

Mitigating Mental Health Through The Arts

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Abstract

Repeated suicide cases at the University of Malawi triggered the motivation for “Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week” which took place during the “Mental Health Month” from the 8th to 14th May 2023. It involved various types of performing and fine arts, a field to glean lessons from to help in mental health mitigation. Suicide, an aftermath of mental health disorders and one of the causes of death globally across ages and people of diverse economic status is on the increase globally. It is ranked the 10th leading cause of death for all ages in the United States. This paper’s problem statement is a response to a call expressing the need for a wide-ranging interdisciplinary response with knowledge of prevention and universal interventions on mental health. The rationale is that everyone engages with performing arts daily, which is proven to assist in various mental health issues; it is imperative to explore on maximization of arts to intervene due to the increase in mental health cases. The study hypothesizes that arts can mitigate mental health. The research question states: How can arts be maximized in reducing mental health cases?

This paper analyzes the “Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week” project with Heron’s Six Categories of Intervention highlighting practices worth emulating in managing mental health. This research implies motivating more practitioners to maximize the use of the power of arts in mental health. Some of the key results include reduced mental cases, increased awareness and information on where to get help, increased care for one another and increased motivation to participate in mitigation. The main finding is that arts are powerful tools in mental health mitigation.

Key Terms: Art Therapy, Mental Health, Suicide Awareness, Artistic Campaign

Introduction

Mental health can be defined as a sound state of the psychic, emotional and social part of a human being that produces effective stress management, good relationships and decisiveness, expressed through rationality, behaviour and interaction in the community (World Health Organization, 2022; National Center of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2023). For various nations and organizations including the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2022) and United Nations (UN) to consider dedicating or utilizing a whole month to focus on mental health is a clear indication that mental health has an international impact and significance; and requires serious urgent attention. World Health Organisation (2022) views mental health as a “basic human right” stressing that “the need for action on mental health is indisputable and urgent”. World Health Organisation crafted a Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for 2013-2030 to that effect. Poor mental health may result in actions that are drastic and catastrophic such as suicide. In the past several years, suicide cases in Malawi have been rising (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2021; The Nation, 2023; Banda et al., 2021; Masina, 2023; and Moyenda, 2023).

Research Question

On a positive note, one of my former choir members at Chrisco Central Church in Kibera, Nairobi - Kenya narrated the following:

“I was going through a tough time and had a lot of stress, so I resolved to end my life by letting the train hit me. The best place where no one would suspect was near the church building where the railway line passes. As I passed near the church, I heard good music, then thought to myself ‘Let me go listen to the music then afterwards I will proceed with the agenda’. When I came in, I was warmly welcomed to join the choir. The music experience was very good and refreshing; it made me change my mind. Life became worth living.” (Akinyi, G. 2022)

These and the impact of Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week, as exposed later motivated the quest to introspect the power and influence of arts in intervening in mental health disorders. Both fine and Performing arts, particularly music, have been researched, tested and proven to be mitigators for mental health illnesses to the extent that some are remedial and others are curative. Therefore, the question addressed is: How do the arts contribute towards the prevention and intervention of mental health disorders?

Methodology

To address the research question, this study mainly uses a retrospective design in which “the outcome of interest has already occurred in each individual by the time s/he is enrolled, and the data are collected either from records or by asking participants to recall exposures.” (Ranganathan, & Aggarwal, 2018). This is done through exploring ‘Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week’, a project that took place from the 15th to the 21st of May 2023. The event was organized and coordinated by the author at the University of Malawi during Mental Health Awareness Month. This study employed a descriptive-analytical approach by recounting and examining the event and the activities that took place while highlighting and discussing issues that are important to this study. The various creator’s interpretations of their artworks such as poems, posters, songs and plays will be discussed vis a vis the analysis of the work. Relevant interviews of the creators of the artworks and those involved in organizing the event are included. The study also employed the use of Heron’s Six Categories of Intervention as a lens to scan through the various parts and activities that took place during Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week. These added six areas of discussion on how the arts may be used as tools for mitigating mental health. The main riding hypothesis is that “the arts are effective in mitigating mental health cases.”

The Arts And Mental Health

Involvement or interaction with the arts is almost as common as interaction with technological gadgets such as mobile phones. Wang (2020) discusses how “Arts engagement within communities is ubiquitous across cultures globally”. This is factual because even in some remote places in Africa people have smartphones and they listen to and watch various types of arts. Wang (2020) continues to express how engagement with the arts “has beneficial effects for both mental health and well-being” and purports that it could be due to diverse arts activities that enhance self-identity through the pursuit of skills, stimulation of creativity and self-expression.” Generally, most arts engage diverse mechanisms and involve various parts of the body thereby impacting on both the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of human beings.

Davis et al. (2012) define arts engagement as “active (e.g. making art) or receptive (e.g. attending concerts) involvement in creative events or activities within a variety of art forms such as the performing arts, visual arts and literature”. The engagement might be through participation in creating and presenting or through appreciation. In both ways, the exposure

causes the impact of the arts to penetrate the individual's senses thus producing the desired or intended impact. Davies et al (2015) continue to explain that "arts engagement promotes patient recovery, relaxation and reduces patient stress, anxiety and depression." Kagan et al (2005) expound that arts have been proven to improve confidence, self-esteem and self-understanding.

The Welsh NHS Confederation (2018) views arts as a supplement to medicine and care for improving a person's physical and mental well-being. The Confederation insists that arts reduce stress, increase social engagement as well and provide opportunities for self-expression. The confederation pinpointed Patient Care, Healthcare Environments, Caring for Caregivers and Community Well-being as the four key areas of arts' positive impact on health. These four areas are indeed all aspects of life because they touch on the physical, psychological, social, emotional and spiritual dimensions of the human being. For this reason, the confederation emphasizes the need to increase public awareness and understanding of the role of the arts in health. The confederation emphasizes encouraging "best practice, shared ethics, research and evaluation on matters arts and health thus this research. This validates the "Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week" and motivates introspecting the event as the essence of this paper.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week

By the use of retrospective design, this section recalls and discusses the activities that took place before during and after the Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week. It also includes artists' recollections on how and why they created the artworks and adds Tiger Li's experience.

As a member of staff, the author encountered factual information on the increasing suicide cases at the University of Malawi. This brought about pressure, tension and a feeling of urgency leading to a state of desperation. The interaction with the Students Representative Council committee members, various lecturers, artists, musicians, and counsellors within The University of Malawi revealed eagerness and willingness to spring to action to stop suicide. However, they needed a platform and coordination which was provided by The Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week event. During the dire need to stop suicide, there was a tendency to operate with the popular propagandistic phrase discussed by Kuehn (2017) that states "desperate times call for desperate measures". However, those involved chose to be strategic and wise and decided to utilize what was readily available to them with maximum

effectiveness and efficiency. Having learnt from the Rwandan 1994 Genocide as discussed by Ong'are (2015) where the United Nations, the African Union and various organisations took too long debating about genocide, while thousands of people were being massacred; leading to the death of over one million people one hundred days; suicide intervention had to be swift and timely. The quickest gadgets of communication were phones and the fastest way for mass media was the use of social media platforms. The organisers of the “Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week” took less time on discussions and strategic planning while more time was spent on action. There was only one physical meeting for planning all the other meetings were consultative and mostly via WhatsApp and phone calls.

Events before

Within one week, immediately before the week of the event, various university artists gathered together, strategized and tasked themselves with creating various artworks for the week. Most artworks including songs, plays, poems, spoken words, and various posters were created, edited and packaged; ready for the public two days before the week of the event. The plan was that; apart from live performances, to use the technology and major media communication channels which are majorly WhatsApp groups and Facebook to disseminate artworks digitally. Audio artworks had a voice-over at the end motivating care for one another and encouraging those with mental health to get help; directing them on where to get assistance. Counsellors were identified, and informed in good time while sound equipment and musical instruments were made ready.

Events during

The Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week took place from Tuesday, 7th May to Sunday, 14th May 2023 at the Quadrangle of the University of Malawi. The Quadrangle as a venue was suggested by one of the executive deans as the most trafficked place by both staff and students during lunch hours. Therefore, the activities targeted between 12:00 and 14:00, a human traffic pick time for both students and staff. Although live music was the main activity, on any given day there was more than one art activity. On Saturday, there was no activity while on Sunday the activity took place from 14:00 to 16:00.

Events After

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week was followed by days of keeping watch. The general observation was that two positive opposite movements of two major, important actions

increased. Counsellors reported an increase in the number of clients while the welfare officials of the Students Representative Council reported a rapid diminish of suicide cases. In weeks that followed and even into the exam time there were no cases reported of attempts or even actual suicide. Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week at the University of Malawi can be viewed as the arts' administration of suicide and mental health antidote.

Tiger Li's Text Note

Tiger Li was my mentee at Durham University in the UK on djembe drums around 2009. Tiger was around seven years old then and it was his introduction to his musical journey. After some training, he joined me in performances with an African singing and drumming group known as "Ngoma Vuma Uropa". Tiger Li proceeded to join Durham Choristers School where he also learnt how to sing and play various instruments including the organ.

Through a text note, Tiger Li explained that music-making remarkably impacted his social and mental perspective. He pointed out that music-making activities and education improved his communication skills on how to express his thoughts and emotions effectively. It helped him understand his emotions which translated to better interpersonal skills. Music according to Tiger became a form of therapy that also taught him how to be patient. Music formed him to approach studies with a positive attitude of completing smaller tasks that lead to the accomplishment of bigger tasks rather than procrastinating. Music cultivated in him; boldness and pliability for heavy tasks and challenges (Tiger Li, 2023).

Tiger's musical experience depicts the positive psychological impact of music on mental well-being. Some of the key areas include managing emotions, self-expression, managing pressure, stress release, patience, tolerance and endurance. These are not only achieved by music only, but also by various other art forms and can be deemed as the results of the ritual power of arts.

Ritualistic Power of Art

Retrospection on Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week and Tiger Li's text note reveals that arts transform individuals through a form of ritual. Ritual in this context does not imply religious activity, but the view by Ong'are (2015) as "a social process of solidifying a group through joint participation in activities, presenting core beliefs and values". Ong'are (2015) discusses how music ritualizes individuals into a positive mental and behavioural change. This view is true not only to music but also to most of the arts. Most of the arts that

individuals and communities get involved in motivate different ways of thinking and acting; with a focus on healthy social relationships among individuals in the community. According to Turner (1975), three stages of a ritual act as a process that an individual goes through, causing them to be better members of a community. The three stages described in relationship to the arts include:

- ❖ Separation: a stage where arts distract the individual from their current focus;
- ❖ Margin: a stage where an individual is engaged in appreciating arts and at the same time being influenced by the same arts; and
- ❖ Reaggregation: the exit stage where an individual is motivated to act according to the paradigm shift caused by the work of art.

This ritualistic power of the arts is testified to have worked as expressed before by Akinyi (2022), Tiger Li and Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week. Having examined how the arts ritualize people into positive change it is therefore prudent to focus on how this power is used in mitigation through Heron's Six Category of Intervention.

Heron's Six Categories of Intervention

The arts can be viewed as interveners or mitigators as far as mental health is concerned. An introspection on Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week through Heron's six categories of intervention is used to support this view. Heron's Six Categories of Intervention is divided into two major categories; Authoritative and Facilitative each having three sub-categories (Heron 2001).

1. Authoritative Interventions

Authoritative intervention can be defined as a state where the intervenor is the source of power and ability to directly divert the intent and action of another from a disastrous ending (Heron 2001). In a way, the intervenor commands authority as far as intervention is concerned. Authoritative intervention has three subcategories as follows:

- a. **Prescriptive** is a state where the intervenor explicitly directs the victim by giving advice and direction. Various arts as discussed in the analysis of artworks were packaged with messages and presented in a way that they advised not only on what to do and what not to do, but also advised them on where to go for help.
- b. **Informative** is a state where the intervenor provides information to instruct and guide the other victim. As explained later in the analysis of the various artworks,

arts advised people on how to handle suicidal mentality and suicide cases. Various arts motivated care, watching and reaching out to others who need our help.

- c. **Confronting** is a state where the intervenor challenges the other person's behaviour or attitude positively and constructively helps the victim consider a change of behaviour and attitudes. Art forms as analysed below positively confronted and challenged the victims by personifying the victims within the artworks.

2. Facilitative Interventions

Facilitative intervention is whereby the intervenor assists a victim in realizing the desire and potential to overcome the mental health problem (Heron, 2001). Three sub-categories within facilitative intervention include:

- a. **Cathartic** is a state where the intervenor helps the victim to express and overcome thoughts and emotions that they have not previously confronted. During the Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week, after performances, people had some moments for questions and comments and it was fascinating to observe how people freely expressed themselves and even asked questions. Some were confident enough to book an appointment with the counsellors who were present.
- b. **Catalytic** is a state where the intervenor helps the victim to reflect, discover and learn for him or herself. This helps him or her become more self-directed in making decisions, solving problems and so on. It was observed during the performances that in most incidences, people were rather quiet and reflective and seemed to agree with the artworks. For example, during the drama, there was a lot of engagement and reflection as explained later in the analysis.
- c. **Supportive** is a state where the intervenor builds up the confidence of the other person by focusing on their competencies, qualities and achievements. Some artworks as explained in the analysis, motivated people by stating that they are well-able, that they can draw strength from the community, and that there is more to life than the challenge.

Analysis and Interpretation of The Artworks

Since the arts played a significant role during the Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week event, this study therefore imperatively employs a descriptive analysis design on some of the artworks used and discusses them vis a vis the creators' intended meaning and the interviews

conducted by creators and organisers. Despite many poems, songs, posters and various other art forms, this study focuses only on one song that was requested several times during the five days, the play which proved effective, and randomly selected one poem and two posters.

SONGS

During the event, there were a variety of songs but three were thematic songs composed and performed by three bands. *Konda Moyo Wako* is a song composed by Aaron Manda, and performed by the UNIMA UMOYA Band, *Dekhani* was composed and performed by AMIDU and UNIMA ZEBRAS Band, and *It's a New Day* was composed by Felixon Damiano and performed by the UNIMA Arpeggios Band. The song that became popular was *Dekhani*, a Chichewa name that means “be calm” or “do not rush”. The songs’ texts, creators’ intents and performance observations were analysed vis a vis Heron's six categories of intervention to highlight the effectiveness of the music in mental health mitigation. Though the theme for Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week was “Love Life” the catchphrase became “Don’t be like Dekhani” from a song by Amidu Ibrahim. Following is an analysis of *Dekani* as a representation of the other songs.

1. SONG: DEKHANI (Be Calm or Do not rush)

Composed by Amidu Ibrahim

Song Text

As narrated by Amidu, the song is about a girl called *Dekhani*, a Chewa name which means “be calm” or “do not rush” or “do not hurry”. He explained that the song has four parts representing various active voices.

1st Voice: The Male Narrator

The parents are overjoyed for her birth, they discuss on naming her, the father declares DEKHANI to be her name. They are grateful to God acknowledging that some couples still do not have children, no matter how they have desired to have them. They see the daughter as a special gift from God and that she may be a soldier or maybe a lawyer.

Dekhani was born when the family faced difficulties, but everyone including the aunties were happy for her to be born. She grew up, went to primary and secondary school. When she joined college, she hoped that the family situation will change but it got worse. She slept on an empty stomach, bathed without soap and had no lotion for her body. She thought that if she had a boyfriend, things would change. She got a boyfriend who later impregnated but refused responsibilities.

Dekhani got confused, ashamed and desperate. She did not want anyone to know, not even her parent. She took a rope and hanged herself on the roof. Upon receiving the news, the father collapsed and died of heart attack.

2nd Voice: The Mother:

The mother was dumbfounded from losing her daughter and husband. Her body trembling with sorrow she released a lament addressing Dekhani's corpse

“What have you done dekhani and why? You would have told me. Don't you remember the plans we had? [Didn't you have friends to share your problems with?](#) What should I do my daughter?”

3rd Voice: The Female mourner:

A girl addresses people telling them that they should not stress, worry or cry. They don't need to reach the extent of ending their own life, everyone's life is precious and each and every problem has its end.

4th Voice: The Male Narrator

"don't be like Dekhani, don't kill yourself, share what's bothering you with your friends or just other people whom you think can help because one head cannot manage to head a roof; you need company.

Everyone joins in a repeated phrase: “Don't be like Dekhani.”

Amidu stated that the “message of the song emerged from the idea that some people who commit suicide think that they are doing a good thing because it's their own life not knowing that they hurt others who love them.”

Analysis of the song text depicts use of various intervention methods to address mental health cases. Within the Authoritative intervention, the song uses a descriptive method by giving a story that advises people on how to handle challenges and what to avoid. It also uses informative method by giving directions on how to live and the consequences of our human actions that may lead to mental conditions and then to suicidal actions. It also uses confrontation method by telling people “Don't be like Dekhani” and also the female voice firmly stating the value of life.

Within facilitative intervention, the song uses the Cathartic method by motivating people to speak out. For example, the mother said “... you should have told me ...” and also asked, “...Didn't you have friends to share your problems with?”. This motivates the victims of mental health to express themselves and know that there are people who are ready to listen. It uses the Catalytic method by presenting narration and dialogue bringing out various character assimilation. The presentation of such a composition encourages attention in that it captures the listener's concentration.

The song has some mixture of typical Malawian styles like Manganja and various others, moving to Afro-Malawian music form. The language used is Chichewa, a Malawian language, and addresses realistic occurrences. This made it easy for the audience to relate to it; and enabled them reflect and consider the decisions that they were to make. During the performance and even after the performance people echoed “Don't be like *Dekhani*”. The song also uses the Supportive method by bringing to the attention that everyone goes through some stress and strains making it possible to make wrong decisions, but we should focus on the support that we can get from the community and make the right choices.

2. POSTERS

Gracious Mulinga tasked himself with producing two electronic posters per day. In total, he produced ten posters focusing on mental health themes to defuse suicide and suicidal thoughts. Posters as fine arts play an important role just like other art forms. The posters contained telephone contact numbers that one could call and get help with issues related to mental health and various other counselling services. Two of the posters are included in the

discussions below. According to Gracious (2023), the posters that he created spoke for themselves. He gave the following explanation:

“The inspiration came from various instances of suicide cases as we hear of them in the media or from others. These informed what was to be put on the posters and also what pictures should accompany the messages. Some of the messages also came from the internet. I googled and found inspiration from other similar campaigns. I either put the messages as they were or did some slight modification on some, while others simply acted as a source of inspiration for my original messages.” (Gracious Mulinga, 2023)

POSTER 1: YOU CAN TALK TO ME



Referring to the poster, Gracious gave the following explanation: “For instance, there was a poster that said "I might not know the pain, I might not know the struggle, I might not know how hard it is, but surely, I'm here for you. **You can talk to me.**" This incorporated some personal experience and some messages I found online. Some years ago, I was speaking with a colleague on some issue and he said I may not know because I have never been in that kind of situation. So, when I was formulating these posters I thought about it, that even though we may not know whatever is going on in someone's life, it is only proper to be there for them and assist in whatever way possible.” (Gracious Mulinga, 2023)

It can be deduced from both the poster “You Can Talk to Me” and the explanation given by Gracious that the poster combines both Authoritative and Facilitative intervention approaches. Its facilitative intervention on cathartic where it draws the victim’s attention to the awareness of the presence of a listening ear and a shoulder to lean on so that they can freely express their thoughts and pains. This is expressed not only by the words but by the picture too. The Authoritative Intervention is expressed by the use of prescriptive and informative methods because it advises the community on what to do and also the victims on where to go to get help.

POSTER 2: NO I AM NOT FINE



Gracious explained that: “There was also another poster that said, “**No, I'm not fine. I may look okay but deep down I'm falling apart.** Please help.” This was inspired by the fact that some suicide cases have appeared jovial in one minute only for people to hear that they have committed suicide the next minute. The poster seeks to encourage people to detect any kind of emotional breakdown patterns in loved ones to prevent them from committing suicide. There was a poster I did which showed a noose. Someone advised that in suicide prevention, it is not advisable to show any weapons that someone may use to commit suicide because it may be traumatic for survivors or may give someone ideas with which they can kill themselves.” (Gracious Mulinga 2023)

The poster applies prescriptive and informative approaches which are within authoritative intervention expressed by the way it motivates the victims to speak out; and also brings awareness to the community that within the community there are mental health cases. It also expresses that there is a solution within the community and should be made readily available. Like the other posters used in the event, it advises the community on what to do and also the victims on where to go to get help. Gracious added that:

“The advantages of the posters, I think, included that with WhatsApp and other social media platforms, it's easy to reach a lot of people in a short while. Many students put the posters on their statuses while others shared in various groups, which helped ensure that the posters reached far and wide. Given that the messages were accompanied by pictures, I think it was easier for someone to interpret the messages. The disadvantages could be that those who did not have access to the online channels through which the posters were shared were left out.” (Gracious Mulinga, 2023)

3. PLAY: THREATS ON TED

The play was written and directed by Smith Likongwe. He is one of the lecturers at the University of Malawi. It was presented by students from The University of Malawi. Mr Likongwe sent the following text note which is a summary of the play:

PLAY: THREADS ON TRED By Smith Likongwe

“The play is about a boy who has school fees problems. The uncle is unable to pay fees but works hard trying to get money back home. The needy boy in college impregnates his girlfriend. Meanwhile, the boy's uncle finally gets money for fees. He sold his phone and other items and in addition, he also borrows and ensures that he has enough money. Someone offers to give the uncle a lift to the university so that he may pay the fees. Back at the University, the boy is afraid because he has no fees and is stressed about being responsible for the pregnancy. The girl also lies to him that she is also HIV positive. The boy panics and commits suicide. Funeral arrives in village as uncle is about to set off to pay fees.” (Smith Likongwe 2023)

After the play, Martha Kasunda, one of the counsellors and the University Chaplain engaged the audience in reviewing the play. The audience gave feedback on the message received from the play, lessons learnt, and practical actions that they were going to take individually. The play presented realistic life situations that the audience could easily relate to and it was presented in Chichewa. During the interaction session, it was clear that the play used both authoritative and facilitative intervention. It was informative in that people expressed understanding of the play, they pinpointed instructive lessons from it and even stated the actions that they were going to take. The performance depicted a reflective state in the audience, it was observed that they responded to the mood of the play.

4. POEMS

Several poets wrote and presented poems during the Suicide Awareness and Prevention week. This study analyses one poem “Dear Friend” by Alfred Kamwendo.

POEM

DEAR FRIEND

By Alfred Inkah Kamwendo

I have been here
I know this kind of fear
I know this dark room
I know this loud silence
I know this unsung song you are listening to
I know this untold story you are narrating

I have met this narrative before
On my way to adulthood
I have been in this self prison before
A prison full of suicidal thoughts
And void of solutions
A prison full great expectations
And void of resolutions
A prison of overthinking

They told me I wasn't creative
They told me I was annoying
They said I was uncooperative
They said I was boring
They said, said, said and said
That I wasn't man enough to keep her
as a lover
So she went, she went and went

Went on to break my heart
Leaving me for nothing
Taking me for granted
I know these words

Dear friend
You are a more precious gift
Than the world's minerals
You are found and not lost
You were bought at an unimaginable
cost
Don't lock yourself
In that dark room
Don't think you are alone
For I, your friend, am with you
Jesus is with you too
My dearest friend
Open your mouth and speak
Speak and speak to the world
Speak that you are strong, strong and
strong
Unlock your face
I miss your smile
Please, LIVE

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#Depression is real! Help a friend#

Alfred Kamwendo explained that he wrote the poem “Dear Friend” while he was with his friend to whom he addressed it. They were on the way to the hospital to get medical help for his friend who had mental issues including depression and suicide contemplation. From the

poem, it is clear that it has both Authoritative and facilitative methods of intervention. It relates to the state of the victim as well as offers advice and moral support.

The analysis of the four art forms depicts that both fine and performing art forms use multiple of Heron's six categories of intervention. The multiple applications can be viewed as the reason for their effectiveness. The four art forms acted as complements and supplements to one another, providing a synergic force that led to effective management of mental health that led to zero suicide cases through to the exam time and the end of that semester.

Conclusion

The study has elucidated mental health as a global universal concern and needs to be addressed in all dimensions. It has proved that intervention through artworks is friendly since through artworks; it is easy to confront and convey messages which would have been otherwise difficult to do through other mediums. Artworks possess ritual power that facilitates the gathering of people, taking them through a paradigm shift into producing positive community actions that are developmental. This power makes art forms effective tools in mitigating mental health and even addressing matters that cannot be otherwise addressed.

Their multifacetedness, engaging both the cognitive, affective and psychomotor of the human being makes them more effective and efficient in mitigation, contributing to the mental well-being of individuals, resulting in a socially and productively healthy society. Artworks ride on modern technology in designing, packaging and disseminating artworks enabling them reach the targeted audience in good quality and shortest time possible.

The study therefore calls upon music and medical practitioners; and researchers to design projects, policies and research that target the use of arts for a mentally healthy society; since the study has proven that indeed the arts have the power to bring down mental health cases and increase a sociable productive community.

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