

Content Consumption Behavior of YouTube Restoration Videos' Viewers: A Research Agenda

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Abstract

The popularity of YouTube has made watching videos entirely accessible to anyone. We now have not only the power to choose what we want to see, but also we can create it ourselves. An unavoidable aspect of the internet is the existence of YouTube rabbit holes. Since 2005, that the video-sharing website went live, YouTube has seen the emergence of genres whose popularity was totally unanticipated and which would never have been thought of by conventional television networks. A new movement has evolved in recent years that may lack celebrities, spectacular reveals, or shock tactics etc. While gamers showing off their talents, obsessively detailed restaurant reviews, culinary skills, shouting conspiracy theories, and softly whispered serenades etc. have all reached mainstream success, this one trend has also gained significant traction. And this is the genre of 'restoration videos'. It's just people taking rust-ridden, dust- and grime-ridden objects and carefully fixing them. There's a whole world of restoration videos on the YouTube, where individuals record themselves pulling an antique tool or other piece of machinery out of the trash. Similarly spectacle are the videos where old automobiles are given a new lease of life in a garage after a gruelling regime. On YouTube, the restoration community has millions of views and likes in addition to multitudes of subscribers. Generally speaking, restoration can be divided into a few categories, such as toy repair, shoes, small machines, automobiles, consumer electronics, furniture, and tools, to name a few. The items restored on these channels feel quirky, exquisite, and distinctive in today's copycat environment, and much of this content is created at a very low cost. The story of an ugly, unwanted, and relatively dysfunctional object being given a second chance at life is both delightful and captivating. It also shares several characteristics with the category of videos known as autonomous sensory meridian response, or ASMR (Wikipedia, 2024). It is thus interesting to analyse why restoration videos are so popular? The paper discusses, setting of the research agenda to analyse the salient aspects of content consumption behaviour of YouTube restoration video viewers. Literature review shall be undertaken to identify the existence of academic and research based knowledge pool contextualized to this popular phenomenon. That shall help identify the research gap, research problem and thus the subsequent agenda for prospective research. The paper also discusses identifying suitable qualitative and/or quantitative studies that shall help address the research problem in order to understand the phenomenon of such distinct content consumption. This research agenda shall be helpful in identifying a structured approach to research the content consumption aspects of restoration videos, which in turn shall be useful to examine whether the constructs such as hypnotic quality (Open Culture, 2020), sustainability (Rhodri, 2019), vicarious satisfaction (Christopher, 2021) and auditory and visual stimuli (Trenholm et al, 2022), and/or some other behavioural motivations drive the viewing of restoration videos?

Keywords

Content Consumption, Restoration Videos, YouTube, ASMR, Vicarious Experience.

1. Introduction

The popularity of YouTube has made watching videos entirely accessible to anyone. We now have not only the power to choose what we want to see, but also we can create it ourselves. An unavoidable aspect of the internet is the existence of YouTube rabbit holes. Since 2005, that the video-sharing website went live, YouTube has seen the emergence of genres whose popularity was totally unanticipated and which would never have been thought of by conventional television networks. A new movement has evolved in recent years that may lack celebrities, spectacular reveals, or shock tactics etc. While gamers showing off their talents, obsessively detailed restaurant reviews, culinary skills, shouting conspiracy theories, and softly whispered serenades etc. have all reached mainstream success, this one trend has also gained significant traction. And this is the genre of 'restoration videos'.

It's just people taking rust-ridden, dust- and grime-ridden objects and carefully fixing them. There's a whole world of restoration videos on the YouTube, where individuals record themselves pulling an antique tool or other piece of machinery out of the trash. Similarly spectacle are the videos where old automobiles are given a new lease of life in a garage after a grueling regime. On YouTube, the restoration community has millions of views and likes in addition to multitudes of subscribers. Generally speaking, restoration can be divided into a few categories, such as toy repair, shoes, small machines, automobiles, consumer electronics, furniture, and tools, to name a few. The items restored on these channels feel quirky, exquisite, and distinctive in today's copycat environment, and much of this content is created at a very low cost. The story of an ugly, unwanted, and relatively dysfunctional object being given a second chance at life is both delightful and captivating.

1.1 Content Consumption on YouTube: Academic Background

A brief literature review undertaken to understand the viewer-motives, effects and psychological constructs etc. in YouTube restoration videos' viewing revealed that no significant scholarly work is available in this area. However the literature review did discover some related research works which are helpful in contextualization for present work.

For example, scholarly works have been done with respect to other psychological constructs in YouTube video viewing like hypnotic quality (Open Culture, 2020; Nansen & Balanzategui., 2022.), sustainability motive (Rhodri, 2019), vicarious satisfaction (Christopher, 2021; Lee & Lee, 2021; Kircaburun et al. 2021) auditory and visual stimuli (Trenholm et al, 2022; Tsun-Yu, 2022), viewer satisfaction (Mohamed and Shoufan, 2024; Cho et al. 2023) and autonomous sensory meridian response, (ASMR) (Wikipedia, 2024; Lohaus et al. 2023; Klusen, 2021; Jeong, 2020; Portas-Ruiz, 2022). In this background, since there exists a research gap, it is thus interesting to study the phenomenon of viewing restoration videos on YouTube.

Thus a research agenda emerges that includes research gap, research questions, research objectives research methodology and the road ahead from there. The research agenda also discusses operational definitions. The paper shall limit to identification of the research agenda, based on which detailed research can be carried out at a later stage. The following sections discuss the research agenda in detail.

1.2 Research Gap

As discussed, a brief literature review undertaken to understand the viewer-motives, effects and psychological constructs etc. in YouTube restoration videos' viewing revealed that no significant scholarly work is available in this area. Thus "*Content Consumption Behavior of Restoration Videos' viewers on YouTube*" emerges as the research gap. Based on this the research questions are formulated in the following section.

1.3 Research Questions

2. What drives the YouTube restoration videos viewers' content consumption behavior?
3. Can the content consumption behavior of YouTube restoration video viewers be explained through certain psychological constructs?
4. Can viewer analytics be used to analyze certain YouTube restoration videos?

The research questions lead to formulation of research objectives.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To document the genre of YouTube restoration videos from a managerial perspective.

2. To explain the viewer-motivation behind viewing of YouTube restoration videos.
3. To explore the context of specific psychological constructs with YouTube video viewers' content consumption behavior.

The research objectives shall be tackled (at the time of detailed research later) with an appropriate research methodology as discussed in the section below.

2. Operational Definitions

- i. YouTube Content:* The wide variety of videos that are posted and shared on YouTube are referred to as content. It covers a wide variety of themes, lengths, and formats, appealing to almost every kind of interest. (Dean, 2021)
- ii. YouTube Restoration Videos:* The video of (often) relatively old/dysfunctional/semi-functional objects being given a second chance at life by the application of certain tools, techniques and labour. (Dino, 2019; Open Culture, 2020)
- iii. Digital Media Content Consumption Behavior:* The way a viewer or listener reads, watches, or listens to data and information that is available on digital media is known as digital content consumption. With a growing number of platforms, devices, and content, digital media content consumption behavior explains, the content consumers' choice, access, consumption, time spent, loyalty, likes/dislikes, preferences, habits and shifting of their choices etc. of digital content. (Chattopadhyay, 2019; Yassin, 2021)
- iv. Content Analysis:* A method of conducting research that identifies words, themes, or concepts within a particular text or set of qualitative data. With content analysis, researchers can quantify and analyze the frequency, relevance, and relationships of specific terms, subjects, or ideas. (White, 2006; Mariette, 2016)
- v. Sentiment Analysis:* The process of analyzing digital text to determine if the emotional tone of the communication is neutral, positive, or negative is known as sentiment analysis. Large volumes of text data, like as emails, customer support chat transcripts, comments and reviews on social media sites, can be subjected to analysis by using this process.
- vi. Psychological construct:* In psychology, a construct is a tool that helps explain human behavior. A psychological construct can be thought of as a label applied to a group or domain of different behaviors. Psychological constructs are outcomes of the broad scientific method of examining natural occurrences, drawing conclusions about shared characteristics from those observations, and assigning a name to the observed commonality or its root cause. This process gives rise to the term "construct." In other words, a construct can be a helpful conceptual instrument that promotes understanding and communication if it is properly stated and the phenomena it includes is specified in a way that allows for diverse viewpoints. Constructs enable extrapolations to unseen behaviours and summarize behavioural domains.

2.1 Research Methodology

Contextual literature review, thus provides the author with an academic justification for the need to carry out a study on YouTube restoration videos' viewers with a mixed-method research approach, i.e. Content Analysis based on viewers' comments coupled with an appropriate additional research method. For content analysis, Sentiment Analysis in Social Media (please refer the below section) shall be chosen. Sentiment Analysis shall be combined with Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on select YouTube restoration video viewers. The overall study shall use an interpretivist, exploratory qualitative approach. The following sections present academic reasoning to deploy prospective content analysis, sentimental analysis and focus group discussion as tools to study the phenomenon with a mixed-method approach.

2.2 Content Analysis of Online Comments

With the evolution of digitalization and related socio-technological breakthroughs, online users can now actively engage in the creation and dissemination of online content. Scholarly interest has led to a robust and growing body of

work on user-generated content (UGC) in tandem with this evolution. (Naab and Sehl 2017). User comments are among the most popular types of publicly accessible user-generated content (Newman et al. 2019; Stroud et al. 2016). When people take advantage of the chance to publish written messages inspired by any online content (news, story, blog or video), that is where user comments begin. The comments appear in comment sections of online content. An online debate may also happen when more people start leaving comments on the same content giving rejoinders the opinions of others (Ziegele and Quiring 2013). Research examines user comments from a variety of perspectives. Scholars also look at a variety of ways that user comments affect readers' and viewers' perceptions of the content (e.g., Sikorski 2016). Finally, user comments on specific topics that catch their attention are examined by scholars across a range of communication science subfields. This is consistent with the wide range of studies on user feedback. (Newman et al. 2019).

2.3 Typical Research Designs for Content Analyses

Scholars typically employ standardised ways to analyse the content characteristics of user comments. There have been reports of several qualitative text analyses as well as standardized content analysis (Al-Saggaf 2006; Graham and Witschge 2003). Furthermore, an increasing amount of research uses automated and semi-automatic methods to examine user comments (Gardiner et al. 2016; Stoll et al. 2020, for example). This development is attributed, in part, to the growing significance of computational methods in communication study in current times and the relatively easy access to massive datasets of content in public domain from social media sites (Possler et al. 2019). Reviews of content assessments based on user comments are not systematic. However, in their scoping assessment of studies on user-generated content, Naab and Sehl (2017) conclude that standardized content analyses perform better than discourse analyses, text analyses, and other qualitative approaches. Studies do, however, seldom use a hybrid strategy (see, for example, Naab and Sehl, 2017). For instance, in their 2015 study, Graham and Wright combined qualitative journalist interviews with a content analysis of internet forums. Ziegele et al. (2014) combine qualitative user interviews with a content analysis of conversation variables found in user comments. Similar to Naab and Sehl (2017), cross-sectional analyses predominate over longitudinal analyses, however there are certain exceptions that offer insightful information (e.g., Gardiner et al., 2016; Kraker et al., 2014; Wright et al. 2020). The knowledge gained from several scholars' examination of contextual influences in online newspapers might be very beneficial for content analytic investigations of user comments (Rowe 2014; Ziegele et al. 2014; Freelon 2015; Ksiazek 2015; Ruiz et al. 2011; Santana 2014). In terms of sampling, it is reasonable to say that Facebook page user comments receive a great deal of scientific attention (Jünger, 2022). This is explained by the fact that Facebook has historically made its public content reasonably accessible. That being said, some platforms have gotten far less attention (Djerf-Pierre et al. 2019 has analysis of YouTube comments for examples of exceptions). Content analyses are rarely carried out in conjunction with experimental designs. For instance, Stroud et al. (2015) used a variety of people in a field experiment to interact with comment section users. They examined the impact on the caliber of the remarks that followed. A few lab studies involved researchers who altered remarks inside a discussion-thread and then content-analyzed the respondents' answers (e.g., Chen and Lu 2017; Naab 2020). Proposed study mentioned in this paper shall be using content analysis of online comments against select restoration videos.

3. The Sentiment Analysis Method Used in Social Media

The use of either lexicon-based methods, machine learning methods, or a combination of both are the major tools for sentiment analysis in social media. Unsupervised learning is the term used to describe the lexicon-based method, which is a simple method that involves the usage of dictionary as the only resource. According to some studies (Zulfadzli & Haliyana, 2019) Sentiwordnet (Agarwal, et al., 2015) and the term frequency-inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) (Das & Sarit, 2018) approaches are widely used for sentiment analysis. This method involves comparing the keywords in the text data with other words that are positive or negative in polarity lexicons that have already been constructed.

Regarding the TF-IDF method, it computes the word frequency-inverse document frequency and functions by turning the words into a number. The method rely on lexical resources, and the quality of such resources has a significant impact on how efficacious the entire approach is. It is predicated on the idea that a text's polarity can be determined by the polarity of the words that make up the text. This method is not intended to cover every facet of language because natural languages are complicated, particularly when it comes to slang, irony, and nullification etc. (Khan et al., 2016). This method is thus insufficient to analyse sentimental language. Some of the issues include the fact that certain words have varied meanings depending on their context, that certain sentences with sentimental words may not actually convey any sentiment, and that numerous statements devoid of sentimental terms may yet suggest opinion (Akhter &

Muhhamad, 2016). The lexicon-based approach does, however, have several advantages of its own, including simple word counting for positive and negative words, adaptability to many languages, and quick analysis completion. The procedure of processing machine learning (ML), which is a subset of supervise learning, requires training data. The Naïve Bayes model and Support Vector Machine (SVM) are often employed machine learning methods. When used on a well-formed text corpus, Naïve Bayes works well (Hassan et al., 2017), while support vector machines do better on smaller datasets. However, the machine learning approach performs badly on Facebook, where users frequently post misspellings and ramblings. It also needs a large training sample size to adjust, as the size and quality of the output are influenced by the dataset size (Akhter & Muhhamad, 2016; Mahtab et al., 2018).

In addition, machine learning analysis is arduous; hours can pass when using a sophisticated model, particularly if training is necessary (Chekima & Rayner, 2018). Although the method is quicker when the training sample is smaller, the classification accuracy suffers as a result (Dhaoui et al., 2017). It's interesting to note that researchers contend that the accuracy of both forms of analytic methods are quite comparable (ibid). In order to forecast the trends of sentiments, two methods can be combined: machine learning-based Naïve Bayes multinomial event models and lexicon-based sentiment categorization using sentiment score functions. Research has demonstrated that employing a combination of both approaches yields greater results in terms of efficiency (Hassan et al., 2018). This means that combining the two approaches will enhance the output because they complement one another and produce a better result than utilizing only one. An interdisciplinary approach is useful for identifying phenomena (Dhaoui et al., 2017). Additionally, it can enhance how unstructured data is handled (Rahman et al., 2019)

The proposed study mentioned in this paper shall be based on either of the methods or similar ones to conduct a sentiment analysis of based on comments by viewers of select YouTube restoration videos.

3.1 Focus Group Discussion on YouTube Restoration Video Viewers

Semi-structured, focus group discussions to examine the viewers' YouTube videos content consumption behavior shall be undertaken. "A group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research" is how Powell et al. (1996) define focus groups (Gibbs, 1997). Focus group discussion method has a great utility by providing in-depth, extensive deliberations on a subject matter by engaging in both types on interactions-complementary and argumentative. Moreover since in-depth interviews might not have the same impact as group interactions, focus groups have been chosen over interviews. (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). According to Kitzinger (1995), interaction is the primary component of focus groups since it reveals participants' worldviews, language preferences, and values on various topics. Focus group discussion gives members the chance to reassess their own perceptions of their experiences and ask each other questions (Gibbs, 1997). Focus groups also yield information that helps researchers determine the significance of a given issue and its underlying causes (Hennink, 2014; Guest et al., 2016; Onwuegbuzie, 2009). Through the 'group effect', which Lindlof & Taylor (2010) define as a technique that relies on directed discussion and shared conversation, the results of focus group discussion shall be used to gather understanding and knowledge on the issues associated to YouTube restoration videos viewers' behavior. In the past the method of focus group discussions have been used to study (though not necessarily in the context of YouTube restoration videos) certain other aspects of YouTube video viewers. (Gbelahan, 2017; Harris, 2019; Harris et al., 2021; Tiffany, 2021; Wickramasinghe & Wijetunga, 2023). These shall be used to arrive at an appropriate number of focus group discussion participants, the agenda, moderators, documenting the discussions, synthesizing and arriving at the outcomes of the discussions in the current study. The focused group discussion participants shall be chosen on the basis of their hobby of watching the genre of YouTube restoration videos.

Subsequent to the identification of academic research support on the prospective methods and related aspects for the prospective research mentioned above, the themes derived with corresponding research studies have been tabulated as follows in Table 1:

Table 1. Literature Support for Relevant Methodology

Prospective Research Methods & Related Aspects	Themes Derived	Studies
Content Analysis of Online Comments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evolution and Growth of UGC Research 2. Nature of User Comments 	Naab and Sehl (2017); Newman et al. (2019); Stroud et al. (2016) Ziegele and Quiring (2013); Sikorski (2016); Newman et al. (2019)
Typical Research Designs for Content Analyses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standardized Content Analysis 2. Automated and Semi-automated Methods 3. Hybrid and Cross-sectional Analyses 4. Contextual Influences in Online Newspapers 5. Platform-Specific Analyses 6. Experimental Designs in Content Analysis 	Al-Saggaf (2006); Graham and Witschge (2003) Gardiner et al. (2016); Stoll et al. (2020); Possler et al. (2019) Naab and Sehl (2017); Graham and Wright (2015); Ziegele et al. (2014); Gardiner et al. (2016); Kraker et al. (2014); Wright et al. (2020) Rowe (2014); Ziegele et al. (2014); Freelon (2015); Ksiazek (2015); Ruiz et al. (2011); Santana (2014) Jünger (2022); Djerf-Pierre et al. (2019) Stroud et al. (2015); Chen and Lu (2017); Naab (2020)
The Sentiment Analysis Method Used in Social Media	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lexicon-Based Methods 2. Limitations and Issues with Lexicon-Based Methods 3. Machine Learning Methods 	Zulfadzli & Haliyana (2019); Agarwal et al. (2015); Das & Sarit (2018) Khan et al. (2016); Akhter & Muhammad (2016) Hassan et al. (2017); Akhter & Muhammad (2016); Mahtab et al. (2018); Chekima & Rayner (2018); Dhaoui et al. (2017); Hassan et al. (2018); Rahman et al. (2019)
Focus Group Discussion on YouTube Restoration Video Viewers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition and Utility of Focus Groups 2. Past Use of Focus Group Discussions 	Powell et al. (1996); Gibbs (1997); Lindlof & Taylor (2010); Kitzinger (1995); Hennink (2014); Guest et al. (2016); Onwuegbuzie (2009) Gbelahan (2017); Harris (2019); Harris et al. (2021); Tiffany (2021); Wickramasinghe & Wijetunga (2023)

These themes which have robust literature-based support, shall be helpful in carrying out the prospective study in a structured manner.

4. Conclusion and the Road Ahead

The research agenda identified and discussed above shall be helpful in researching the content consumption aspects of YouTube restoration video viewers, which in turn shall be useful to examine whether the psychological constructs and/or some other behavioural motivations drive the viewing of restoration videos? This agenda shall be further shared and discussed with other researchers in a structured manner in order to identify refinements if required in the research methodology and/or any other aspects under discussion that may be needed to be studied in context with viewers' content consumption of YouTube restoration videos.

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Biography

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