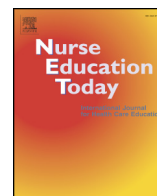


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Review

Literature review: Use of commercial films as a teaching resource for health sciences students

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SUMMARY

Purpose: Analyze some of the characteristics of the publications focused on commercial cinema as a learning tool for university students engaged in health sciences degrees.*Design and Methods:* The review was based on the search of information in three electronic databases: MEDLINE, CINAHL and ERIC.*Findings:* 54 papers were selected and analyzed.*Conclusion:* Cinema is a commonly used resource; however there is still a lack of studies demonstrating its usefulness and validity. This review is limited on its analysis by the fact that a large number of experiences are described as having a loose design.

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Introduction

In our society, cinema, since its origins, is attached to the idea of leisure and enjoyment and it is very often taken as a mirror of daily life. The use of this means, associated with recreation, can be extremely useful as a learning resource given that images can convey values and attitudes to specific audiences in training. One such audience could consist of college students. It is possible to transmit, in addition to knowledge about the actual content of the subjects, social skills, anthropological and cultural learning, that can help with the interpretation and understanding of human life. It is a matter of motivating and stimulating reflection and analysis through emotion as a way of increasing knowledge (De Puig, 2006). In education, there are numerous experiences related to the use of cinema, ranging from primary school to university studies (Cottone and Byrd-Bredbenner; Arrué Mauleon, 2013; Pereira Domínguez and Marín Valle, 2001; Pérez Parejo, 2010; Juvinyà Canal and Ballester Ferrando, 2005).

In recent decades, health care students have been immersed in the learning and use of technology that constantly advances and meanwhile keep a humanistic perspective of the people under their care. Some studies claim that students with a humanistic background, in addition to scientific and technical, are better prepared to care for their patients and they are able to think critically and apply those thoughts to clinical practice situations (Sánchez et al., 2010; McKie, 2012).

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Education through cinema is encompassed by the term cinemeducation, which refers to the use of sequences or entire films to assist in the training of health science students in the bio-psycho-social-spiritual sense (DiBartolo and Seldomridge, 2009). In nursing, there is the term cineurduccion (Oh et al., 2012), which refers to the use of films in nursing studies, and specifically to the learning concepts that can be attributed precisely to the use of this strategy.

The objective of this review is to analyze some of the characteristics of the publications focused on commercial cinema as a learning tool for university students engaged in health sciences degrees.

This narrative review will not only allow the understanding on what has already been published on the topic but also the aspects that need further insight, related to gaps in existing knowledge of specific questions.

Review Question

What characteristics do studies performed on the use of commercial films as a learning tool in university and postgraduate education in health sciences have? What have been the results in terms of effectiveness and satisfaction?

Methodology

A literature search was made with the objective of finding the largest possible amount of papers focused on cinema as a teaching tool in higher education on health sciences.

The review was based in the search of information in three electronic databases: MEDLINE (PubMed), CINAHL and ERIC. The

keywords used for the search were combinations with the following keywords:

Student, Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Education, Health studies, Films, Movies, Cinema, Flicks, Commercial film. The search strategy used the Boolean operator “AND” and truncation (*).

A complementing search on Google Scholar was made, using the same combinations of words and selecting the scientific papers appearing on the first twenty references. A manual search was made in the Journal of Medicine and Movies, edited in Spanish and English by the University of Salamanca (Spain). It includes analysis of films with bio-health contents from an educational and dissemination perspective. This journal, celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2014, is an on-line open access quarterly publication.

The initial selection was based on the title and when in doubt in relation to the objectives of this study, the abstract was read, and if necessary continuing with the whole document. Initially 303 references were obtained, reducing to 202 once duplicates were deleted; finally, after analyzing abstracts, 145 texts were included.

Inclusion criteria for the 145 preselected papers were as follows: i) that the study included aspects on educational training in the areas of medicine, dentistry, nursing, psychology, biology and veterinary; ii) commercial cinema was the main learning resource used in the teaching and learning of university students; iii) documents selected include original papers, narrative experiences and letters to the editor; iv) also included were studies combining resources other than films, e.g. cinema and literature.

Documents excluded were books, book reviews, monographs, PhD thesis and audiovisuals that were not films (more than 60 min), or that combined different types of audiovisual material like documentaries. Videos filmed by the students themselves were excluded as well. Also excluded were papers in languages other than English, Spanish, Catalan or French.

Finally 54 papers were obtained that are analyzed in the present research.

The following variables were identified in the papers selected:

1. Journal: title.
2. Paper: year of publication & number of pages.
3. Authors: number of authors and origin.
4. Country of origin of the first author.
5. Paper type: original paper (with quantitative and qualitative perspective), reviews, & letters to the editor.
6. Learning objective
7. Way in which the film was used: fragments, full film, viewing frequency.
8. Grades where cinema was applied.
9. Health topics considered:
 - a. Mental health.
 - b. Public health.
 - c. Internal Medicine.
 - d. Oncology and palliative.
 - e. Profession.
 - f. Geriatrics.
 - g. Pharmacology.
 - h. Maternity & Pediatrics.
 - i. Microbiology.
 - j. Other.
10. Impact or academic results obtained.
11. Bibliographic references: number and type (journal paper, book, etc.).

Results

Paper Selection

After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria 54 papers were selected.

Papers selected were published between 1990 and 2012. Journal of Medicine and Movies has the largest number of entries totaling 20% (Welsh, 2003) of papers; secondly, 9% (Pérez Parejo, 2010) is Nurse Educator, followed by Family Medicine, 7% (Pereira Domínguez and Marín Valle, 2001).

Most of documents were produced by 1 to 3 authors, 80%. A majority (54%) resides in the USA, followed at a distance by Spain (15%), Argentina (6%), New Zealand and the United Kingdom (4%) (Table 1).

As for paper type, 77% are original papers, 19% are review papers, and 4% consists of letters to the editor.

The number of pages has a direct relationship to the type of article. Originals have a mean of 5.26 pages (SD = 4.48), reviews 5.8 pages (SD = 4.59), and letters to the editor 1.50 pages (SD = 0.71). The majority of designs used in the studies correspond to narrative experiences (59%) and quantitative research (28%), followed by qualitative studies (9%). One study combined both of the latter and another does not disclose details. Half of the qualitative studies are phenomenological, 33% includes no data, and 17% use grounded theory. Quantitative studies are experimental (73%), and the rest are observational.

More than half of the learning objectives indicated the intention to modify or transmit specific student attitudes (Fig. 1), 38% intended to increase knowledge and 6% was intended to evaluate satisfaction with the use of cinema as a teaching resource; one paper evaluated the future smoking attitude.

The experiences using the cinema resort for a longer time are of four years, 6%, and three years, 2% respectively. Almost half of the experiences were applied for a full academic year, 46%, followed by a 13% of experiences that were conducted during one term and a 9% using this resort during a single class (Fig. 2).

Regarding manner and frequency of screening, 12% consisted of selected sequences, while 80% used the entire film. In all cases a single screening was used, however 19% of the papers provide no data for this item.

The film resource is used mostly in Medicine (44%) and Nursing Grades (31%), followed by Psychology (6%), Biology (5%) and finally Nutrition and dietetics, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Pharmacology and Communication, all with 2% of the cases.

Referring to the knowledge area where cinema has been used as a teaching resource, almost half of the studies have been to illustrate a mental health issue, followed by internal medicine themes, public health and oncology, view on the profession, and finally pharmacology, maternity & pediatrics, and microbiology. Six papers do not indicate the knowledge area where the film was used.

A 48% of papers have less than 15 bibliographic references (48%), and 32% present more than 25. All items include journal papers in their bibliography, followed by books (24%), films (12%) and web references (8%). Other references add only 1%, and those consist of reviews, monographies and statistical software.

Table 1
Paper country of origin (n = 54).

	N	%
Germany	1	1.9
Argentina	3	5.6
Australia	1	1.9
Brazil	1	1.9
Colombia	1	1.9
Denmark	1	1.9
USA	29	53.7
USA & Philippines	1	1.9
Slovenia	1	1.9
Spain	8	14.8
India	1	1.9
Israel	1	1.9
New Zealand	2	3.7
United Kingdom	2	3.7
Thailand	1	1.9

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