

Cinema insights: The power of movies for adult learners

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ABSTRACT

Background: Modern adults frequently integrate movie watching into their daily routines. While traditionally regarded as entertainment, movies have also been recognized as valuable learning and personal growth tools. While previous research has demonstrated the effectiveness of movies as educational tools in academic settings, there is a notable scarcity of studies focusing on their application among adults in Indonesia. **Purpose:** This study aimed to discover the utilization of movies as a learning tool for adults. We explored all types of lessons adults learn after they watch movies and examined how movies reflect their problems. **Methods:** A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, involving seven participants selected through snowball sampling. Data collection was conducted using an online questionnaire with open-ended questions. Thematic analysis was applied to analyze the data. **Results:** Three prominent themes emerged from the data processing: (1) learning about various relationships, (2) the movie as a mirror of reality, and (3) key elements of a memorable movie for adults. The emerging themes aid us in gaining a deeper understanding of how adults perceive and derive meaning from the movies they watch. **Conclusion:** The findings indicated that movies offer adults meaningful insights. Moreover, watching movies contributed to their understanding of intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. Additionally, movies serve as a stimulus for self-reflection. Therefore, these findings have implications for instructional designers who leverage movies as inspirational and educational tools. **Implications:** This study highlights that movies are more than just entertainment—they can inspire adults, specifically those aged 18-40. The insights gained from this research can be applied to adult learning experiences, particularly those incorporating movies as valuable educational tools.

Keywords: Adults; cinema insights; edutainment; learning; movies

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INTRODUCTION

The development of industry 4.0 in the 21st century continues to proliferate. This rapid development also offers many conveniences. Compared to the past, people can now easily access various media. One significant change is in the way we watch movies. Traditionally, watching movies required going to cinemas, but in this day and age, individuals can simply access Subscription Video-on-Demand (SVoD) platforms such as Netflix, Disney+, Viu, or Prime Video via their devices.

According to Bestari (2022), Indonesia has seen a steady annual increase in SVoD users, reaching approximately 11.5 million. However, moviegoers do not immediately abandon theaters as a conventional cinema service. Based on the reports from Media Indonesia, in 2022, cinema audiences in Indonesia totaled 54.073.776, marking a 5% increase compared to 2019 (Oebaidillah, 2023). Watching movies has become an integral part of daily life for many Indonesians, especially adults, who engage in this activity during both weekdays and weekends (JakPat, 2023; Permana et al., 2019). Based on the existing data, it can be inferred that the activity of watching movies is highly favored among individuals in Indonesia.

Watching movies in any way has psychological impacts and can be categorized as a leisure activity. Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive mental health outcomes associated with leisure activities (Bian & Xiang, 2023; Takiguchi et al., 2023).

In 2020, researchers at University College London's Department of Experimental Psychology and Audible London UK discovered a direct correlation between watching a movie and its impact on our brain and psychological function (Richardson et al., 2020). Watching movie scenes can be beneficial for inducing positive emotions in people who are in distress (Sulistiobudi et al., 2021). Additionally, viewing movies enhances teachers' confidence in teaching knowledge (Öztürk, 2017). While primarily designed to entertain, movies can also provide valuable mental health benefits to those who adore them. Movies can also be a therapeutic tool for personal growth and mental well-being. This transformative power lies in how movies present real-life problems and challenges that viewers can identify, helping them reflect on their experiences.

Psychologically, individuals are motivated to enjoy entertainment such as movies due to hedonic and eudaimonic motivations (Bartsch & Oliver, 2016). Individuals motivated by hedonic motivation seek pleasure when enjoying entertainment. In contrast, those driven by eudaimonic motivation attempt to find a meaning or lesson, for example, in the movies, through messages conveyed by the movies they watch. This dual nature positions movies as enjoyable entertainment and valuable sources of insight. It essentially indicates that the activity of watching films fundamentally brings benefits to the viewer, both from a hedonic and eudaimonic perspective. Therefore, viewing

movies as a worthwhile activity is not incorrect, as the viewer can feel its psychological effects, whether consciously or unconsciously.

There is an educational component to watching movies. For example, when someone watches a movie and feels pleasure or stress relief, they recognize that this activity produces pleasant emotions that are likely to be repeated. Similarly, when individuals acquire insights from a movie, they obtain new information and broaden their knowledge on a specific subject. It highlights how movies, as entertainment, can also act as a learning tool. The combination of learning and entertainment, commonly called “edutainment,” merges educational value with engaging content (Corona et al., 2011). Edutainment emphasizes the idea that education should be enjoyable, and at the same time, entertainment should also have educational value (Corona et al., 2011; Johnson, 2015). Empirical evidence has proven that edutainment can directly provide meaningful lessons (Blasco et al., 2015; Niemiec, 2020; Sacilotto et al., 2022; Susanto et al., 2021). The learning process that becomes easier and more fun can also advance learning outcomes (Arab-anani et al., 2021; Corona et al., 2013), such as inductive reasoning and problem-solving skills (Chuang, 2021; Nugrahani, 2017).

Practically, movies may appear to be a form of pure entertainment, but further than that, they can also be effective material for learning. Movies can help individuals acquire new skills, increase awareness, and gain insights into

dealing with a wide variety of problems that are being faced, from everyday problems, such as interpersonal relationships, to mental disorders, such as anorexia or addiction (Bjelland et al., 2017; Sacilotto et al., 2022). People who watch television and movies, specifically, can have a better understanding of anxiety and depressive disorders (Wolcott & Kurtz, 2021). Additionally, it can also influence people’s knowledge about and attitude toward mental illness (Carrara et al., 2021). Another study also highlights movies’ potential for promoting self-reflection, allowing viewers to examine their lives and address personal challenges (Blasco et al., 2015). Movies can also touch the affective domain while developing an attitude of self-reflection (Blasco et al., 2015; Richardson et al., 2020). For example, Blasco et al. (2018) studied using movies to teach ethics education. They found that participants in the study could strengthen their reflecting abilities and attitudes by allowing them to reflect on their feelings and ethical values.

From a learning theory perspective, movies provide significant learning opportunities. Learning is acquiring new information, behaviors, or skills through practice, observation, or other experiences, as evidenced by changes in behavior, knowledge, or brain function (Gary, 2015). In other words, learning occurs when new knowledge is gained from personal experiences and observing others’ experiences. Constructivist learning theory believes that people can independently process

the information they acquire. Scaffolding is important because it helps individuals continuously develop their potential (Ahmed et al., 2022; Chuang, 2021). Therefore, movies, acting as scaffolding, help viewers grasp new concepts or skills more quickly.

Learning occurs either enactively through actual doing or vicariously by observing models, such as characters in a movie (Yeadon-Lee, 2018). Bandura's social cognitive theory provides a framework for understanding how individuals learn through observation (Bandura, 1963). Watching movies exemplifies this concept of vicarious learning, whereby individuals acquire knowledge and skills by observing the experiences of others. Without direct personal experience, viewers can vicariously understand the emotions, motivations, and consequences of various movie situations. For instance, people do not have to be victims of infidelity to understand how awful it is to be cheated on. They can comprehend this circumstance through the events and viewpoints of the characters in the movie.

Furthermore, the nature of adult learning is distinct from that of children. Adults are more self-directed and prefer informal learning methods that allow for autonomy and flexibility. It makes movies a particularly effective tool, as they offer a learning experience that is both engaging and independently driven. Even as we reach adulthood, learning remains an inevitable part of life—however, the approach changes, with adults typically becoming more

independent in acquiring new knowledge. Adults tend to be less confident and anxious; therefore, they prefer informal learning approaches that are more self-directed. Even when offered assistance in learning, adults tend to be more selective (Pappas et al., 2019). As a result, adults will use different learning methods. In the context of learning, self-reflection is an effective way for adults to identify areas for improvement.

Self-reflection is one of the important components in adults (Ryff, 2013). Self-reflection allows individuals to gain deeper insights into their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, ultimately leading to heightened self-awareness. In adulthood, self-awareness is crucial and essential for achieving success in life. Self-awareness can be interpreted as awareness of internal processes within themselves. According to Carden et al. (2022), self-awareness can help individuals understand themselves better so that individuals can develop themselves in a more positive direction. One of the things that can be done to become self-aware is to reflect on oneself (Carden et al., 2022; London et al., 2023). Self-reflection is a powerful tool for personal growth, as it involves examining thoughts, feelings, and actions that can be improved. Thus, self-reflection is a key factor in enabling adults to continue learning and growing (Sutton et al., 2015).

Among the diverse methods employed for self-reflection, movies are an effective material for introspection, facilitating the resolution

of personal challenges by fostering self-awareness. When individuals take the time to watch a movie, they get a chance to introspect and translate their lives into the movie they are watching. Watching movies also provides uncomfortable facts of life, where they view the reality of life as imperfect, life-threatening, and anarchic (Bjelland et al., 2017; Blasco et al., 2015). On the other hand, they also get a hopeful fact, where they are inspired to face problems like the characters in the movie they are watching. Niemiec (2020) used movies as a method of cinema therapy, employing it as a therapeutic intervention to facilitate self-reflection and enhance self-awareness among her clients. According to Fernández-Aguilar et al. (2019), the process of self-reflection through movies also requires complex cognitive tasks, abilities that the average adult already possesses. In addition, adults are also faced with challenges in learning due to limitations in time, cost, and information (Chuang, 2021). Given these challenges with the ability to watch movies anytime, anywhere, without needing to go to a theater, the accessibility of movies as a learning tool offers a valuable opportunity for personal growth, particularly for adults with busy schedules. Based on the literature review, movies also positively impact adults from the start of learning to the process of therapy (Arab-anani et al., 2021; Bjelland et al., 2017; De Souza & Adams, 2023).

Previous research has noted that a movie can be used as a learning material for adults

(Ahmadzadeh et al., 2019; Bartsch & Oliver, 2016; Blasco et al., 2015; De Souza & Adams, 2023; Johnson, 2015; Kubrak, 2020; Niemiec, 2020; Recupero et al., 2022; Sari & Sugandi, 2015; Shankar, 2019; Trivedi & Joshi, 2022). Adults also prefer specific genres to be watched when watching movies. For instance, adults prefer watching drama genre because the dynamics of the problem are more similar to reality (Grodal, 2017), which may reflect what they are facing in their everyday lives. In addition, they also have a preference for watching thriller and horror movies. The research also stated that watching horror and thriller movies for adults is an adventurous activity. Apart from the drama, horror, and thriller genres, the comedy genre is popular with adults. Comedy is a form of social therapy, allowing viewers to collectively share negative experiences through laughter and pay attention to the story. From the perspective of coping theory, humor is a form of positive coping in dealing with negative stimuli (Braniecka et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2021). Other research also stated that the use of humor has a moderating effect on reducing stress. Research on comedy movies also found interesting facts where comedy movies have been proven to reduce anxiety, reduce levels of depression, and improve the quality of life of patients (Morais et al., 2020; Sarıtaş et al., 2019).

Studies conducted in foreign countries have examined the positive impact and learning that adults obtain after watching movies (Bjelland et al., 2017; Fernández-Aguilar et al., 2019; Paxton

& Marcus, 2018). Unfortunately, research conducted in Indonesia is limited to the use of movies in an academic context (Anggarini et al., 2023; Susanto et al., 2021; Winara, 2020). Adults are also required to continue learning in order to develop themselves not only in the academic context (Ryff, 2013) but also in personal problems experienced (Bjelland et al., 2017). However, research is scarce on this matter, even though previous research has indicated the positive impacts of watching movies that can be utilized effectively for the personal development of adults. There is a significant need to expand our comprehension of movies for adult education, specifically on how movies are used as a reflective tool. Thus, this study aims to explore how watching movies can be a valuable learning experience for adults. This study's findings may also guide content creators and educators in developing movie scripts or learning programs that align with adults' needs and preferences.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research approach we used in this study was the qualitative method. We employed a qualitative descriptive approach to describe phenomena and gain insights into an understudied research area, which does not necessitate specific frameworks or theories (Ayton, 2023). This approach was particularly relevant given the limited research on how movies influence adult learning experiences in Indonesia. This approach entailed systematically distributing

digital surveys to selected participants to gather responses and insights pertinent to the research objectives. The data gathering process transpired during May 2023 and was located in Bandung, Indonesia.

Despite its limitations, using online forms is efficient and effective for gathering data in qualitative research (Bartsch & Oliver, 2016). We distributed an online questionnaire facilitated by TypeForm, a web-based survey platform. Participants were required to complete questionnaires, including informed consent, demographic data, and several main questions.

After completing informed consent and demographic data, we asked several main questions using open-ended questions. Before answering the questions, participants were asked to choose one of the movies they thought was the most memorable in their lifetime. After identifying the movie, they answered several main questions: 'What movie title impressed you the most?'; 'What made the movie memorable or meaningful to you?' After identifying a movie, the next question was: 'What lessons did you learn from the movie that impressed you?'; 'Do you think the movie can be used to reflect on yourself?'; and 'If so, how can it help you reflect on yourself?' The question aimed to explore their perceptions of the chosen movie and its impact on their personal development and self-reflection.

Participants first reviewed and signed informed consent forms before providing demographic information and responding to

open-ended questions. Participants answered these questions independently, with completion times ranging from 5 to 10 minutes. The questionnaire was available for three days, ensuring ample time for participation. Participants were recruited using the snowball sampling technique, a practical method for identifying participants in qualitative research. Seven participants (male, $n = 1$; female, $n = 6$), aged 23 to 38, voluntarily completed the study. All participants were adults within the 18–40 age range, ensuring alignment with the study's focus on adult learning experiences.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2021). We first familiarized ourselves with the data by reviewing it twice (Phase 1). Initial codes were generated by examining each line of the data transcripts, focusing on the meaning rather than the exact wording. Codes were intuitively assigned to capture the essence of the responses. The coded data were then organized by collating relevant verbatim excerpts under their respective codes (Phase 2). We identified themes that involved carefully reviewing collated data and codes to determine

if they could form independent themes or merge with others (Phase 3). A thematic map was created in the subsequent phase to visualize the connections between various themes (Phase 4). Themes were inspected to ensure that pertinent data were gathered under each one and to understand the implications of each theme within the entire dataset. Continuous refinement was undertaken to define the themes precisely (Phase 5). The thematic analysis results were presented through thematic maps and verbatim excerpts (Phase 6). This systematic approach ensured rigor and transparency in analyzing participants' responses, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how movies contribute to adult learning experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results obtained, participants' responses were classified into three primary categories: explicitly learning about various relationships, the movie as a mirror of reality, and key elements of a memorable movie for adults. Each theme was further divided into subthemes for a detailed understanding (see Table 1).

Table 1 Thematic Analysis

Theme	Subtheme
Theme 1: I learned about various relationships	(1) Interpersonal relations (2) Intrapersonal relations
Theme 2: Movie as a mirror	(1) I somehow have a similar aspect to the movie (2) Extended point of view
Theme 3: Key elements of a memorable movie for adults	(1) Audio-visual effects (2) Plots and storylines (3) Insightful viewing experience

Note: This table summarizes the themes identified through the thematic analysis procedure.

Source: Research Result

Theme 1: I learned about various relationships. Participants reported gaining insights into both interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships through memorable movies.

Interpersonal Relation. Some participants learned about interpersonal relationships. According to data given by participants, one participant said that after watching the movie, he learned that as a family member, it is necessary to empathize with other family members.

...(I) also learn empathy towards others, especially family members. Roles as firstborns will not go away, so burdens may make it hard for us to imagine what they are going through. It is necessary to empathize with what they are going through. (P2, Encanto, male, 25)

Some participants stated that they learned lessons related to patterns of interaction with others. One participant mentioned that assertive communication is needed in social interaction.

...(we) cannot tell others to understand us. If you feel uncomfortable, you could say it assertively so that others can understand what you feel and need. (P5, Noktah Merah Perkawinan female, 23)

In social relations, sacrifices must be made or, in other words, compromises must be made. When people understand each other's perspectives and make accommodations, they lay the groundwork for developing strong and cohesive bonds. This ability to find common ground and navigate differences is crucial for fostering positive and meaningful connections in social interactions.

Everyone makes certain sacrifices, including time with your loved ones. (P4, Midsommar, female, 38)

Rumors may also spread widely in social interactions. The movie teaches participants about the portrayal of rumors and how to respond to them in their society.

...The rumors will always be rumors until we directly confirm them, hence do not easily believe them. (P2, Encanto, male, 25)

Intrapersonal Relation. The learning obtained is not only about relationships with others but also about learning related to oneself. When individuals finish watching a movie, they learn new insights and knowledge. One of the participants gets a representation of emotional processes in the human brain.

Ooh, the illustration of our brain process is like that, and we have control over ourselves about the feelings we feel, explained just like in the movie...(P7, Inside Out, female, 24)

Then, one participant also learned about the process as a psychologist candidate.

...As a psychologist candidate, you can get an overview of the counseling process, from building rapport and trust with clients, to the basic skills needed. (P5, Noktah Merah Perkawinan, female, 23)

One of the participants also gained knowledge and an overview of mental disorders.

...(I) got the representation and portrayal of anxiety and its effect, narcissism, dependence, and brainwashing. (P4, Midsommar, female, 38)

Some participants mentioned the sincerity shown in the movie.

...Good intentions and sincerity will produce even better results than we thought even though the process is full of struggle. (P2, Encanto, male, 25)

Some individuals get learning related to self-

development. The self-development in question is in the form of essential notes that must be instilled in them. One participant emphasized that as an adult, one must continue to learn.

It is okay if there are still things that we struggle with and are still trying to overcome. Even though we have grown up, it is natural, and indeed, we should continue to learn, learn, and learn...(P1, Adult Children of Divorce, female, 25)

Other participants also referred to self-development, which is correcting mistakes made before.

...everyone made a mistake in their lives, and everyone also has the opportunity to correct whatever mistakes they made before...(P5, Noktah Merah Perkawinan, female, 23)

Theme 2: Movie as a mirror. Participants reported that movies served as reflective tools, enabling them to evaluate their lives. What made them able to reflect on their problems was the similarity of aspects in the movie with the problems that individuals experienced and their extended point of view. One of the participants felt she shared a similarity with the movie. The participants claimed to have problems similar to those told in the movie.

...From the problem-solving process in the movie, I also pondered whether the same strategy could be applied by me as well. (P5, Noktah Merah Perkawinan, female, 23)

Certain participants made noteworthy statements about their profound sense of connection with the movie's narrative. The storytelling resonated with them on a deeply personal level.

...When there are things or events that relate to the conditions or problems we are

facing, we become easier to reflect. (P1, Adult Children of Divorce, female, 25)

...The movie is similar to our situation. (P2, Encanto, male, 25)

Furthermore, some participants discussed behavior patterns in movie characters who resembled them. The movie became a captivating mirror reflecting universal themes and specific patterns of human behavior that closely resembled aspects of the participants' lives.

...(I) relate to one of the characters at the beginning of the movie, and as the movie progresses, I can also sense the effect of the behavior, I relate to...(P4, Midsommar, female, 38)

...From the problems experienced by the characters in the movie, I also reflect on whether I have the same pattern of behavior that can cause those problems...(P5, Noktah Merah Perkawinan, female, 23)

Extended Point of View. The new perspective that can help the audience see the problem thoroughly allows them to use a movie as a time of reflection. Storytelling becomes a medium for presenting different angles and complex human experiences, inviting viewers to explore the details of the problems that are portrayed.

When we watch a movie, we get a third-person perspective, making it easier to understand what is happening. Furthermore, when some things or events are related to the conditions or problems we face, it becomes easier to reflect on them with a new perspective that is more visible. (P1, Adult Children of Divorce, female, 25)

...and how the behavior looks from an outsider/logic perspective. (P4, Midsommar, female, 38)

Theme 3: Key elements of a memorable movie for adults. We identified key elements of a memorable movie for adults. In explaining this theme, we divide it into three subthemes: audio-visual effects, plots and storylines, and an insightful viewing experience.

Audiovisual effects. Participants emphasized the significance of captivating visuals and emotional resonance. A movie was to entertain them and leave a lasting impression.

Visually stunning, super emotional, and lots of details that reflect mental health, wrapped in a horror/thriller. (P4, Midsommar, female, 38)

The animation is good,..., the song is soul-penetrating. (P6, Spirited Away, female, 25)

The acting of the actors,..., the edits. (P3, Interstellar, female, 26)

Plots and Storylines. Engaging and relatable storylines were deemed essential for making movies memorable.

The animation is good, the story is remarkable, the song is soul-penetrating.” (P6, Spirited Away, female, 25)

One participant stated that an interesting storyline is an unexpected storyline.

...the movie has unexpected storyline. (P4, Midsommar, female, 38)

The portrayal of the problem within a movie was an important element and provided a new perspective to the audience, which differentiated it from other movies.

What makes it memorable is that this movie generally shows the perspective of adults whose parents are divorced, where usually people focus more on the impact of divorce on children or teenagers. (P1, Adult Children of Divorce, female, 25)

It was an insightful viewing experience.

Everyone was asked to select one movie from the many movies they might have watched that impressed them the most. Movies that provided moral or psychological insights left a lasting impression. One individual highlighted that the movie’s memorability was attributed to its moral message.

Because this movie is related to what happens within us regarding how our emotion works. This movie is perfect; it can capture the process of our emotion, and it became more relatable when I was studying psychology...(P7, Insight Out, female, 24)

Encanto is a cartoon made by Disney. Although it may seem to be made for children, there are many moral messages that I get while watching it, so that gives a special impression to. (P2, Encanto, male, 25)

...(I) get the picture that domestic conflict can come from small things that accumulate because they are not communicated properly. (P5, Noktah Merah Perkawinan, female, 23)

After examining the theme, this study highlighted how watching films can be a powerful learning experience. According to constructivist learning theory, humans, especially adults, actively engage in the learning process, constructing and refining their understanding through experience and interaction (Chuang, 2021). Therefore, it can be concluded that watching movies can provide valuable learning experiences because adults are viewed as active seekers of their knowledge. Our research finds that watching movies can be a learning experience for adults, even when

the movie is not explicitly designed to teach viewers a lesson. Research findings indicate that adults gain insights into interpersonal and intrapersonal relations through a variety of movies.

Through watching a movie, adults learn about interpersonal relations such as empathizing, assertive communication, self-sacrifice for others, compromise, and responding to rumors. Adults consider this learning necessary because positive relationships with others are crucial predictors of human well-being (Williams et al., 2018). Building positive interpersonal relationships can improve their psychological well-being (Zhang et al., 2024). Adults with good interpersonal skills can face conflicts even when they are complex, such as in interpersonal conflicts where violence is involved (Khalifian et al., 2019). Interpersonal abilities such as empathy, assertive communication, and compromise are skills that individuals need to have when socializing (Main et al., 2017; Vertino, 2014).

Adults also gain lessons about intrapersonal conflict after watching a movie. Intrapersonal conflicts that often arise in adults are personal growth. Aside from positive relationships within the social environment, nurturing personal growth is a pivotal component contributing significantly to human well-being. The journey of personal growth involves continuous self-improvement, exploration of one's capabilities, and pursuing meaningful goals, all collectively contributing to a holistic and fulfilling life

experience (Ryff, 2013). When adults are aware of their behavior patterns, they can correct their mistakes from their past. This learning is acquired by participants through the movies they watch, allowing them to continually learn and correct past mistakes (Carden et al., 2022; Sutton et al., 2015). Similar findings have been reported in preceding research, indicating a consistency in the identified outcomes across multiple studies. The process shown in the movies encourages participants to continue to grow and fix problems in the past (Trivedi & Joshi, 2022).

These two types of learning (interpersonal and intrapersonal relations) are possible due to cognitive activities that help adults learn. The first cognitive activity is like looking into a mirror that shows our true selves as we observe and integrate new information from a movie scene and reflect it onto ourselves. When a character in the movie faces difficulties, it makes the viewers aware that they are experiencing similar challenges. This cognitive activity is commonly referred to as the process of assimilation. In constructivist learning theory, assimilation is the process of absorbing, incorporating, or making similar (Gary, 2015). This finding is also in line with prior studies, where feeling connected to a character in the movie can provide strength to face life's problems and apply learned lessons later (Niemic, 2020).

The second cognitive activity is analysis. The thematic analysis results indicate that films facilitate the learning process by introducing new

perspectives, helping individuals view relevant problems from different angles. In the context of cognitive psychology theory, Jean Piaget emphasizes the development of abstract and analytical thinking during the formal operational stage, which can be stimulated by the complex narratives in films (Chuang, 2021). Additionally, Lev Vygotsky's constructivist theory highlights the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. Films provide a rich social context, allowing individuals to learn through observing characters and their interactions, thereby building new understandings and enhancing analytical skills. Thus, films not only enrich cognitive experiences but also improve individuals' analytical abilities.

In order for a movie to be an effective learning tool for adults, there are some interesting findings from this study for learning designers and scriptwriters. Three key elements make a movie burst into the hearts of adult individuals: audio-visual effects, plots and storylines, and an insightful viewing experience. The audio-visual effects are the elements that can make a movie effective for learners. The audio-visual aspect is no less important because it can help emphasize the emotional aspect of a movie (Boydell & Croguennec, 2022; Richardson et al., 2020). Emotion is also related to human learning, playing a critical role as both a fundamental basis and a motivational factor in the learning process (Reeve, 2018). The intensity of emotions correlates positively with the depth and richness of the learning acquired (Taylor &

Statler, 2014). In other words, learning would likely occur when the learners experience high-intensity emotions. It can be concluded that the better the audio-visual effect of a movie, the easier it will be for the audience to get into the story's path. When an individual enters a movie's story, there will be many lessons. Thus leading to the creation of a memorable movie experience for them.

Plots and storylines are the next key elements because they relate to audience involvement in the movie. The more complex the plot in one movie, the more the audience will get involved with the story (Flayelle et al., 2019). It also explains that the intriguing plot and storyline will be memorable for adults because they are already engaged with the movie and are stored in their long-term memory.

Apart from these two things, an insightful viewing experience is also a key element so that a movie can be interpreted as a memorable movie by adults. The insightful experience discussed here is when a movie leaves the audience with a wealth of new knowledge. Greenwood and Long (2015) report that several movies have become memorable. They provide learning that is appropriate to the struggles they face in their lives because they seem to guide them in dealing with their problems. This research also reported the same thing where several participants stated that the movie they watched helped them to understand the conditions they were facing, such as participants who watched the movie *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* who were pursuing a career

as a psychologist (P5) and *Adult Children of Divorce* (P1) who have divorced parents. This learning will be explained in more depth in the next theme.

In addition to identifying the themes, we were also curious about which type of genres provided the most opportunities for learning. After looking at the IMDb website, we find interesting findings regarding the genre watched by adults. Based on Table 2, each participant chose a different type of movie genre. Adults perceive different kinds of movies that have meaningful facets to them. From the many movies available, it can be observed that adults have preferences for various genres of movies. The genres we have listed here are based on information from the Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB) website.

Adults predominantly opt for the drama genre. Three out of seven adults preferred movies of the drama genre. Previous research

has stated that it is undeniable that the choice of movie genre is related to biological factors, one of which is age. Adults prefer to watch movies with more realistic genres, such as horror, thriller, and drama (Grodal, 2017). Previous research portrayed the same results, showing that drama movies are often chosen due to their association with eudaimonic motivation, where watching movies in the drama genre provides individuals with an opportunity to evaluate their personal lives or the lives depicted in the movie (Greenwood & Long, 2015; Kim, 2020). This study also highlighted the same finding that adults tend to watch horror, thriller, and drama movies as memorable movies. If we examine this further, this is related to adults' need for continuous growth, as stated by Ryff (2013). This need can be facilitated by watching movies that portray many real-life problems and illustrate potential solutions.

Other than the drama genre, the animation

Table 2 Movie Title and Genre

Participant	Title	Genre
(P1, 25)	Adult Children of Divorce	Comedy
(P2, 25)	Encanto	Animation Family Fantasy Musical
(P3, 26)	Interstellar	Adventure Drama Sci-Fi
(P4, 38)	Midsommar	Drama Horror Mystery
(P5, 23)	Noktah Merah Perkawinan	Drama
(P6, 24)	Spirited Away	Animation Adventure Family
(P7, 24)	Inside Out	Animation Adventure Comedy

Source: (IMDb, 2024)

genre was also selected by adults. Four out of seven adults watched movies categorized under the animation genre. The interesting finding in this study was that animated movies can provide deep meaning for adults. Animation that is mainly intended for children can be interpreted deeply by adults. It is not a surprise because the animation genre can help adults understand things that cannot be explained in reality, thus promoting further learning (Cruz et al., 2017). Markus and Nurius (1986) also see the same thing: fantasy is seen as a possible self, or, in other words, an ideal self in a future that is full of hope. The ideal self can encourage individuals to achieve vision and move towards positive change. Future research must explore the ideal self-image in movies that can encourage individuals to continue to develop themselves in a more positive direction.

In addition to drama, thriller, and animation, the comedy genre is also one of the movie genres chosen by adults. It is probably also related to what is offered when watching a comedy. Comedy movies try to give a new perspective where the characters in the movie try to laugh at their problems. Making jokes about our problems is a form of good emotional regulation and is part of positive coping (Braniecka et al., 2019; Simone & Gnagnarella, 2023; Wu et al., 2021). Previous research has proven that comedy movies effectively reduce anxiety and improve a person's quality of life (Morais et al., 2020; Saritaş et al., 2019). As a result, learning designers can consider every genre that has

been mentioned, as it appears that adult readers enjoy and find meaning in these kinds of stories.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research demonstrated that watching films was not merely a form of entertainment but could also be a valuable learning experience. By providing rich, complex narratives and emotional experiences, movies offer opportunities for adults to reflect on and refine their understanding of themselves and others. Films allowed viewers to derive interpersonal and intrapersonal insights, emphasizing the importance of cultivating healthy relationships with others and oneself. Previous research has shown that the better the relationship, the happier their lives will be.

One of the key findings is the role of films in enhancing interpersonal skills. By witnessing characters navigate emotional and social challenges, adults can gain a deeper understanding of interpersonal relationships, including the importance of empathy, assertive communication, compromise, and managing conflicts. These are essential skills for maintaining positive relationships, which directly impact well-being. Learning these skills through movies allows adults to recognize and develop similar qualities in their own lives, improving their ability to manage relationships both in professional and personal environments.

In addition to interpersonal skills, films also facilitate intrapersonal learning. Watching characters deal with their struggles or growth

can inspire viewers to reflect on their own lives, especially when they relate to the challenges portrayed. Films often depict moments of self-discovery, emotional growth, and the process of overcoming personal barriers. These experiences can help adults become more aware of their behavior patterns and guide them toward making positive changes in their own lives. The reflection and learning that takes place while watching movies can thus contribute significantly to personal growth and well-being, reinforcing the importance of continuous self-improvement.

Watching a movie requires viewers to engage in various cognitive tasks, such as assimilation and analysis, which makes it easier for adults to gain valuable lessons. However, this process is not without challenges. For some viewers, the reflective nature of movies may evoke deep emotional responses, including discomfort or distress when confronted with unresolved issues or personal struggles. Despite this, the opportunity for self-reflection and personal growth remains significant, as films offer a unique space for adults to engage with complex emotions and life lessons.

For these lessons to be effectively internalized, a movie must possess three essential elements. These elements are audio-visual effects, plots and storylines, and an insightful viewing experience. Together, these three elements make a movie memorable because they support viewers in understanding the problems in the movie. Therefore, it is easy

for viewers to recall a lesson because these key elements have a significant impact on them. Scriptwriters and learning designers who want to create a memorable movie should consider these key elements during the development process.

Additionally, genre selection plays a pivotal role in shaping the learning experience. Drama, thriller, horror, animation, and fantasy genres, each with its unique attributes, can evoke a range of emotions and insights. Even animation—often regarded as children’s entertainment—can provide profound lessons for adult audiences by presenting complex ideas in an accessible and imaginative way.

Based on these insights, future research was recommended to focus on curating a database of movies that were particularly effective for adult learning. Such a resource could inform educators, facilitators, and scriptwriters, ensuring that movies were leveraged as powerful tools for self-reflection, growth, and education. By identifying and cataloging films that have been proven to have a positive impact on adult learning, we can help fully realize the potential of movies as a medium for lifelong education.

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