

Analysis of Self-Care and Stress Management in YouTube Vlogs Targeting Adolescents

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Abstract:

With the proliferation of new media platforms, YouTube vlogs have increasingly become a vital channel for adolescents to express themselves and gain mental health insights. This study examines 50 adolescent vlogs uploaded between 2022 and 2024, employing content analysis and thematic induction to systematically analyze representations of self-care and stress management. Findings reveal that self-care themes primarily manifest in three dimensions: physical self-care (40%), psychological adjustment (35%), and interest cultivation (25%). Stress management strategies, meanwhile, fall into three categories: study methods (45.5%), emotional regulation (31.5%), and social support (23.0%). At the expressive level, linguistic narratives, visual imagery, and interactive elements collectively form a multimodal narrative framework, enhancing the communicative impact of these themes. This study indicates that YouTube vlogs play a positive role in lowering barriers to mental health topics and facilitating peer experience sharing among adolescents. However, the study has limitations, including the insufficient scientific rigor of the content and an overreliance on online support. The findings contribute to understanding emerging trends in adolescent mental health education within new media contexts and provide reference points for intervention and guidance by families, schools, and platforms.

Keywords: adolescents; YouTube vlogs; self-care; stress management; mental health communication

1. Introduction

In recent years, adolescent mental health issues have garnered increasing societal attention. Academic pressure, interpersonal relationships, societal ex-

pectations, and struggles with self-identity present adolescents with multiple psychological challenges during their developmental journey. With the proliferation of digital media, YouTube has emerged as a vital platform for adolescents to access information,

express themselves, and seek emotional support. Within this ecosystem, video blogs (Vlogs) have gained significant popularity as a core content format. Adolescents are not only consumers of Vlogs but also active creators. While documenting their lives and sharing experiences, Vloggers also demonstrate strategies for self-care and stress management.

Compared to traditional media, YouTube's dissemination methods align more closely with adolescents' rhythms of life, offering stronger interactivity and immersion[1]. Through comment sections, live comments, likes, and other features, viewers can establish emotional resonance with creators. This social dimension endows vlogs with functions beyond mere entertainment consumption, serving as platforms for psychological counseling and experience sharing. Particularly in presenting themes of self-care and stress management, vlogs become crucial channels for adolescents to observe, emulate, and learn. Therefore, systematically analyzing the portrayal of self-care and stress management in YouTube vlogs not only reveals emerging trends in adolescent mental health education within the new media context but also provides reference points for relevant interventions and guidance.

Studying self-care and stress management in youth vlogs holds multifaceted academic and practical value. On the academic front, this research fills a gap in studies examining mental health communication among adolescents in new media environments. Existing research predominantly focuses on psychological, educational, and sociological perspectives, with limited attention to YouTube—a highly transnational and social platform—resulting in a lack of concrete media-specific practice analysis. On the practical front, adolescents' cognitive and practical levels of self-care and stress management directly impact their developmental quality and social adaptability. The widespread dissemination of vlogs presents an opportunity to popularize related knowledge. Analyzing the themes presented within these vlogs can offer more targeted references for parents, educators, and mental health practitioners[2]. Furthermore, this research can reveal how adolescents construct mental health discourse in online spaces, which reflects their position in intergenerational communication and sociocultural shifts. Self-care and stress management are not merely individual psychological behaviors but also manifestations of cultural values. Therefore, this study concerns not only mental health education but also encompasses multiple dimensions including media communication, cultural identity, and social interaction.

2. Research Design

2.1 Sample Sources and Selection Criteria

During sample selection, this study primarily relied on

YouTube's search and recommendation mechanisms. By inputting keywords such as "teen Vlog self-care" and "teen Vlog stress management," approximately 200 videos were collected as preliminary samples. To ensure research relevance and validity, the following screening criteria were established: Video creators must be explicitly positioned as adolescents or targeting adolescent audiences; Video content must address self-care or stress management themes, such as daily routines, emotional regulation, or academic pressure coping strategies; Videos were uploaded between 2022 and 2024 to ensure timely relevance of findings; Videos had over 50,000 views to guarantee audience influence[3].

After multiple rounds of screening and manual review, 50 eligible videos were finalized as the research sample. These videos were primarily created by adolescent vloggers aged 14 to 20, who reside in North America, Europe, and East Asia. Content spanned academic routines, lifestyle sharing, and psychological adjustment experiences. The sample's international nature facilitates cross-cultural understanding of commonalities and differences in self-care and stress management among youth populations.

2.2 Analytical Dimensions and Thematic Categorization Method

The research dimensions were defined around three key perspectives: presentation styles and frequency of self-care themes, revealing how vloggers convey practices of physical, psychological, and emotional care through videos; types and application contexts of stress management strategies, examining how vloggers articulate pressures from academics, interpersonal relationships, and societal expectations while sharing specific coping methods; The role of language, visuals, and interactive elements in conveying themes, analyzing how YouTube's multimodal characteristics amplify or diminish the communicative impact of relevant themes[4].

Data organization primarily involved the use of Excel spreadsheets and handwritten notes, with researchers systematically listing keywords and thematic units extracted from transcripts. Through tabular comparisons and color-coded annotations, the categorization process for open coding and axial coding was completed. The self-care theme was subdivided into three categories: physical care, psychological adjustment, and interest cultivation. Stress management strategies were categorized into learning methods, emotional regulation, and social support. Regarding expression methods, verbal narration, visual imagery, and audience interaction formed the primary analytical dimensions.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1 Presentation Methods and Frequency of Self-Care Themes

Self-care in adolescent vlogs is primarily presented through everyday life scenarios. Regarding physical care, many vloggers document morning and evening skincare routines, fitness activities, or dietary habits, demonstrating bodily attention through concrete daily practices. For psychological adjustment, practices like journaling, meditation, and mindfulness exercises frequently appear in videos, described as crucial methods for alleviating anxiety and enhancing self-awareness. Interest cultivation

manifests through sharing activities such as painting, music, and sports, with vloggers emphasizing that hobbies are not only entertainment but also vital supports for mental health.

As shown in Table 1, physical self-care topics account for approximately 40% of content frequency, mental adjustment for 35%, and interest cultivation for 25%. This distribution reflects adolescents' heightened focus on external appearance and physical condition, alongside a growing awareness of mental health importance. Particularly in the post-pandemic period, many vlogs featured increased attention to solitary time and inner emotions, indicating significant societal influence on adolescents' self-care practices.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Self-Care Themes in Teenage Vlogs

Self-Care Theme	Occurrence Frequency (Times)	Percentage (%)
physical self-care	82	40.0
Mental Adjustment	72	35.0
Interest Cultivation	51	25.0
Total	205	100.0

3.2 Types and Application Contexts of Stress Management Strategies

As shown in Table 2, academic stress is the most frequently mentioned topic in stress management. Many Vloggers share experiences with exam preparation, time management, and study planning. Common strategies include creating study checklists, using the Pomodoro Technique, and maintaining a balanced schedule. Emotional release is primarily achieved through artistic expression, exercise, and social interaction. Vloggers tend to express stress through painting, dancing, or songwriting, and also seek support by gathering with friends or participating in community activities. Social support manifests as seeking help

from family, teachers, or online communities, with some vlogs also introducing psychological counseling or self-help platforms.

In terms of application contexts, study-related stress management is more prevalent during the academic term and exam periods, while emotional coping and social support are integrated into daily life. This indicates that adolescents tend to rely on planning and techniques when facing sudden, high-intensity stress, whereas they depend on emotional regulation and social networks to manage long-term stress. The combined use of different strategies reflects the diversity and flexibility of adolescent stress management[5].

Table 2: Distribution of Stress Management Strategies in Adolescent Vlogs

Stress Management Strategy	Frequency (times)	Percentage (%)
Study Methods	91	45.5
Emotional Guidance	63	31.5
Social Support	46	23.0
Total	200	100.0

3.3 The Role of Language, Visuals, and Interactive Elements in Theme Communication

As shown in Table 3, at the expressive level, verbal narration serves as the most direct method. Many vloggers employ first-person narration, emphasizing "my" experiences

and feelings to bridge the gap with viewers. Visually, the videos often incorporate soothing background music, soft color palettes, and relatable everyday camera angles to create a warm and relaxed atmosphere. Regarding interactive elements, the comment section serves as a vital space for viewers to share their experiences and express feelings

of resonance. Viewer comments often spark broader discussions about self-care and stress management, transforming the video into an interactive space for psychological support.

Notably, some vloggers invite audience participation in self-care practices through challenges or Q&A formats, such as “7-Day Mindfulness Challenge” or “Stress Man-

agement Quiz.” This form of interaction not only enhances engagement with the video but also promotes the dissemination and application of thematic content. Through the combined effect of multimodal narratives, themes of self-care and stress management are conveyed intuitively and effectively in vlogs[6] .

Table 3: Frequency of multimodal expression methods in adolescent vlogs

Expression Method	Usage Frequency (Times)	Percentage (%)
Verbal Narration	125	50.0
Visual imagery	82	32.8
Interactive Elements	43	17.2
Total	250	100.0

4. Discussion

The above analysis reveals that YouTube vlogs hold potential positive effects in adolescent mental health education. Vloggers’ relatable narratives reduce the sense of solemnity surrounding mental health topics, making these topics more accessible and easier to emulate for young people. The platform’s interactive features provide channels for expression and communication, fostering online support networks. The cross-cultural nature of vlogs facilitates the sharing of experiences among adolescents from diverse regions, contributing to the development of more universal self-care and stress management approaches.

Future research should delve deeper into the scientific validity of vlog content and its impact on audience reception, while also examining the differences and convergence in mental health discourse among adolescents across diverse cultural contexts. Educators and mental health professionals should actively engage to guide adolescents in utilizing vlog resources appropriately, leveraging them as complementary channels for mental health education.

5. Conclusions

In summary, YouTube vlogs have become a significant platform for adolescents to demonstrate and learn self-care and stress management. Content analysis reveals that physical self-care, psychological adjustment, and interest cultivation form the primary themes of self-care; learning methods, emotional regulation, and social support constitute core stress management strategies; while verbal narration, visual imagery, and interactive elements collectively enhance the dissemination effectiveness of these themes. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are proposed: Adolescents should maintain critical thinking when consuming and creating Vlogs to distinguish

between scientific from unscientific content. Educators and parents should monitor mental health discourse on platforms like YouTube, while actively guiding adolescents toward healthy concepts of self-care and stress management. Platform operators can enhance content review and recommendations, encouraging the dissemination of more positive and scientifically grounded mental health practices.

This study reveals emerging trends in adolescent mental health communication within new media contexts, enriching interdisciplinary research between psychology and communication studies while providing future research directions. As platforms like YouTube continue evolving, representations of self-care and stress management will diversify, exerting long-term impacts on adolescent development and societal mental health.

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