60	18h
19	Rape	2.57	19 th
20	Illegal possession of dangerous weapons	2.55	20 th

Source: Ibrahim (2018).

According to the table above, lack of respect for constituted authority ranks highest. The fact that persons constituting Generation Z has been exposed to several cultures that might have corrupted their thinking; parental guidance may be lacking; and they might have seen the so called adults involved in certain malpractices and corruption that could make the youths to disrespect them and other adults. Whatever the case may be, it is evident that Generation Z is in a state that requires intervention. Reckless display of wealth is rated 6th on the table above, and this is attributed to ill-gotten wealth by youngsters that engage in fraudulent online dealings. This reckless display of wealth appears to be infectious going by several reports on youths going into ritual killings for wealth (Ibrahim, 2018).

Studies on demographic characteristics of persons perpetrating kidnapping activities have revealed that youths constitute appreciable number (Unchenna, 2014). Collecting ransom is one of the major aims of kidnapping and youths have focused on this especially when the western people they used to swindle have also developed approaches to identify swindlers (Obarisiagbon and Aderinto, 2018).

CINEMATHERAPY AND DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Youths require emotional intelligence to integrate properly into the society and positively make contributions. According to Ali (2017), Cinema-therapy is a veritable tool to build emotional intelligence of adolescents. If Generation Z could be well groomed in the quadrants of emotional intelligence, several character deficiencies leading to erosion of morals would be better curtailed. Majority of issues surrounding challenges encountered by youths could be solved through mastering the four quadrants of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management (Soltani, Shahsavari, and Moradi, 2014).

Self-awareness as an indicator of emotional intelligence is a state of realization of one's capabilities, limitations, tendencies and general disposition to life. It is a key component of emotional intelligence. Self-regulation is concerned with gaining control of reactions to situations; coming to realization that one has no control over circumstances but it is possible to control self in responding to situations. Motivation is the essence of every action. It is the propeller of every action. Motivation could be intrinsic or extrinsic. Young adults could be motivated to embrace positive behaviours when they are properly engaged through Cinematherapy. Another indicator of emotional intelligence is empathy. This is needed by Generation Z because it has to do with feeling for others; putting oneself in the shoes of others.

Cinematherapy could be used as an intervention for moral decadence as the indicators follow strategic patterns that could be used to measure the process of change being encountered by individuals through the treatment. The four indicators of Cinematherapy are identification, catharsis, insight and application. Identification occurs when individuals realize through characters in a story that their situations are not peculiar to them alone, others experience same. It could be comforting that there are persons that have been subjected to similar challenges and could surmount them. For instance, a child that does not understand mathematics sees the story of another child that experiences same but is developing capacity to meet up with the challenge. Catharsis involves connecting emotionally with happenings in a story. Persons being treated with Cinematherapy can relate challenges to events and characters and let out emotions. At this point, individuals can begin to have the hope on the possibility of changing their situations to the desired point. Insight is the point of realization of the possibility of applying lessons learnt from the story. Willingness to take practical steps towards application of the lessons to the current challenges. Application is the final stage that has to do with practical steps involved ensuring that the same result achieved in the story is repeated by persons going through the treatment. Application stage is a sensitive stage that involves assistance from therapists. The decision of the client is also very important.

The five components of emotional intelligence proposed by Goldman appear to be most suitable for the Generation Z. These could be developed using Cinematherapy. They are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (MindTools 2020).

- **Self-awareness and Cinematherapy:** the first quadrant of emotional intelligence is self-awareness and it has to do with coming to terms with self. It has three indicators which are emotional self-awareness, accurate self-awareness and self-confidence. Self-awareness is becoming complicated to Generation Z due to myriad of information they are bombarded with on social media and other platforms on the internet. Self-awareness on its own has three indicators which are emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence. It appears the 21st century youths have lots of confusion in understanding who they are due to the fact that the process of self-awareness, self-assessment and self-confidence have been interrupted by toxic media contents.
- **Self-regulation:** No change takes effect in any individual without the capacity for self-regulation. The pivot for behavioural change is self-regulation as noted by Baumeister and Vohs (2007). One of the major challenges of Generation Z appears to be self-regulation. It has been found that youths find it hard to control media addiction. They have tendency to be controlled by social media and they find it challenging to resist the influence of peer pressure (Ozkan and Solmaz, 2015). Therapists could use videos that have to do with self-regulation to address issues relating to self-regulation. Behavioural change is possible when assistance is rendered to clients using cinematherapy.
- **Motivation and Cinematherapy:** Intrinsic motivation is key to change and development of positive attitude. To develop this, Generation Z could be introduced to videos that would assist them. One of such is the movie titled the Three Idiots. The movie covers several aspects of youth development. One of such is motivation. Resilience and optimism are key components of motivation displayed in the movie. Identifying with a character in a story could help a client to become resolute in achieving a target such as overcoming social media addiction through determination. Extrinsic and intrinsic types of motivation are needed.
- **Empathy:** Putting oneself in other people's shoes to understand their feelings is sometimes not easy especially when upbringing of an individual does not give room to moral development. Exposure to violent movies and other toxic media contents may have dulled the sense of empathy among youths. It may therefore be required to use Cinematherapy to change their orientation. Social sensitivity of youths could be improved through Cinematherapy as opined by Blasco, Moreto and Pessini (2019).
- **Social Skills and Cinematherapy**
High level of social skill is needed by Generation Z in order to understand the people, environment and events. Social awareness has to do with empathizing with others by understanding how their general backgrounds, experiences and cultures influence them. For instance the Xenophobia issue that took place in South Africa might not have taken place if the perpetrators have high level of social awareness by empathizing with people

who were foreigners. It has been argued that prejudice could stem from persons with less emotional intelligence (Makwana, Dhont, García-Sancho and Fernández-Berrocal, 2021). Social violence, violation of moral conducts and other antisocial behaviours have been traced to persons that have low emotional intelligence by Brackett, Bailey, Hoffmann and Simmons (2019). Emotional intelligence involves mastering social and ethical norms for behaviour, recognizing community resources, family and institutions (Gehlbach, Young and Roan, 2012).

ENGAGING CINEMATHERAPY AS INTERVENTION

Consciously and systematically engaging media contents (movies, documentaries, interviews, story-telling, and discussions) by professionals to address challenges suffered by individuals is referred to as cinematherapy. It is an offshoot of bibliotherapy which engages books and other visual documents to perform same function. Five components have been proposed by Daniel Goleman as indicators of emotional intelligence. They are known as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (MindTools 2020). Russell and Waters (2014) explained that cinematherapy could be used for development of positive character among youths. The need to engage media and cinema to impart knowledge that could propel positive character traits have been advocated (Plotnikova, 2019). Much more Generation Z appears to be gravitating towards the media. Although there are arguments that human behaviour is not easily changed, movies however appear to appeal to imagination of viewers. Use of gun, smoking, drinking and other violent behaviours has been popularized by media over the years.

There have been arguments that youngsters are emotionally connected to media and whatever is projected through media usually attracts them. This explains the reason for their susceptibility to manifesting behaviours that is predominant in the movies projected to them. Also using positive media contents could help them emulate positive character, thereby embracing morals (McClintock; 2015). Well censored good stories could be put together to help students overcome tendencies to manifest some antisocial characters. There are movies that portray good and bad characters at the same time and they tend to create more harm than good. For instance, a movie is designed to project the dangers of prostitution but characters portraying the harlots may be too graphical to the point of stimulating young ones to want to explore sex. Due to these tendencies, videos to be used for cinematherapy are usually presented for censorship.

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING CINEMATHERAPY

Cinematherapy administration has guidelines which should be followed to have maximum positive outcome. These are instructions that could help therapists facilitate smooth cinematherapy sessions with several individuals with different types of cases. They are presented as follows:

- **Explain what cinematherapy entails and develop the interest of the client before recommendation is made.** When clients understand the concept of cinematherapy and the benefits, they may be propelled to subscribe to it.

- **Confirm the willingness of the client:** It is not every client that may be interested in the use of cinematherapy. There is the need for consent from the clients before the recommendation is made.
- **Familiarize with the video:** The therapist is expected to have seen and understood the video and the nitty-gritties before exposing the client to it. Care must be taken to avoid dissemination of unwanted and unnecessary details. There are movies that are intended to address violence but end up displaying violence to admiration of the viewers. The ability of the therapist to strictly adhere to guidelines before exposing clients to videos is very important. It is recommended that the therapist see the video at least two times to have the details.
- **Do a briefing for anticipation:** It is expedient to stimulate the appetite of the client before the video is presented. The therapist is not expected to tell the story in detail but to stir the interest of the client either by watching the trailer together or share it by the word of mouth. Also, it is important to let the client to know that the video is fiction or true life story acted. Some clients are highly emotional and forget that they are actually watching a 'make believe'.
- **Consider the demographics of clients:** It is important to put the age, education, sex, experience, exposure, status and other related factors into consideration while choosing a video for cinematherapy. When a video or movie is beyond or below the level of the client, the application could be counterproductive.
- **Arrange Discussion Periods with Clients:** A discussion time is required after the client has seen the video. This helps to know if the client has identified with a character that represents the situation the client may be passing through. It is also paramount to know the opinion of the client on the video with reference to ideas expressed, characters and events. The client should be encouraged to express disposition either positive or negative. Care should be taken not to turn the session to interrogation instead of discussion. This is the essence of training in administering cinematherapy. Follow-up discussion is also encouraged to keep the memory of the movie and develop empathy.
- **Avoid cinematherapy constipation:** It is not advisable to recommend so many videos at a time. It can be tasking for some clients while some reduce the video to pleasure viewing for entertainment. Several videos at a time on the same issue may be confusing as individuals have several levels of assimilation. There are however some occasions where multiple videos may be used but this is guided and segmented.

SUGGESTED MOVIES FOR CINEMATHERAPY FOR GENERATION Z

Several videos have been made that could be used for cinematherapy. Some of them address school related issues while some are to promote morals. Some address family issues and there is several that help younger generation to integrate properly into the larger society. Three of the movies that have been seen by the authors are presented below:

Three Idiots

The 2009 movie, *Three Idiots* could be adopted for cinematherapy. According to Sajjad and Nasir (2016), the movie is hinged on authentic education; parental expectations; teacher's attitudes; and peer influences. It was pointed out in the story through humour that rote memorization has no value if understanding of the main subject is not achieved. Education should not be based on certificate acquisition but knowledge transfer. Another featured part in the movie is that of high and inconsiderable expectation from parents. One of the students (Farhan) had passion for photography but the father wanted him to become an engineer. Undue pressure from parents could make a student to cheat to pass or commit suicide when failure is recorded in education. The story also featured teachers' attitude to students. The role of teachers in determining the outcome of students is also paramount. Peer influence in the movie also revealed that students could emulate habits of peers close to them. Positive and negative habits are contagious.

Akeelah and the Bee

In the study done by Wardani and Purwati (2019), it was found that *Akeelah and the Bee* is a reliable resource for young ones to develop resilience, optimism, kindness, friendliness, love, optimism, ambition and resoluteness. Students that are able to develop these characteristics could have the tendency to endure, shun malpractices and other forms of juvenile delinquencies. Despite distractions *Akeelah* could reach her goal. Her environment was not so favourable for her aspirations; nevertheless she maintained focus on her goal. The Generation Z is faced with several issues that could cause distraction but librarians can be intentional about ensuring access to movie documentaries and other video contents that could help them to properly align with expected standard for living.

Gifted Hands

The story of Ben Carson in the 2009 movie, *Gifted Hands* could be referred to as manual for self-development. Angelis, Miranti and Dwiastuty (2019) explained that the timid kid (Ben Carson) grew to become a very confident and successful surgeon. The place of mentoring in development of a child and parental involvement are vividly demonstrated in the movie. The Generation Z requires mentoring to be properly guided in decision making. Ben Carson and his brother were mentored by their mother despite the odds that surrounded them. The mother also represents resilience and focus which are virtues required for success. The story of *Gifted Hands* is in book and movie formats and these afford librarians the opportunity to use them for bibliotherapy and cinematherapy.

LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND CINEMATHERAPY RESOURCES

Collection development as taught in most library schools focuses more on books while other resources such as video collections are taught partially. With the current change around the world, proactive libraries are beginning to incorporate subscription for video contents into their budgets. It has been argued that collection development policy should be reviewed to include subscription to videos for streaming (Hartnett, 2019, Chapter 2). Electronic journals and books have been enjoying some levels of consideration in collection development but there is a need to also focus on videos. Spicer and Horbal (2017) found that students prefer video clips of lessons to replay in order to monitor processes and steps involved in some systems and practices. In the same vein, clients in the library could refer to videos for cinematherapy. Libraries in most

advanced countries have stepped up in reviewing their collection development policies as focus has shifted from acquisition of physical books only to electronic and video resources subscription. As noted by Barnes (2019), several videos for subscription are being produced by Apple and Disney.

CONCLUSION

Librarians as key players in the development of youths that are also referred to as Generation Z are increasingly becoming aware that the media has positive and negative impact on youths. It is also glaring that physical books alone may not be ideal in dealing with challenges confronting Generation Z. They are technology savvy, hence the need to adopt the use of technology to address issues confronting them. Cinematherapy has been presented as an intervention for moral decadence among youths, hence the need for librarians to review collection development to include subscription to video collections that could be adopted for cinematherapy.

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