

# EFFECT OF TIK-TOK COMEDY SKITS ON THE VIEWERSHIP OF NOLLYWOOD MOVIES AMONG ABUJA RESIDENTS

Ikani Victoria Ugbededojo

---

## Abstract

This paper argues that TikTok comedy skits have significantly affected the viewership of Nollywood movies in Abuja, Nigeria. The objectives of this study are to determine the level of exposure to TikTok comedy skits among Abuja residents; assess the impact of TikTok comedy skits on the frequency of watching Nollywood movies among Abuja residents; determine the extent to which TikTok comedy skits influence Abuja residents' opinions about Nollywood movies; and ascertain the effectiveness of TikTok as a marketing platform for Nollywood movies among Abuja residents. The paper employs the Uses and Gratifications Theory as its theoretical framework to analyze the motivations behind media consumption choices, comparing the gratifications sought from TikTok comedy skits versus Nollywood movies. Methodologically, this study utilizes survey research design and questionnaire as instrument of data collection. It examines trends in digital media consumption, attention spans, and the growing popularity of short-form content. The paper posits that TikTok's addictive nature, characterized by brief, engaging videos, has conditioned viewers to prefer shorter content, potentially drawing them away from feature-length Nollywood productions. Additionally, it argues that TikTok's role as a primary source of entertainment news and cultural discourse may be redirecting attention from traditional Nollywood marketing channels.

**Keywords:** Tik-Tok, Comedy, Skits, Viewership, Nollywood Movies

**Declaration of conflicting interests:** The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## Introduction

The global entertainment landscape has undergone significant transformations in recent years, largely driven by the rise of social media platforms and changing consumer behaviors. The Nigerian film industry, colloquially known as Nollywood, is no exception to these shifts. As one of the world's largest film industries by volume, Nollywood has been a significant contributor to Nigeria's cultural and economic landscape. However, the emergence of short-form content platforms, particularly TikTok, presents both challenges and opportunities for traditional movie viewership. Nollywood's growth and significance are well-documented. According to a report by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), Nigeria's entertainment and media revenue reached \$4.46 billion in 2018, with a projection to grow to \$10.8 billion by

2023 (PwC, 2019). The film industry has been a key driver of this growth, contributing significantly to the country's GDP and employment. However, the industry now faces the challenge of adapting to a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Social media platforms have become increasingly influential in shaping media consumption habits. A study by Kemp (2021) revealed that as of January 2021, there were 33.00 million social media users in Nigeria, representing 15.8% of the total population. This digital transformation has implications for how content is created, distributed, and consumed.

The impact of social media on traditional media consumption has been a subject of extensive research. A study published in the *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* found that social media use is

negatively associated with television viewing time among young adults (Cha, 2013). While this study focused on television rather than movies, it highlights the potential for social media to disrupt traditional viewing habits. In the context of film industries, social media has been shown to influence audience behavior. Research by Liu (2006), examined the role of social media in movie-watching decisions, finding that user-generated content on social platforms significantly influences movie choice and attendance. This suggests that the content created and shared on platforms like TikTok could potentially impact decisions to watch full-length movies.

The rise of short-form content, epitomized by platforms like TikTok, represents a new challenge for traditional film industries. TikTok's growth has been remarkable, with the app surpassing 1 billion monthly active users globally in September 2021 (TikTok, 2021). While specific data on TikTok's impact on Nollywood viewership is not readily available, studies on similar platforms provide insights into potential effects. Research on the impact of YouTube, another platform known for shorter-form content, on traditional media consumption offers relevant insights. A study published in *Computers in Human Behavior* found that YouTube use was negatively associated with television viewing time, particularly among younger audiences (Cha & Chan-Olmsted, 2012). This suggests that platforms offering short-form content could potentially draw viewers away from longer-format entertainment. However, it's important to note that the relationship between social media and traditional media consumption is not always competitive. Hargittai & Waelejko (2008), stated that social media can also serve as a complementary platform, enhancing engagement with traditional media content. The Nigerian context presents unique considerations. A report by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) shows that internet penetration in Nigeria reached 43.3% as of August 2023, with the majority of users accessing the internet via mobile devices (NCC, 2023). This mobile-first internet landscape aligns well with platforms like TikTok, which are optimized for mobile use.

While specific data on TikTok usage in Nigeria is limited, broader trends in social media use provide context. According to the Digital 2023 report for Nigeria, 31.6% of internet users aged 16-64 use TikTok (Kemp, 2021). This significant user base suggests that TikTok has the potential to influence media consumption habits in the country. A global study by Deloitte found that 55% of survey respondents watch user-generated content on a weekly basis, with this percentage being higher among younger demographics (Deloitte, 2021). This trend towards user-generated

content could have implications for the consumption of professional productions like Nollywood films. It is upon this background, that this position paper aims to highlight the effect of Tik-Tok comedy skits on viewership of Nollywood movies.

### **Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the level of exposure to Tik-Tok comedy skits among Abuja residents
2. Assess the impact of Tik-Tok comedy skits on the frequency of watching Nollywood movies among Abuja residents.
3. Determine the extent to which Tik-Tok comedy skits influence Abuja residents' opinions about Nollywood movies.
4. Ascertain the effectiveness of Tik-Tok as a marketing platform for Nollywood movies among Abuja residents.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Tik-Tok Comedy Skits**

TikTok comedy skits refer to short-form comedic videos created and shared on the social media platform TikTok. These skits typically range from 15 to 60 seconds in length and often feature humorous content, such as satire, parody, or absurdity (Bao, 2020). TikTok comedy skits have become a popular form of entertainment among the platform's vast user base, particularly among younger generations (Chen, 2020). One of the defining characteristics of TikTok comedy skits is their use of visual and auditory elements to convey humor. Creators often employ music, sound effects, and editing techniques to enhance the comedic effect of their skits (Kim, 2020). Additionally, TikTok's short-form video format allows creators to experiment with innovative storytelling methods, such as fragmented narratives and non-linear storytelling (Jenkins, 2020). TikTok comedy skits also frequently incorporate elements of social commentary, with creators using humor to critique societal norms, cultural expectations, and political issues (Wang, 2020). This blend of humor and social commentary has made TikTok comedy skits a unique and captivating form of online content.

Furthermore, TikTok comedy skits often involve collaboration and interaction between creators and their audiences. The platform's comment section and duet feature allow viewers to engage with creators and participate in the comedic process (Zhang, 2020). This interactivity has fostered a sense of community among TikTok users, with creators and viewers sharing and enjoying humor together. TikTok comedy skits are

a distinctive form of online content that combines humor, creativity, and social commentary. Through their use of visual and auditory elements, innovative storytelling methods, and interactive features, TikTok comedy skits have become a beloved and integral part of the platform's entertainment landscape.

### **Nollywood Movies**

Nollywood movies have gained global recognition as a significant component of Nigeria's cultural identity and the world's second-largest film industry. Nnadozie (2014), stated that Nollywood movies are Nigerian-produced films that encompass a wide range of genres, including drama, romance, comedy, action, and thrillers. According to him, the term "Nollywood" was coined in the 1990s and is a portmanteau of "Nigeria" and "Hollywood," reflecting the industry's aspiration to emulate the success of the American film industry. According to Nsereka & Enyindah (2018), Nollywood movies are characterized by their low-budget production, rapid production schedules, and grassroots distribution networks. They often reflect Nigerian culture, values, and societal issues, and are predominantly produced in the English language, as well as various local languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa. Okome (2017), asserted that the production process of Nollywood movies typically involves a decentralized approach. Filmmakers often operate within independent production companies, utilizing digital technologies and consumer-grade equipment to shoot their films. The process is known for its speed and efficiency, with films often completed within a few weeks or months (Okome, 2017).

Onuzulike (2017), stated that financing for Nollywood movies comes from various sources, including personal investments, sponsorships, and collaborations with private investors. The low-budget nature of these films allows for greater accessibility, enabling a broader range of filmmakers to participate in the industry. According to Onuzulike (2019), distribution of Nollywood movies initially relied heavily on informal channels such as local markets, video rental stores, and street vendors. However, with the advent of digital platforms and the internet, online streaming and video-on-demand services have become increasingly popular, providing global access to Nollywood films. According to Onyenakeya, Oyenakeya, & Osunlcunle (2019), Nollywood movies have had a profound impact on Nigerian society and the global entertainment landscape. They stated that firstly, they serve as a powerful medium for cultural expression and representation. Nollywood films often address social, political, and economic issues, reflecting the realities of Nigerian life. They showcase the country's diverse cultural heritage, traditions, and

languages, promoting cultural pride and identity.

Furthermore, Nollywood movies have played a significant role in shaping public discourse and influencing societal attitudes. Ayakoroma (2021), stated that they (Nollywood movies) tackle themes such as corruption, gender inequality, family dynamics, religion, and the importance of education, contributing to social awareness and sparking conversations on relevant topics. Furthermore, Ayakoroma (2022), asserted that Nollywood movies have also stimulated economic growth and job creation within the Nigerian film industry. They provide employment opportunities for actors, directors, producers, cinematographers, and various other professionals involved in filmmaking. Additionally, the industry has facilitated the growth of ancillary businesses such as film distribution, marketing, and film-related merchandise. On a global scale, Nollywood movies have gained international recognition, contributing to the visibility and reputation of Nigerian cinema. They have been showcased at international film festivals, leading to increased exposure and global appreciation of Nigerian storytelling and filmmaking techniques. Moreover, Nollywood movies have played a vital role in shaping the perception of Africa in popular culture. They challenge stereotypes and provide alternative narratives that highlight the ingenuity, resilience, and creativity of the African people. According to Alawode & Sunday (2017), Nollywood movies represent a vibrant and influential component of Nigerian culture and the global film industry. According to them, their low-budget production, cultural relevance, and grassroots distribution networks have enabled their widespread popularity and impact. Through their storytelling, Nollywood movies reflect the complexities of Nigerian society, addressing social issues and promoting cultural pride. Nollywood's continued growth and success demonstrate its enduring appeal and its position as a cultural phenomenon (Alawode & Sunday, 2017). To Alamu (2014), the variable of Nollywood movies represents a dynamic and multifaceted aspect of Nigerian cinema. It encompasses the various elements, characteristics, and influences that define the production, content, and impact of films produced within the Nigerian film industry, commonly referred to as Nollywood.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper is anchored upon the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The Uses and Gratifications Theory is a communication theory that focuses on understanding why individuals choose to consume specific media content and how they derive satisfaction or gratification from it. Unlike traditional

media theories that view audiences as passive receivers of messages, the Uses and Gratifications Theory places emphasis on the active role of individuals in their media consumption choices. The theory suggests that individuals are not simply influenced by media messages but actively seek out media content to fulfill their specific needs and gratifications. These needs can be categorized into various dimensions, including entertainment, social interaction, information, personal identity, and escapism. According to the theory, individuals select and use media channels and content based on their motivations and goals.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory originated in the 1940s and 1950s, with early contributions from researchers such as Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch. However, it gained significant attention and development in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, scholars such as Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, Michael Gurevitch, and Denis McQuail further refined and extended the theory. Elihu Katz and Jay Blumler, in their seminal work "Uses of Mass Communication," proposed a typology of media uses and gratifications. They identified four main categories of gratifications: diversion (seeking entertainment and relaxation), personal relationships (using media for social interaction and companionship), personal identity (reinforcement of values, attitudes, and beliefs), and surveillance (obtaining information about the world). Michael Gurevitch and Denis McQuail expanded on the theory by introducing the concept of "media dependency." They argued that individuals become dependent on media for specific gratifications, and their level of dependency influences their media consumption patterns and preferences. Other scholars, such as James Webster and Barrie Gunter, have contributed to the theory by examining additional dimensions of gratifications, such as cognitive needs (learning and acquiring knowledge), affective needs (emotional arousal and mood management), and tension release (relieving stress and anxiety).

The Uses and Gratifications Theory has been applied to various media contexts, including television, radio, print media, and more recently, digital media and social media platforms. It has helped researchers understand audience motivations and preferences in these contexts and has been used to explain the popularity of particular media genres, channels, and formats. The theory has also been instrumental in understanding the role of new media technologies, such as social media platforms, in fulfilling individuals' needs and gratifications. With the rise of social media, users actively engage with platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to satisfy their social interaction, self-presentation, entertainment, and information needs.

The strength of the Uses and Gratifications Theory lies in its focus on the active role of individuals in media consumption and its recognition of the diversity of audience motivations and gratifications. It emphasizes that individuals are not passive recipients but active agents who select and use media content to fulfill their specific psychological and social needs. However, the theory has also faced criticism. Some argue that it places too much emphasis on individual agency and overlooks the broader social and cultural factors that shape media consumption. Critics suggest that the theory fails to address the power dynamics between media institutions and audiences and their influence on gratifications sought and obtained. Despite these criticisms, the Uses and Gratifications Theory remains a valuable framework for understanding audience behavior and motivations in the media landscape. It provides a comprehensive perspective on why individuals consume media content and how they derive satisfaction and gratification from it, contributing to our understanding of media effects and audience engagement.

### **Methodology**

The population of the study is Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria, with an estimated population of 3.2 million people, according to the 2020 estimates from the National Population Commission of Nigeria. To determine the sample size, the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination technique was used. The calculation is as follows:

$$n = (Z^2 \times P \times Q) / E^2$$

where:

n = sample size

Z = 1.96 (Z-score for 95% confidence level)

P = 0.5 (proportion of the population)

Q = 1 - P = 0.5

E = 0.05 (margin of error)

Substituting the values, we get:

$$n = (1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5) / 0.05^2$$

$$n = 384$$

Therefore, the sample size for this study is 384.

A survey research design was used for this study, as it allows for the collection of data from a large number of respondents in a relatively short period. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection, designed to elicit information from respondents on their views and opinions about the effect of TikTok comedy skits on the viewership of Nollywood movies. A three-stage sampling technique was employed for this study. First, Abuja was stratified into six area councils: Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Gwagwalada Area Council, Kuje Area Council, Bwari Area Council, Kwali Area Council, and Abaji Area

Council. From each area council, two wards were selected using simple random sampling. For example, in AMAC, the wards of Wuse and Garki were selected. In Gwagwalada Area Council, the wards of Gwagwalada and Zuba were selected.

Then, from each selected ward, every 10th household was selected using systematic sampling until 384 respondents were selected. For instance, in Wuse ward, households on Ogunlana Drive, Central Business District, were selected. A total of 384 copies questionnaire were distributed, but only 378 copies were retrieved, with the rest lost due to non-response. Data were presented in tables and simple percentages to make the data easy to understand and interpret.

**Data Presentation**

**Table 1:**

Objective	Response Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Level of exposure to TikTok comedy skits among Abuja residents	Very High Exposure	118	31.2
	High Exposure	120	31.7
	Moderate Exposure	80	21.1
	Low Exposure	60	15.9
	No Exposure	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>
2. Impact of TikTok comedy skits on the frequency of watching Nollywood movies among Abuja residents	Significant Increase	130	34.4
	Moderate Increase	100	26.5
	No Change	90	23.8
	Decrease in Frequency	20	21.1
	Significant Decrease	38	10.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>
3. Extent to which TikTok comedy skits influence Abuja residents' opinions about Nollywood movies	Very High Influence	110	29.1
	High Influence	100	26.5
	Moderate Influence	80	21.1
	Low Influence	50	13.2
	No Influence	38	10.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>
4. Effectiveness of TikTok as a marketing platform for Nollywood movies among Abuja residents	Very Effective	70	18.5
	Effective	111	29.4
	Moderately Effective	119	31.5
	Slightly Effective	50	13.2
	Not Effective	28	7.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The data indicate a strong familiarity among Abuja residents with TikTok comedy skits, as a significant portion reports high or very high exposure to this content. This widespread engagement suggests that TikTok has become an integral part of the media landscape, potentially shaping cultural consumption patterns in the region. The implications of such exposure are profound, as it not only reflects changing entertainment preferences but also indicates that TikTok may serve as a bridge to other media forms, particularly Nollywood films.

Furthermore, the impact of TikTok comedy skits on viewers' perceptions of Nollywood movies highlights a substantial influence on public opinion. Many respondents acknowledge a positive effect, which could enhance the appeal of Nollywood films among younger audiences who might otherwise overlook them. However, there are also indications of diminished viewing frequency for some, suggesting a potential challenge in maintaining traditional audience engagement. The effectiveness of TikTok as a marketing platform for Nollywood reflects a mixed but generally promising outlook, with a notable number of residents perceiving it as a valuable tool for promoting films. This indicates that filmmakers and marketers may need to strategically leverage TikTok to maximize reach and resonance with their target audiences, ensuring that they adapt to the evolving digital landscape.

**Discussion**

The findings from this study indicate that TikTok comedy skits have a significant presence among Abuja residents, with a substantial portion reporting high levels of exposure—31.7% indicated high exposure and 31.2% reported very high exposure. This aligns with the broader trend highlighted by Tefertiller (2017), which notes that social media usage directly impacts movie viewing habits. The considerable engagement with TikTok suggests it could play a pivotal role in influencing the viewing patterns of Nollywood films. Notably, 34.4% of respondents reported a significant increase in their frequency of watching Nollywood movies due to TikTok skits, underscoring the platform's potential to shape audience preferences.

The implications of this exposure are

significant, particularly in light of findings by Feng et al. (2019), which emphasize that frequent social media use leads to a preference for shorter, more digestible content. This shift in consumption patterns may challenge traditional film industries, as evidenced by the study's data showing that while many residents acknowledge TikTok as a positive influence, 23.8% reported no change in their viewing habits. This suggests a complex relationship where TikTok skits capture attention but do not necessarily convert into increased viewership of full-length films.

Additionally, social media platforms have become primary sources of entertainment news and cultural discourse, especially among younger demographics. A report by We Are Social and Hootsuite (2021) indicates that social media reshapes how users discover and discuss films, which may redirect attention from conventional marketing channels. In this study, while 29.4% of respondents viewed TikTok as effective for marketing Nollywood movies, others perceived it as only moderately effective, indicating a need for the Nollywood industry to adapt its promotional strategies to fully leverage TikTok's unique format.

The addictive nature of platforms like TikTok further complicates this landscape. Research by Tushar et al. (2022) suggests that engaging content can lead to extended usage sessions, potentially limiting the time available for watching full-length movies. This is reflected in the current study, where 21.1% of respondents experienced a decrease in their Nollywood viewing frequency, illustrating the dual-edged nature of social media engagement.

Ultimately, the findings reflect a dynamic relationship between TikTok and Nollywood, resonating with the observations made by Ojedokun and Mohamad (2020) regarding the evolving landscape of Nigerian media consumption. As social media continues to redefine content engagement, the Nollywood industry must explore innovative promotional strategies to harness the opportunities presented by platforms like TikTok. Studies such as Gong et al. (2021) demonstrate that social media engagement can significantly enhance movie awareness and ticket sales, suggesting that TikTok could be a valuable tool for expanding the reach of Nollywood films. In summary, while TikTok comedy skits disrupt traditional viewing patterns, they also present unique opportunities for the Nollywood industry

to effectively connect with and engage new audiences.

## Conclusion

The rise of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, has significantly impacted the landscape of entertainment consumption, presenting both challenges and opportunities for traditional film industries like Nollywood. The shift towards short-form, easily digestible content on platforms like TikTok has influenced viewer preferences and attention spans, potentially affecting the consumption of full-length feature films. However, this digital transformation also offers new avenues for audience engagement and film promotion. Research indicates that social media usage directly correlates with changes in film consumption habits, with platforms like Tik-Tok becoming primary sources of entertainment news and cultural discourse. The addictive nature of these platforms, driven by dopamine-fueled feedback loops, may reduce the time and energy users have for traditional movie-watching experiences. In the Nigerian context, where mobile internet usage is prevalent, TikTok's mobile-optimized format aligns well with user habits, potentially influencing Nollywood consumption patterns.

## References

1. Abidin, C. (2021). From "networked publics" to "refracted publics": A companion framework for researching "below the radar" studies. *Social Media + Society*, 7(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120984458>
2. Feng, G. C., Zhang, Y., & Lin, Z. (2019). A meta-analysis of the effects of sociodemographic factors on social media adoption. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 1996-2025.
3. Gong, S., Zhang, J., Zhao, P., & Jiang, X. (2021). Tweeting as a marketing tool: A field experiment in the TV industry. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(3), 528-542. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243720980411>
4. Kemp, S. (2021). Digital 2021: Global overview report. DataReportal. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report>
5. Ojedokun, O., & Mohamad, B. (2020). Social media use and its effect on knowledge sharing:

- Evidence from Nigerian universities. *SAGE Open*, 10(2), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020930771>
6. Tefertiller, A. (2017). Moviegoing in the Netflix age: Gratifications, planned behavior, and theatrical attendance. *Communication & Society*, 30(4), 27-44. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.30.3.27-44>
  7. Cha, J. (2013). Do online video platforms cannibalize television? How viewers are moving from old screens to new ones. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 53(1), 71-82. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-53-1-071-082>
  8. Cha, J., & Chan-Olmsted, S. M. (2012). Substitutability between online video platforms and television. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(2), 261-278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699012439035>
  9. Cunningham, S., & Craig, D. (2016). Online entertainment: A new wave of media globalization? *International Journal of Communication*, 10, 5409-5425.
  10. Deloitte. (2021). Digital media trends, 15th edition: Courting the consumer in a world of choice. Deloitte Insights. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/technology/digital-media-trends-consumption-habits-survey/summary.html>
  11. Hargittai, E., & Walejko, G. (2008). The participation divide: Content creation and sharing in the digital age. *Information, Communication & Society*, 11(2), 239-256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180801946150>
  12. Haynes, J. (2016). Nollywood: The creation of Nigerian film genres. University of Chicago Press.
  13. Kemp, S. (2021). Digital 2021: Nigeria. Data Reportal. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-nigeria>
  14. Liu, Y. (2006). Word of mouth for movies: Its dynamics and impact on box office revenue. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(3), 74-89.
  15. Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). (2021). Industry statistics. <https://www.ncc.gov.ng/statistics-reports/industry-overview>
  16. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). (2019). Entertainment and media outlook: 2019-2023 - An African perspective. PwC.
  17. TikTok. (2021, September 27). Thanks a billion! [Blog post]. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-us/1-billion-people-on-tiktok>