

Economic Viability of Arabic Skit Making in South West, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

From the time immemorial, Arabic language has become a commercial tool that is navigating towards the means of livelihood of particular set of people through their commercial engagements both at the local and international level of merchandise activities. At the international level, the position of Arabic Language at the United Nations (UN) and Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) as well as African Union (AU) can never be neglected regarding its economic roles playing in the committee of oil producing nations, and other diplomatic engagements. Nevertheless, the experts in Arabic language have also defined many means in commercializing their proficiency beyond teaching of Arabic language in their *madāris* (Islamic Schools) and other classes of study. With the advent of social media, many handlers of various channels of social media contents have explored the medium in exhibiting their talents and content creations in skit making in standard Arabic Language that at the end earned them huge amount of income, which at the same time deciphered to economic growth and benefit in our society. This

research paper is an attempt to identify some of the so-called Arabic Skit makers in Southwestern part of Nigeria and critically appraise the contents of their skits. Descriptive and Analytical method would be strictly adhered to in given a detailed analysis of the Skit contents. Findings show that this is modern adventure is greatly having positive impacts on many Arabists as it has taken them out of poverty-stricken situations that usually combat the Arabic language experts in Southwestern part of Nigeria. The study concludes that Arabic skit making is the way to go in this modern era of globalization and therefore should be sustained.

Keywords: Arabic language, Skit making, Economic Viability, Prospect

Introduction

The economic recession in Nigeria and in other parts of the world is a great concern to human life and survival. Human beings by nature are naturally entitled to survival means in every day and night. With this hardship, human strive for alternative means were sorted and discovered within the web

links of social media such as; Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Tiktok X (twitter) and the likes.

Recently, content creation on these aforementioned social media platforms has gained more patronage according to Ikani (2024). In his opinion, he justified this assertion by saying that this new creative art has enabled our youth to display their given talents, artistic prowess and comic expertise with different themes on the global web of internet. These creative abilities and talent displays were ignited by the economic recession and hardship as it was perceived by Okadigwe and Onyekachukwu (2023), and according to them, this led Nigerians to venture massively into the entertainment biz as a new greener pasture, which paved way to the sudden hike in electronic artistic and comic creativity productions.

Toeing the historical lane, it is of note to state that Arabic language has been in the forefront in the committee of languages of the world because of its significance and potentials in divine religious practices, diplomatic engagements, international relations, national historical studies, literacy, as well as worldly commercial activities (Ayuba M. A. 2012, p. 193). However, over the years the language has been rated low, and pushed to be having less attracting values by Nigerian people, even the lesser people that found themselves within its tentacles is either by force or by accidental. Moreover, the reason behind this is simply impoverishing status attached to the language most especially in the southwestern part of Nigeria.

The objective of this study is to identify the economic viability of Arabic language and to state the areas where its expertise can thrive in fetching economic opportunities and proceeds aside the existing channels. In addition, to highlight skit making in Arabic language as a new opened gate for Arabic linguist to earn livings and to encourage young *mallams* to showcase their various Arabic artistic talents to the world via social media platforms.

Arabic literature of Nigerian authorship, particularly in Yorubaland, has made significant strides in embracing electronic and digital platforms to showcase artistic works. Abdur-Rahman A. A. (2021, p. 78) highlighted that Arabic electronic literature represents a new trend in the history of Arabic literature in Nigeria. He noted that this innovation has its roots in the Western world and has introduced a unique way of presenting literary works that transcends traditional written formats.

This form of literature is often rendered digitally, utilizing media components such as audio, visuals, pictures, colors, and motion. It encompasses various artistic expressions, including poetry, storytelling, and theatrical performances. By incorporating these multimedia elements, Arabic electronic literature creates a dynamic and engaging experience, broadening its appeal and accessibility to modern audiences.

This study will be of immense significance in opening the eyes of Nigerian youths generally and the southwestern youths, in particular, to the alternative income generating merchandize, which

they can venture into, using those who are making waves in the Arabic skit making industry and earning significant income in the newly discovered enterprise. Moreover, this will alleviate the impoverishment attached to the study of Arabic language in this part of the country (Southwest) and will make meaningful impacts on our youths.

Furthermore, this research holds implications for Arabic language educators and speakers, seeking to promote and preserve the art of Arabic-speaking as a money-making tool. By this, the stakeholders can better appreciate the value of this art form as a tool for merchandize operation and financial monetary derivation conglomerate for the specialist in Arabic language. The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with Arabic skit makers, content analysis of skit performances, and participant observation of skit events. By triangulating these data sources.

In summary, this research seeks to uncover the intricacies of Arabic skit making in South West Nigeria, exploring its thematic features, linguistic analysis, and socio-cultural implications. By doing so, it aims to contribute to a deeper appreciation of the cultural diversity and creative vitality of Arabic-speaking in the region, while also offering insights into the potential of Arabic skits as a medium for money making and financial stability amongst Arabic speakers.

Research Problem

It is apparently obvious that some of the experts in the field of Arabic art have restricted their job opportunities to teaching in public or *Islamiyyah*

Schools as the only prospect the study can bring forth before the coast started becoming clearer with lots of discoveries and explorations of more even-broken ways both at the international level and otherwise. With the advent of internet and social media platforms, some brilliant young men who are handlers o these various platforms have explored the art of skit making using Arabic medium in interpreting their artistic work by creating some comical contents in form of drama, song and motivational speaking. So, this research aims to open the eyes of less privileged Arabist to the phenomenon of Arabic skit making as a way to alleviate the perpetual wretchedness that has become rampant in their domain and discipline if it is properly key into. And at the same time, Arabic skits, short theatrical performances typically with comedic or dramatic elements, have been gaining popularity among Arabic-speaking people in the region. However, there is limited scholarly attention paid to these new emerging contents and contexts in such a way they could be appraised and analyzed literarily.

Aims and Objectives

This study aims to broaden the perspectives of Nigerian youths, especially those in the southwestern region, by highlighting alternative income-generating opportunities. In a country where young people are often limited by traditional job markets, this research will serve as a guide to discovering and engaging in innovative ways to earn a livelihood. By focusing on unique avenues, the study intends to inspire youth to think beyond

conventional employment and explore entrepreneurship in creative fields. The study emphasizes on the emerging Arabic skit-making industry, which has quickly gained traction as a viable and profitable enterprise. By showcasing this growing field, the study introduces the potential of Arabic skit-making not only as a creative pursuit but as a business opportunity, providing practical insights into how it can be an effective source of income. This new avenue allows young people to blend cultural expression with entrepreneurship, creating a unique niche in the entertainment industry.

Moreover, the research underscores the importance of preserving and promoting Arabic language skills within the framework of the arts. By viewing Arabic-speaking abilities as a marketable tool, the study encourages youths to take pride in and capitalize on their linguistic skills. This approach helps to sustain the art of Arabic-speaking and empowers young individuals to leverage their cultural and linguistic heritage in a way that is both rewarding and financially sustainable.

Conceptual Review

In recent time, Arabic skit making has emerged as a vibrant money-making venture in social media space in Nigeria, but with little drive in the South West region of Nigeria. The skits are mostly structured with the unique blend of linguistic, artistic, and socio-cultural expressions coupled with short theatrical performances often characterized by comical, educative, lyrical, social awareness and prevailing happenings (Ikani, 2024, p.340). This

venture have meagerly practiced among Arabic speakers in the region. However, despite its growing prevalence, there remains a dearth of scholarly research examining the contents and prospects of Arabic skit making in South West Nigeria, to bring massive opportunities in creating wealth and open a new enterprising window for the Arabic speakers via social media economy in order to ameliorate the level of poverty among the experts.

This will address this gap by delving into the rich tapestry of Arabic skit making, exploring its themes, linguistic features, socio-political implications, and potential for cultural preservation and community engagement. Focusing on Arabic skits in South West Nigeria, the study aims to shed light on an overlooked area of the region's cultural landscape and contribute to a deeper understanding of the diverse creative expressions within Arabic-speaking communities. The significance of this research lies in its potential to illuminate the intricate interplay between language, culture, and artistic creativity in the context of South West Nigeria in Arabic language.

Evidently, the skit making is considered to be an artistic content creation, which implies artistic exercises that thread online for the short period of one minute to four minutes and in some cases extend to ten minutes as posited by Godwin, I. S. (2022:4). However, Skit always swings between normal and comic reflections in the presentation of ideas that may be connected to Nigerian society.

Numerous influencers and social media economy engagers have translated the contents and ideas into

moneybag due to the huge number of the followers in millions, and this may open the doors of many lucrative opportunities that will bring monetary prospects.

Empirical Review

Academic research on the economic impact of skit-making in Nigerian languages highlights its role as a growing industry that creates income and job opportunities for young people across the country. Studies examining skits in Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo languages as it was stated by Mark, Tekena. (2024 p.5), evidently shown the rise and acceptability of skit comedy in the creative arts and economic generating industry. The study has carefully selected the Nigeria three major ethnic groups such as Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo, which randomly covered skit makers like Mark Angel (Igbo from Imo State), Taaooma (Yoruba from Kwara State), Sabinus (Ikwerre from Rivers State) and Bello Galadanchi (Hausa/Fulani from Kano State). It is evident in recent times that skit-making has become a profitable venture on online platforms, with active practitioners earning income through advertising revenue and brand endorsements. For example, many Nigerian skit creators generate revenue by attracting large audiences and partnering with local brands, which often prefer advertising in indigenous languages to enhance cultural relevance.

A technical report of Africa Polling Institute (API) has reported the economic viability of the art of skit making as a major income in recent time, making reference to the likes of Samuel Animashaun (Broda Shaggi), Mark Angel, Debo Adebayo (Marcaroni)

and Maryam Adedoyin Apaokagi (Taaooma) as successful skit comedy creators whose have carved many niche for themselves in Eco-Nigerian entertainment industry, Ihua , Bell & Kadiri, and et al. (2021, p.5).

Research on Hausa and Igbo skits further demonstrate that skit making contributes to regional economies by providing alternative sources of income and promoting local businesses. Hausa-language skits, which are popular in Northern Nigeria, attract brand sponsorships and product placements from companies seeking to reach northern audiences effectively, reinforcing the economic significance of culturally tailored content. Similarly, Igbo skit-making has proven economically viable, with creators monetizing their content through ads, collaborations, and merchandise sales. Academic studies underscore the economic potential of these indigenous language skits, particularly as they cater to niche markets and resonate deeply with their communities. Together, these findings highlight how skit-making in Nigeria's various languages has transformed from a form of entertainment to an economically impactful industry, sustaining livelihoods and contributing to regional development.

Nevertheless, in the context of Arabic, it is noteworthy to assert here that Arabic skit making is a new baby that just found its way out of the womb with reference to the two Arabic skit makers that this research work is introducing and bringing to the limelight in skit making industry with Arabic language as a medium of expression. With this fact,

it is so difficult to see a previous study that will x-tray what is not in existence for the public for research purpose

Meanwhile, many studies have been carried out on other languages such as English, Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo languages as previously submitted in Tekena Mark, (2024), and this is to expose the skit making industry as an alternative income generating medium and window for more economic opportunities among the social media handlers in Nigeria i.e brand ambassador, product advertisement and event anchoring.

Methodology

Discourse and narrative methods are used to explicitly introduce Arabic skit making into the market of e-enterprise and analyse the contents of the chosen skit makers in order to know their expertise in Arabic arts and speech making accuracy. Likewise, their prowess in the choice of Arabic words and construction balances in both syntax and semantics. Finally, to expressively x-tray the thematic features therein.

Arabic Skit Contents Analysis

Two pure Arabic skit makers were found on the social media space in the southwestern part of Nigeria and they are both based in Lagos state, Nigeria. They are; Ibrahim AbdulGafar, a native of Ibadan and based in Lagos with Annusrat as his stage name on his social platforms and Abbas Suleiman, an indigene of Minna, Niger state,

Nigeria who also lived in Lagos with the stage name Tapadollaroflagos.

The duo are the only young Nigerians in the southwest that media presence on various social media handles that have found their ways into the art of skit making in Arabic language on social space with the help of the Internet on different platforms of social media i.e. Facebook pages, Instagram, YouTube channels and Tiktok accounts. This is great evidence to justify the origin of this innovative move in the Southwest, Nigeria among the Arabic experts based on the findings as at the time off this research aside those that are using the social media space for academic activities through classic Arabic medium, live online streaming of events in which Arabic language is been used as a medium of communication and rendition/posting of different themes of Arabic poems.

It is observed that the duo have explicitly engaged their audiences with their power of diction and oration in Arabic Language. The former (Annusrat) in one of his skit synopsis where he engaged his student called Zayd by name, asking him the number of colours in Nigerian flag in Arabic language, the conversation goes does:

المعلم: زيد..... كم لون جمع في علم نيجيريا؟
زيد: ثلاثة ألوان
المعلم: ثلاثة.....؟ اذكرها
زيد: أخضر، أبيض، أخضر.
المعلم: زيد! تفكر جيداً
زيد: نعم ثلاثة ألوان
المعلم: ثلاثة؟..... ألم تعلم أنك ذكرت الأخضر مرتين؟
زيد: لأنه موجود في العلم مرتين.

Meanings:

Teacher: Zaid

Zaid: Yes

Teacher: How many colours are there in the Nigerian flag?

Zaid: Three colours

Teacher: Three Mention them...

Zaid: Green-White-Green

Teacher: Zaid, Think very well

Zaid: Yes, three colours

Teacher: Three... Zaid! Can't you see you mentioned green twice?

Zaid: Because it was also in the flag twice.....

The link to the skit on Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8MxHwWMce2/?igsh=bmZmcTRIYXo4dWw5>

The conversation was comical and at the same time educating in such that the teacher comically taught his viewers the Arabic word for colour green and white.

While the latter (Tapadolaroflagos) in his Tiktok synopsis that got 81,100+ followers with 654,200+ likes. He narrated what he was going through to survive in his Ikotun, an area in Lagos state, likewise his hard struggle in his ghetto life striving to get away with poverty engaging in hard labour to survive in their trench. But, his style in this Arabic skit is so lyrical in pure classic Arabic language rapping like hip-hop artists.

The following are the Arabic contents of his lyrical expressions:

...يلا إلى إكوتن
حيث لا يوجد من يلعب
...إكوتن
...هناك انتمينا
هو خندقنا
إكوتن
...هم جادون
.. أغني ذي الأغنية للكادحين
..ومزاحمي الشوارع والهاربين من البيت الذين يستخدمون ذكائهم
الذين لا يملكون من أسباب العيش إلا أجرهم
...تشي بنا بخبث

كل هوا ... لماذا تتم أمرنا... خلاص
ميش فاضي للترداد
مسعاكم لن يذهب سدى.....
نناضلون ضد الفقر.....
نريد التخلص من الفقر.... إكوتن...

Meaning:

Let's go to Ikotun...

Where there is no one who has time for play..

Ikotun...

That is where we belong

That is our trench

They are serious

Am singing this song

To those working hard

And street hustlers

And those that ran away from home

Using their knowledge

Those who have nothing to sustain unless on their hand work

You are gossiping us badly

Shut up!

Why are you gossiping our life matter

It is enough

I don't have time to reply you all

Your all efforts won't be in vain

We are all striving against poverty

We want to be free from poverty

The link of the skit on Tiktok:
<https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMrSGSoSN/>

Arabic Skit Making and Economic Viability

Arabic skit-making has emerged as a dynamic and culturally relevant art form with significant economic potential, particularly in regions where Arabic is widely spoken or appreciated. This creative medium allows for the combination of

humor, storytelling, and cultural narratives in a format that resonates with diverse audiences. With the growth of digital platforms, skit-makers can easily reach audiences locally and globally, leveraging online channels for quick and widespread distribution. This accessibility not only increases viewership but also opens up possibilities for monetization, as skits can attract advertising, sponsorships, and fan support.

The economic viability of Arabic skit making lies in its ability to engage audience through relatable content while building a loyal viewer base. As skits gain popularity, creators can monetize through platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, where content creators often earn revenue based on views, ad placements, and collaborations. Additionally, the industry provides entrepreneurial opportunities beyond the screen. Skit-makers often branch into merchandising, brand endorsements, and live performances, creating a range of revenue streams. For many young people in Arabic-speaking communities, skit-making can serve as a legitimate and fulfilling career path, turning creative expression into a source of sustainable income.

Moreover, Arabic skit-making plays a role in cultural preservation and promotion, adding to its value beyond economic gains. By creating content in Arabic, skit-makers reinforce the use of the language and share cultural nuances with audiences worldwide. This unique aspect fosters a sense of pride and connection among viewers, further increasing demand for such content. As the industry continues to grow, it has the potential to bolster the

economy by providing new employment opportunities, from video production and scriptwriting to digital marketing and merchandising, creating a ripple effect of job creation and skill development in the creative sector.

It is observed that some of these social media platforms are money-paying entity based on the number of your engagements and involvement of the audience in terms of views, comments, likes of you followers and flows of the contents pasted in social media domains.

Estimating, the number of all these engagements in their artistic productions, a systemic calculation would be done by the owners of these social media spaces and the content creators will be remunerated based on their work performances.

Nevertheless, confessions were made during the interaction with the duo, that, they have earned themselves a lot of accolades and honor that have resulted to brand ambassadorial endorsement that fetch them huge money likewise involvement in different products and services advertisements on their social platforms.

Recommendation

This research work strongly recommends that Arabic experts should take the advantage of this new e-economic means of using Arabic skit making as an alternative economic window to combat the menace of joblessness and restriction to teaching only with our Arabic language expertise. And to sternly warn the students of Arabic language in

various higher school of learning to revert from wasting their little financial resources and time on frivolities online, and rather use the resources and their talents, Arabic prowess to attract more lucrative opportunities.

Conclusion

This work has identified two Arabic skit makers who serve as pathfinders in this regard within the southwestern part of Nigeria. They have made notable contributions to Arabic-language media and entertainment in the region. Through their creative work, these skit makers not only entertain but also preserve and promote the Arabic language and Islamic culture among local communities. Their influence has encouraged a growing appreciation for Arabic media in southwestern Nigeria.

The work provides insight into their artistic works, highlighting the creativity and skill they bring to their performances. It reflects a deep engagement with cultural themes and demonstrate a strong command of language. These skit makers display intellectual tendencies, particularly evident in their oration and diction. Their choice of words and delivery showcase their eloquence and proficiency, adding depth to their performances and appealing to diverse audiences.

Also, it highlights the ability of the mentioned skit makers where the duo skillfully displayed their expertise in the grammatical patterns in both internal and external structures, as demonstrated across the various themes they engage with in their performances. It finally examines how the art of

skit-making fosters economic self-reliance among individuals and opens doors to numerous lucrative opportunities.

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