



Evaluation of Social Media Skits and Emerging Behaviours among Youths in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the influence of social media skits on emerging behavioural patterns among Nigerian youths. Anchored on the Uses and Gratification Theory, it examines how skits, short comedy videos widely shared on platforms such as TikTok, Facebook Reels, and Instagram are shaping youth culture in ways that go beyond entertainment. The study adopts a qualitative design using content analysis of 60 purposively selected skits posted between January and June 2023, alongside secondary sources for context. Findings reveal that while skits often serve as a medium for creativity, humour, and social commentary, many also promote sexually explicit content, risky pranks, and other behaviours that were previously less visible in Nigerian society. These portrayals tend to normalize certain practices among impressionable viewers and contribute to wider debates on morality, freedom of expression, and cultural change. The analysis further shows that the growing quest for online visibility and monetization motivates skit makers to push boundaries, sometimes blurring the line between creativity and harmful content. The paper concludes that although digital communication has expanded opportunities for youth expression and participation, it has also introduced content that challenges social values and raises questions of responsibility. It recommends stronger regulatory oversight by institutions such as the National Film and Video Censors Board, alongside digital literacy campaigns to help youths critically engage with online content. Such measures would help strike a balance between preserving creative freedom and protecting vulnerable audiences from harmful influences.

Keywords: Moral behaviour, social media, skits, youths, digital communication, Nigeria.

Introduction

In recent years, social media has become a dominant platform for youth expression and creativity in Nigeria, with short comedy videos, popularly known as skits, gaining widespread popularity. These skits are not only used for entertainment and relaxation but also as vehicles for social commentary and political satire. However, alongside their positive contributions, concerns have emerged about their influence on youth behaviour, particularly in shaping new patterns that were previously less visible in Nigerian society. Research has shown that social media content can both reinforce and challenge social norms depending on its form and reception by audiences (Al-Ansi et al., 2023; Ekpenyong & Turnwait, 2016). In Nigeria, the accessibility of digital tools and the absence of strong regulatory checks have enabled rapid growth in skit production, creating opportunities for self-expression but also exposing audiences to content that may encourage risky or unconventional behaviours (Ajagunna & Oladeji, 2017; Oloyede & Oloyede, 2022). The central concern of this study, therefore, is how social media skits contribute to emerging behavioural patterns among Nigerian youths. While some skits promote positive social messages, others feature explicit sexual content, dangerous pranks, or exaggerated acts that may normalize practices with broader social consequences. This makes it necessary to examine the intersection between digital freedom, cultural values, and youth development. The study therefore investigates the types of behaviours portrayed in social media skits, how they shape emerging patterns among young audiences, and what implications these trends hold for social regulation and cultural continuity in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Social media, no matter what it is used for, has come to stay. Aside from youths, businesses, companies, nations and organisations use social media platforms like Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter and others to connect with friends, allies, customers, loved ones and even business partners. But in the case of entertainment, skit makers like *Sabinus*, *Brainjotter*, *Sydney Talker*, *Macaroni*, *Broda Shaggi* and others have become famous and successful through their explicit content on social media. Richards and Caldwell (2015) confirm that social media skit is taking another turn; a situation in which offensive and dangerous behaviour is propagated for fame and money. *Sabinus*, a popular skit maker released a video showing how he walked along with ghosts in a mortuary. *Macaroni* on the other hand, is known for his sexualising of women by revealing their butts and huge breasts. Oberst, Wegmann, Stodt, Brand and Chamorro (2017) stressed that skit makers are becoming dangerous and morally problematic to the society than entertaining their audience.

Young girls of secondary school ages now expose their breasts in schools, some hang out with male students in bushes during school hours, practicing what they watch on skits. Two lesbians from South Africa have shared a couple of videos on Facebook, in which they kiss and fond each other's breasts and shared by thousands of followers. Jayne (2023) also confirms that there is a correlation between questionable behaviours among youths and social media skits viewing. In August 2022, Eyinatayo Iluyomade, a 19-year-old Lagos-based comedian, [was arrested and charged to court for an expensive joke](#). The skit maker dropped a threat note of robbery at First Bank's Sabo branch counter in Ondo town, indicating that by 1 p.m. on the said day, his armed robbery gang members would rob the bank. This caused all banks operating in Ondo state to shut down for the whole day (Jayne, 2023). There have been consistent complaints about this kind of emerging behaviour among youths who seek fame and wealth through offensive and sexual social media skits. This arguments is intense because the Nigerian culture is not known for such things. Based on this issue, the paper, therefore, discusses

contending issues surrounding social media skits leading to unruly behaviour among youths in Nigeria.

Conceptualising social media skit and behavioural pattern among youths

Since the invention of digital media such as the internet in the 1990's, other communication platforms like social media began springing up in 2004, when Facebook was launched by Mark Zuckerberg and his team of digital scientists. Since then, other social networking platforms started surfacing on the internet including Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, among others (Sreenivasan, 2016). Social media are online communication or networking platforms that facilitate discovery of new ideas and trends, connecting with existing and new audiences in deeper ways, bringing attention and traffic to your work, building, crafting and enhancing your brand (Sreenivasan, 2016). Nigerian youths mostly use social media for communicating between their friends and families having been born in this era of emerging technology (Njoroge, 2013).

To Obiechina (2023), social media skits are short dramas in videos format that are meant to entertain, educate, and inform. A skit is a short drama meant to create amusement and meet the entertainment needs of consumers, who are mostly seeking for entertainment to help reduce the stress of life. Ojomo and Sodeinde (2021) say that introducing skits or short videos on social media has brought about tremendous changes in both social media use, the value derived, career development and behavioural change.

These online platforms, such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, have enabled the creation and sharing of social media skits. Social media users can access these skits at their convenience, using smartphones, computer and other internet enabled gadgets. Skit makers also take advantage of their large followership to place adverts, thus improving their income. Social media skits cannot be said to be all-round bad because some of the makers project messages of love, hard work, career, personal development, corruption, thuggery, kidnapping, hunger, domestic violence, cheating, lustfulness, and emotional stability. Therefore, Obiechina (2023) further states that social media skit makers rely on different appeals such as humour, fear, sexual appeal, romantic appeal, endorsement appeal, empathy appeal, potential appeal, and pain solution appeal.

At the end, it is usually the fame and the money from likes, views and shares accrued to watching their videos, the social media skit makers are after, especially as Facebook, TikTok, YouTube and Instagram pay content creators for their content whether such content glorify western lifestyles or not. The utilization of these appeals is to ensure that the message achieves its goal and gains more followership. Consumers are also expected to engage with social media skits in different ways. Examples of engagement are sharing the content, clicking the like button, commenting, and following the skit maker to receive notifications on new skits.

Literature Review

According to Ojomo and Sodeinde (2021), in recent years, social media skits are becoming popular in Nigeria's entertainment industry in which both old and new skit makers have rely on social media platforms to share their content. Specifically leveraging on the ability to share skits on the social media means that "a skit can be absorbed and deconstructed by thousands of people in a matter of minutes" (Awa-Kalu, 2016, p.3). This opens up the audience to unending availability of entertaining skits, which provide them with humour more constantly,

as opposed to specifically waiting for comedy shows on the broadcast media, or event centres, which many times are not shareable. Entertainment seekers no longer have to travel to places to buy tickets just to watch their favourite comedians crack jokes. With social media and social media skits, entertainers and entertainment seekers meet online using digital tools. The introduction of skits has brought about the start of many comedy careers stemming from skits that have gone viral among the audience on social media. The social media provide an array of platforms to showcase and promote such careers through this new way and format of presenting comedy. Skits on social media now boost talents in ways that were not available when the likes of *Alibaba* and *Julius Agwu* of Nigeria and *Churchill* of Kenya started as stand-up comedians in the 90s (Ojomo & Sodeinde, 2021).

Those who had gained fame before the popularity of the social media are also walking back to strengthen their base and acquire more followership by editing their old comedies or creating new ones. In this group, we have the likes of *Mr. Bean*, *Jennifer Lewis*, *Shangela Wadley*, and *Anne Kansime*. The point here is that social media skits are used to promote ones talents and increasing fame and also an avenue for extra income. Therefore, it is safe to state that entertainers are now leveraging upon social media skits, regardless of their entry point into comedy. *Anne Kansime's* hilarious online skits have won her several awards such as the YouTube silver play button 2015 and Comedy YouTube Sub-Sahara Africa Creator Awards 2016, which both highlight the popularity and viewing rate of her skits (Kansime, 2018).

Kaufman (2014) also states that through viewers' engagements with adverts, that is, the number of clicks, views and shares, the number of adverts a user watched in a single viewing, and the amount of time spent in viewing the adverts, skit providers earn money on their social media platforms. The skit providers leverage on the number of subscribers and viewers who view adverts placed on their skits to facilitate their earnings. By knowing this, famous and new skit makers go to the extreme to create content that are thought-provoking and behaviour inducing. In Nigeria, for instance, most skits with thousands to million views, likes, comments and shares are those that expose female reproductive organs like breasts, vagina, butts, and other sexual appealing body parts.

Therefore, advertisers look for trending skit providers who have high followership to place adverts on their channels. Adegboyega (2019) states that this trend has led to unhealthy competition among skit makers who now rely on indecent and offensive copies to get rich quick and become famous. Although YouTube does not publish their payment rates, *Olga Kay* boasts of US\$100,000 to US\$130,000 gross earning annually from her comedy skit YouTube channel (Kansime, 2018). Some of the trending social media skit providers who found fame and started their career through this genre of entertainment include *Mark Angel*, *Olga Kay*, *Ryan Abe*, *George Mnguni*, *Anthony Padilla* and *Ian Hecox* of *Smosh*, *Craze Clown*, *Jenna Mourey*, *Mo Gilligan*, *Arron Crascall*, *Twyse*, *James Veitch* down to the most recent ones like *Sabinus*, *Broda Shaggy*, *Macaroni*, *MC Live*, *Brainjotter*, *Taooma*, *Sydney Talker*, *Trinity Guy*, among others. Many of them now have huge audience followership who seek after them for entertainment. This has also paved way for them in taking up similar roles in movies, music videos, as compères and brand ambassadors, YouTube doyenne, radio and television talk show hosts, as guests in the broadcast media, and as stand-up comedians.

Before now, the likes of *Okey Bakassi*, *I Go Die*, *Basketmouth*, *Clint Da Drunk* and *Julius Agwu* could make people laugh by using both abstract and non-abstract appeals to portray their points. But in today's social media skits, especially those shared on Facebook Reels and TikTok, emerging behavioural pattern is gradually becoming a norm among youths. There is

unlikely short drama shared on these platforms that do not have unimaginable engagements, especially those that contain scenes of two young girls caressing and kissing each other, minors involved in exposing their pointed and standing breasts, young girls using cucumber as symbol of different sizes of penis as to which they prefer, or even older women advertising prostitution with such words as Kpekus, which implies vagina. These risk sexual behaviours predispose youths to several sexual and reproductive health problems like STIs, HIV, unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortion, indecent dressing, same-sex relationship, cross dressing like in the case of Bobrisky and James Brown (Olayinka et al, 2020).

Notwithstanding, Ajagunna and Oladeji (2017) pointed out that there is still positive behaviour portrayed in social media skits. For example, in one of his popular short dramas, *Mr. Macaroni*, a Lagos-based social media comedian, featured a first-class Nigerian monarch, the Ooni of Ife. *Mr. Macaroni* is known for his skits on relationships (especially with ladies with big breasts and big buttocks) and his mantra of “Aye o kunle mo” (People no longer kneel) which is not in line with the cultural symbol of respect among the people of Yoruba descents in Nigeria.

BBC News Pidgin (2020) confirmed that as a leading monarch and custodian of tradition in the Yoruba kingdom, the Ooni of Ife addressed *Mr. Macaroni*’s mantra advocated for respect and cultural promotion in the skit. But according to Ojomo and Sodeinde (2021), since that collaboration, *Mr. Macaroni* has stopped using the expression “Aye o kunle mo” in his comedy skits, instead he uses the expression “You are doing well”, to express sexual and lustful desire for younger, beautiful, sexy and appealing girls. With as little as a smart phone and internet connection to upload the videos, skits can be produced as not much editing or aesthetics is needed. Thus, an average audience or user of social media can easily produce skits by capturing questionable events that happen (Awa-Kalu, 2016).

This is so because, on Facebook reels and TikTok, there are amateur videos of young boys and girls in uncompleted buildings engaging in sexual activities. The freedom that social media has afforded its users has made it that everyone can become a content creator. And by implication, anyone with poor moral upbringing can be seen in social media skits dishing out offensive content for others to imbibe. Often, this requires little, and often no skills or formal training in photography or filmmaking. Indeed, some skit makers produced their early skits with their mobile phones. For instance, self-starter skit maker George Mnguni said he began by using his Samsung tablet for recording and editing. In his words, “I started there, doing (the) most with what you have” (Selepe, 2017).

Despite the wrong narrative about social media skits and behavioural change among Nigerian youths lately, the likes of *Taaooma*, whose style of comedy is the representation of the life and relationship of a traditional-minded African mother with her family has earned some commendable appraisal among right thinking members of the viewing community. *Taaooma* was a novice to video editing when she started producing skits around the behaviour of an African mother, which many audience in Nigeria and other African countries can relate with and have come to enjoy. Her skits served as her video editing training materials over time (Salaudeen, 2020).

Theoretical Underpinning

Subjects of this nature would ordinarily be anchored on few media theories such as technological determinism and uses and gratification theories. For instance, the former holds that technology, and its components are drivers of socio, economic, and cultural changes and development in every society, including Nigeria. The introduction of social media platforms, new media gadgets such smartphones, computers, ring lights, editing software, and other internet enabled devices, there is a change in the way people, especially the youths learn, socialise, think, feel, and most importantly, behave. However, most appropriately, and for the sake of fairness and balance, the uses and gratification theory is best fit for a discussion of this type. Regardless that people use certain media for their information, education and entertainment needs, they still reserve the rights to share and seek whatever content that suit their personal ego, desire and lifestyle.

Therefore, the uses and gratification theory was used in this study. Blumler and Katz (1974) cited in Obiechina (2023) suggested that the theory is used to explain the motivation for media use. The theory according to Obiechina (2023) explains that people often decide to use certain media based on the needs that they have to meet. This is unlike other media effect theories like the framing theory, the uses and gratification theory emphasis on why and what audience use media for. It could be to escape depression, segregation, intimidation or for mere entertainment. It could also be for information, education and making new friends. This theory places power in the hands of audience who are assumed to be active enough to make their own media content and channels choices for their needs. Aligning with the choice of this study for this paper, Okoro and Gever (2018) confirmed that the uses and gratification theory is the most appropriate for studies related to the use of media content, especially social media, which guarantees audience absolute freedom to share and to receive.

Lariscy (2011) notes that individuals usually select certain media ahead of others because of the benefit that they will get from consuming such media content. For the first time, the owner of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg announced in July 2023 that the number of users on the platform surpassed one billion globally. This enormous penetration vindicates the uses and gratification theory. Facebook has become a household name even in Nigeria. An average youths with android phone has Facebook app installed. Nigerian skit makers are cashing out big by creating content and uploading on the platform.

There are millions of skit videos on Facebook reels and on TikTok, mostly created by youths and targeted at youths. Majority of the videos are explicit including those that sexualise women, minor, and those that propagate Lesbianism, Gayism, Bisexualism, Transgenderism, Queerism (LGBTQ) and other forms of behavioural practices. Under such videos, there are unimaginable engagements such as likes, comments, views, and shares. This shows that people patronise social media skits for their communication or sexual needs, regardless if that could be judged as good or bad.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design with content analysis as the main approach. The focus was on social media platforms that attract significant youth engagement: Facebook Reels, TikTok, and Instagram. A total of 60 skits produced between January and June 2023 were purposively selected based on their popularity and thematic relevance to youth behaviour. Each skit was systematically observed and documented, with attention paid to recurring themes

such as sexuality, risky pranks, deviance, and positive social messaging. Secondary sources, including academic works and policy reports, were also consulted to provide context and support interpretation. The data were analysed thematically, with categories developed to capture patterns in how skits represented behaviours and values, while frequency counts highlighted the most common trends. This approach made it possible to explain not only the entertainment value of social media skits but also their potential impact on shaping emerging behaviours among Nigerian youths.

Discussion

Social media comedian, *Nasty Blaq* sparked a debate on Twitter over one of his skits. These upcoming skit makers who indulge in creating anti-moral content for the purpose of fame and money were once victims of offensive content exposure. Bamidele (2020) states that several tweets suggested that *Nasty Blaq* sexually harassed a lady who was featured in the skit. In the skit titled “Lockdown has affected my eyes”, the skit maker made the featured lady to wear a see-through night gown, showing her bare breasts and a clear view of her vagina shape. While many Nigerians lampooned him for sexual explicit content, many of such skits may have gone unnoticed, or probably that people are tired of debating. This is obviously becoming a norm behaviour.

In 2014, *Basketmouth* made a joke about the difference between dating “white girls and African girls”. In his usual humorous manner, he suggested that white ladies would agree to sex on first date as opposed to African ladies who would “chop your money” and probably drag till the ninth date before offering sex. Suggestively, white ladies are sexually cheaper than African ladies who could prefer money over sex on first date. Five years later, the infested firewood he fetched invited chickens for dance, when the European Union axed his name from a list of nominees considered for an ambassadorial role in a campaign against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (Bamidele, 2020).

In his words, the well-respected godfather of Nigerian comedy, *Ali Baba* once stated that “*There is a very thin line between being funny and being offensive; some people don’t know how to tread it because a lot of people have come into comedy because of the financial reward*”. This statement from Ali Baba could be likened to the assertion made by Oloyede and Oloyede (2022) that human attempt to define right and wrong, or good and bad is called morality or simply put the proper differentiation between what is wrong and right and recognition of a code of conduct in ensuring sanity in a society’s rules and regulations. Going further, Lutkevich and Wigmore (2022) affirmed that when there are deviations from established moral behaviour, degeneration and vices tend to occur. Social media placed excess freedom in the hands of users who decide what is right and wrong. Interestingly, this same decision is further judged by another set of users who still decide what is right and wrong and what ought to be shared or not to be shared on social media space.

As Okiche (2020) rightly noted, most social media skit makers produce skits on different issues in the society. This is not unfound as it has been discussed earlier that entertainment can be used to preach pro-social messages. While the likes of *Trinity Guy* who was recently arrested and charged by the Nigeria Police Force for his extreme content, some others have been seen to be active in dedicating certain episodes of their skits to addressing issues around domestic and sexual violence, cultural values, insecurity, police brutality, and COVID-19 (BBC News Pidgin, 2020; Elike, 2020; The Interview Editors, 2019; Okiche, 2020; Salaudeen, 2020; ThisDay, 2019). Some others, however, are known for theme-based skits and specific comedy

styles which provide entertainment on certain identified situations or issues in the society. *Frank Donga*, for instance, produces skits on job interview sessions through the portrayal of an unassuming job seeker who experiences the struggles of seeking employment in the Nigerian labour market (Falayi, 2016).

Mr. Macaroni on the other hand is known for producing skits that sexualise the shape and endowment of young ladies. His messages are that of regret of a man who sees a beautiful and sexy young lady and would transfer any amount of money to her bank account just to have sexual intercourse with her. In the present, most skits do not carry any significant message, especially those shared on Facebook Reels and TikTok. Underaged girls have become very active in promoting their very intact breasts and revealing parts of their undies.

The essence is not to communicate any meaningful message but to attract male admirers, fame, and sudden wealth. BBC News Pidgin (2020) reported that this social media induced emerging behaviour is gradually gaining acceptance in schools. Young boys and girls are seen with sophisticated smartphones, computer and other internet enabled gadgets, which they use to record unplanned sexual scenes or activities, especially when a female student carelessly opens her legs while on a seat. There are many of such videos on social media platforms, including those that show the buttocks of female teachers in class.

However, there are few social media skits makers who dedicate their time and talent into producing moral and cultural values that are worthy of emulating. For instance, *Mc Lively* who hit the limelight through his skits “Agidi” in 2018 has since focused on his new character “Barrister Mike” an angry unemployed young law graduate who interferes in the business of others (Elike, 2020; ThisDay, 2019). Barrister Mike is also a job seeker who transfers his frustration about his inability to secure employment on others, yet, addressing societal issues. Unlike *Frank Donga* who plays a dual role (the interviewee and interviewer), *Mc Lively* uses other actors as the interviewer and supporting characters.

Moreover, both comedians use sarcasm in their delivery of entertainment. Also, *Officer Woos* has maintained a single character of a police officer with the theme of depicting the lifestyle of a cunning law enforcement and security officer since he started social media skit production (Officer Woos, 2021). The trend here is that skit merchants are creating audience specific skits, thereby generating an audience category that could attract some types of advertisers. While that is a good adventure, the other unfortunate thing with trending skits on social media sites is that they portray emerging behaviours that are strange to the African society.

Conclusion

Digital communication has transformed the way Nigerian youths create and consume content, with social media skits emerging as a powerful medium of expression. While skits were initially celebrated for their role in entertainment, education, and social commentary, the growth of digital platforms has widened participation and introduced new dynamics that both enrich and complicate youth culture. The findings of this study indicate that social media skits frequently extend beyond humour, reflecting behavioural patterns that range from creativity and cultural critique to sexually explicit portrayals and risky pranks that may influence impressionable audiences. These trends highlight the dual role of digital platforms as spaces for innovation and self-expression on the one hand, and as channels that can normalize practices with wider social implications on the other. It is therefore important to encourage content creation that upholds creativity and social value while addressing the risks associated

with unregulated digital expression. Strengthening the role of regulatory institutions such as the National Film and Video Censors Board, coupled with digital literacy campaigns, will help young people engage critically with online content without stifling their creative freedom. Ultimately, striking a balance between openness and responsibility in the digital sphere remains central to shaping youth behaviours in ways that support social cohesion and sustainable cultural development in Nigeria.

From skit makers to prank makers to unplanned video makers, offensive dramas, sex induced videos, pro-gay representation content have been flooding social media platforms in recent times. These skits or short videos containing questionable behaviours according to BBC News Pidgin (2020) are even shot or recorded in schools. By implication, it is eating deeper than we all can imagine. While digital communication has brought about transformation in Nigeria, it has also degenerated the moral behaviours of some Nigerian youths, who see social media skits as escape route to disguise pornography, sexual harassment, prostitution, and public representation of pro-gay activities.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, this study recommends a multi-pronged approach to addressing the influence of social media skits on youth behaviour. First, media literacy education should be integrated into school curricula to equip young people with critical skills for engaging with digital content responsibly. Second, collaboration between content creators, regulators such as the National Film and Video Censors Board, and civil society groups is necessary to develop practical guidelines that encourage creativity while discouraging harmful portrayals. Third, parents and guardians should be supported with tools and training to monitor and guide their children's online activities, ensuring that engagement with skits contributes positively to their development. Finally, further research using empirical data, such as surveys and interviews with youths and skit makers, is needed to deepen understanding of the relationship between digital content and behavioural outcomes. These combined efforts would help to create a safer and more constructive digital environment while preserving the creative freedoms that drive youth participation in social media.

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