
PARENTS' EXPERIENCE ABOUT AUTISM ON YOUTUBE VIDEOS

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Introduction

Sharing personal experiences and survival mechanisms about challenging conditions such as Autism on YouTube may be useful to other parents, educators, psychologists, and policy makers.

Objectives and aims

This study aimed at analysing YouTube videos of parents sharing their experiences about Autism and text comments posted by viewers.

Methods

During the period from 15 November to 15 December, 2012. YouTube was researched by three assessors for videos covering parents sharing their experiences about Autism. Only relevant videos in the English language were identified. For each video, the following information were collected: title, authors, duration, number of viewers, and total number of days on YouTube. Using criteria comprising content, technical authority and pedagogy parameters, videos were rated independently by three assessors and grouped into educationally useful and non-useful videos. A critical thematic analysis of comments posted on was conducted.

Results

A total of 834 videos were screened and only 128 were found to be relevant to parents sharing their experience. Further analysis revealed that 105 (82.1%) provided useful information; scoring (mean \pm SD, 15.5 \pm 0.94). The other videos 23 (17.9%) were not useful educationally, scoring (11.9 \pm 2.87). The differences between these two categories were significant; $p < 0.001$. An aggregate of 2393 text comments was posted to useful videos and 951 to non-useful videos.

Conclusions

Despite the variability in the quality of YouTube videos, there are good videos covering parents' experiences about Autism that can be used by other parents, publics, and professional bodies. The comments made by viewers reflect the importance of the emerging social media tools such as YouTube in sharing experiences.