

**THE INFLUENCE OF COMEDY SKITS AS THERAPEUTIC AID AMONG  
STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, NIGERIA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this project is based on a research undertaken by me Okodua Onoseta Joan, in Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin under the supervision of Mr. Sunday Ekerikevwe, for the purpose of acquiring a Bachelor of Arts(B.A)degree in Mass Communication. All the views and ideas in this study are a product of personal research and the ideas of others expressed are duly acknowledged.

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## CERTIFICATION

I certify that this project work is carried out by Okodua Onoseta Joan Art1801795 under my supervision and has been approved. This project work is to be submitted to the Department of Mass Communication, University of Benin.

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty, the Author and Finisher of my faith, my source of wisdom and understanding, and my strength.

I also dedicate this work to my Mother, Mrs. Okodua Bridget Omosefe, who has been my unshakable supporter from my 100 level till this point and basically all my life. Thank you for your unconditional love, prayers and encouragement.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This project assessed the influence of comedy skit as a therapeutic aid among students of the University of Benin. The survey design was adopted for the study with the aid of an 7-item questionnaire administered to 100 respondents purposively selected from the various faculty that makes up University of Benin. Data obtained were analyzed and presented with the aid of Frequency Tables, simple percentages, and Mean Scores. Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that comedy skits are valued for their role in providing entertainment, enhancing moods, offering stress relief, and fostering positive social interactions. The researcher therefore recommends among others that UNIBEN students continue to embrace and enjoy comedy skits for their positive contributions to social interactions, mood elevation, entertainment, and stress relief.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Laughter and humor have always existed in all societies and have a significant place in numerous mythologies all over the world. Various ancient philosophers, including Aristotle and Plato, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Kant, and Darwin, as well as contemporary philosophers like Bergson, Jankelevich, and Alvin Toffler, have regarded humor or laughter as a fundamental aspect of human existence.

The significance of humor for the delicate balance between human well-being, divinity, and society is demonstrated by the place it occupies in mythologies and the attention philosophers have paid to it. However, the use of humor is not restricted to theorizing and storytelling. The well-known saying: The proverb "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Proverbs 17:22) has been used throughout history, and medical records indicate that physicians have promoted the potential of potentially curative qualities of humor for hundreds of years.

Although it is difficult to define the concept of comedy skits, two essential characteristics are usually present laughter and smiling. Comedy skits allows for socialization and communication within many interactions and is often defined along two dimensions, the appreciation of humor and the creation of humor. For instance, if a person is pointed out as having a good sense of humor, it usually means that the person has one or both of these qualities.

According to Collins English Dictionary, a comedy skit is a short performance or a type of entertainment such as plays and films with particular scenes in them in which actors makes fun of people, events, and types of literature by initiating them to make people laugh.

Situational comedy gets its humor from awkward, amusing situations. Called “sitcoms” for short, situational comedies are usually TV shows in which a small set of characters gets into a different situation in each episode. All individuals have the potential to laugh freely, although some may suppress this depending on their capacity for openness and creativity. Others may not have developed an appreciation of humor because of their personal background. When people are unable to appreciate comedy skits in life it may be because they are grieving due to loss, are

chronically depressed, unable to comprehend the humor, or generally unable to “let go” and relax because of a desire to monitor and control their emotions.

There is a plethora of research which emphasizes the positive impact of the arts on the well-being of young people; however, this tends to focus on music, drama, dance, singing, and visual arts (Lee et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Zarobe and Bungay, 2017). Although rather limited, there is a growing body of evidence which highlights the positive impact that comedy skits can have on an individual’s health and well-being (Crawford and Caltabiano, 2011; Twardzicki and Jones, 2017). A systematic scoping review conducted by Gonot-Schoupinsky et al. (2020) explored the many benefits of laughter, which include a reduction in anxiety, tension, stress and depression, and an increase in self-esteem, hope and energy. It also helps to provide a sense of empowerment and control. Furthermore, it has been suggested that humour (comedy skits) can help reduce the stigma associated with talking about mental health (Corrigan et al., 2014).

Most people agree that humor plays a role in nearly every situation in which people interact. In many formal settings, comedy skits especially when it is in the form of laughter, is viewed as unprofessional. For some researchers this stigma has

squelched attempts to include it in formal research. To date, the effects of comedy skits ( humor) have been cited in areas such as education , psychotherapy, training in leadership, and the medical properties of combating stressful illnesses such as cancer, hypertension, and stroke. Humorous laughter brought about by comedy skits is also cited in music, literature, and theater, and often helps the artist to point to incongruities in society.

Even though the "comedy skit" is a relatively new field, research from the past 30 years has suggested the ways humor may benefit health. Comedy skits seem to have the ability to alleviate pain, strengthen the immune system, enhance positive emotions, reduce stress, separate distress from joy, and enhance interpersonal processes. It is postulated that if comedy skits is introduced as a therapeutic tool for developing increased coping skills, it can also serve to help increase the effectiveness of therapeutic, educational , and team building interventions. This study therefore will assess the influence of comedy skits as a therapeutic aid as perceived among students of the University of Benin. Nigeria.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Research in the area of comedy skits as a form of therapeutic aid is still in its infancy. The need for research in comedy skits is a reminder that not all science concerns arcane or narrow problems. We should resist neglecting or trivializing the commonplace.

There are rewards for approaching nature with a naive curiosity and attempting to see the familiar in new ways. As with any of the other communication tools available to us, comedy skits' positive or negative effect on treatment, education, and in groups or teams will be relative to the context in which it is used. There is an evident need for researchers to do trials utilizing humor as a central component.

According to Dr. Pamela B. Rutledge, director of the Media Psychology Research Center in California, there are a lot of different types of humor from comedy skits and self-deprecation to slapstick and dark humor. The way comedies and humor register in our brain can vary, making the neuronal activity in response to it very complex depending on the individual exposed to the content.

Moreover, no studies have been done in Nigeria to determine the influence of comedy skits as a therapeutic aid based on the opinion of the student. It will

therefore become necessary for this study to assess the influence of comedy skits as a therapeutic aid as perceived among students of the University of Benin, Nigeria.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The research work is guided by the following objectives:

1. To measure the level of impact of comedy skits on students of the University of Benin.
2. To establish the factors that causes sustained interest in comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin.
3. To find out the functions of comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin.

### **1.4. Research Questions.**

The research work seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of impact of comedy skits on students of the University of Benin, Nigeria?
2. What are the factors that cause sustained interest in comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin?
3. What are the functions of comedy skits as perceived by the students of the

University of Benin?

### **1.5 Scope of the Study.**

4. According to Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo & Okpanachi (2012), scope of study is the area of focus of the research. This is the area the research seeks to cover. This becomes imperative as it would give support to streamline the process to a manageable size to achieve the set objectives.
5. The study centers on the assessment of the influence of comedy skits as therapeutic aid. Hence, this research is set to focus on students of the University of Benin, Nigeria. This population has been chosen owing to the level of literacy and experience, not leaving out the ability to criticize.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This research will help to determine the perception of comedy skits on people and its impact on them. It will give comedy skit producers an idea of how the audience views their skit production thereby enhancing the production of skits that will reach the expectation of the audience. Also, research on humor would benefit therapeutic professionals who need to understand the importance of laughter when dealing with their patients.

In addition, it will bring about growth and improvement in the Nigerian entertainment industry concerning comedy as a whole. That is, while many skit makers (content creators) started with little or no production skills, the audience will desire better-executed content in terms of production quality in the future. This emerging trend would become a key entertainment sector where creators would compete for audience attention, loyalty, and experience, with the potential for the expansion of skit-making into the movie and cinema industry.

And finally, the study would be of great significance to the audience in general who wishes to carry out studies on the subject matter in the future.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study is the lack of resources. There hasn't been much research done on this subject, and many of the studies that have been done weren't easily accessible for use. In essence, these limitations do not infringe on the validity of this work, the topic was the passion that helped to achieve the aims and objectives of the research work.

### **1.8 Definition of Terms**

For clarity, therefore, the different terms will be defined in the context under which they will be used.

1. **Aid:** The act of providing support or relief
2. **Assessment:** The act of judging or deciding the amount, value, quality, or importance of something.
3. **Comedy Skit:** It is a funny, dramatic, or informative short play
4. **Influence:** The capacity to affect the character, development, or behavior of someone.
5. **Students:** A Student is a person engaged in the study; one who is devoted to learning, one who attends a school, or who seeks knowledge from professional teachers in an academy, a college, or a university.
6. **Therapeutic:** It is a form of therapy or treatment.
7. **UNIBEN:** University of Benin (UNIBEN) is a research university located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. It is among the universities owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria and was founded in 1970.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Preamble**

This chapter involves a review of related literature covering the following headings:

- 2.1. Comedy Skits : An Overview
- 2.2. Comedy Skits As A Means Of Therapy
- 2.3. Comedy Skits and the Youths
- 2.4. Factors That Enhances Interest in Comedy Skits
- 2.5. Function of Comedy Skits
- 2.6. Review of Empirical Studies
- 2.7. Theoretical Framework

#### **2.1 Comedy Skits: An Overview**

Comedy skits have grown in popularity in recent years as a form of entertainment. The capacity to distribute skits on social media in particular means that "thousands of individuals can absorb and deconstruct a sketch in a couple of minutes" (Awa-Kalu, 2016, para 3). Instead of waiting particularly for comedy

events on the broadcast media, which frequently are not shareable, this exposes the audience to the endless availability of hilarious skits, which give them humor more consistently. Due to the emergence of skits, numerous comedic careers have begun as a result of skits that have gained popularity among viewers on social media. Through this novel method and structure of comedy presentation, social media offers a variety of outlets to showcase and promote such careers.

Today's comedy skits promote talent in ways that weren't possible when stand-up comedians like Kenya's Churchill and Nigeria's Alibaba and Julius Agwu began their careers in the 1990s. Individuals who rose to fame prior to the rise of comedy skits are also re-establishing themselves in order to grow their fan base and attract new ones by editing or producing new comedies. We have people like Mr. Bean, Jennifer Lewis, Shangela Wadley, and Anne Kansiime in our group. It is safe to say that, regardless of how they got into comedy, entertainers are now making use of comedy skits.

Skit providers make money on their social media platforms by monitoring user interactions with advertisements, such as the number of clicks and views, the number of ads a user watches in a single viewing, and the duration of time spent

watching the advertisements. The number of subscribers and watchers who watch the advertisements placed on the skits is a key revenue driver for the skit providers. Hence, in order to place advertisements on their channels, advertisers search for trending skit providers with a large following.

Mark Angel, Olga Kay, Ryan Abe, George Mnguni, Anthony Padilla, and Ian Hecox of Smosh, Craze Clown, Jenna Mourey, Mo Gilligan, Arron Crascall, Twyse, and James Veitch are a few of the popular social media skit creators who rose to popularity and launched their careers using this kind of entertainment. Many of them currently have sizable audiences who follow them and look to them for entertainment. This has also given them the opportunity to take on comparable roles in television and radio talk shows, stand-up comedy shows, music videos, movies, commercials, and as brand ambassadors and compères.

As comparison to making typical comedies, movies, or broadcast entertainment programs, this entertainment format is easier and less expensive to produce. Skits can be created with just a smart phone and an internet connection because minimal editing or aesthetics is required. As a result, anyone who uses social media or is part of an ordinary audience can quickly create skits by recording

amusing situations (Awa-Kalu, 2016). This frequently calls for little to no formal expertise in photography or filmmaking. In fact, some comedians used their smartphones to create their earliest sketches. Self-starter skit creator George Mnguni, for instance, claimed that he first used his Samsung tablet for recording and editing. "I started there, doing (the) most with what I had," he said.

In general, the majority of content producers create skits on various social concerns. This is not surprising because it has already been mentioned that prosocial messages can be spread through entertainment. Nigerian comedians have a history of utilizing specific episodes of their skits to address topics such as domestic and sexual assault, cultural values, insecurity, police brutality, and COVID-19 (BBC News Pidgin, 2020; Elike, 2020; The Interview Editors, 2019; Okiche, 2020; Salaudeen, 2020; ThisDay, 2019). Others, on the other hand, are renowned for theme-based skits and unique comedy genres that offer enjoyment on specific identified social concerns or circumstances.

The trend here is that skit merchants are creating audience-specific skits, thereby generating an audience category that could attract some types of advertisers.

## **2.2 Comedy Skits as a Means of Therapy**

In Africa, although these studies are only beginning to emerge, many aspects in comedy skits are yet to be exhaustively explored. According to Dr. Pamela B. Rutledge, director of the Media Psychology Research Center in California, The way jokes and comedy skits register in our brains can differ depending on the style, ranging from wordplay and self-deprecation to slapstick and black humour, making the neural activity in response to it quite complex.

The concept of comedy skits, which has many facets, is getting more attention in students in colleges. Generally speaking, therapeutic comedy skits refers to any form of good encounter that will uphold, enhance, or otherwise benefit one's bodily or mental health. Granick (1995) indicates that many therapists believe that comedy skits may be a valuable tool for clients to use to effectively deal with their personal, social, and emotional issues. Living a complete and fruitful life requires a connection between humor, creativity, emotion, and mental health. Therapeutic comedy skits can be utilized in an instructional and remedial manner to help foster cognitive-emotional balance.

Comedy skits in the therapeutic setting can foster a competitive therapeutic

partnership, elevate self-worth, inspire original thought, and broaden viewpoints. In order to moderate undesirable responses, skit makers can assist people in turning distressing situations into humorous ones. (Jacinto et al 2003). Watching of comedy skits can help reorient perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, which can lead to more balanced interactions. The systematic study of the nature of humor and laughing and how it is incorporated into human personality was pioneered by Freud (1905) He noted that jokes and funny expressions help people defend against worries, dread, rage, and other unsettling emotions in *Wit and Its Connection to the Unconscious*.

Solomon (1996)) asserts that humor helps people take control by redefining situations as less dangerous. Moreover, embarrassing circumstances may be seen as less serious and therefore within control. Using comedy skits to redefine an event can provide someone a sense of control over it, regardless of their ability to control or influence it.

### **2.3 Comedy Skits and the Youths**

The social media have several characteristics that influence how practitioners and the youths use them (Anjugu, 2013). The youths now has access to international social media sites where they may see skits from around the world, providing them

with an endless supply of amusement. This is referred to as having a "free gateway destination for entertainment content" by Weide, Kevorkian, and Ireland (2011) on page 10. Borders, cities, or nations are no longer barriers to the audience's enjoyment of entertainment. For their entertainment, the youths can view as many comedy skits posted on social media from any location in the world.

Even though it may be argued that certain broadcast stations stream some entertainment shows online, many contents are still only available through paid broadcast services, which limits the audience's access to some entertainment options and discourages them from using social media for such purposes.

Similar to that, mobile viewing experiences enable youths to watch comedy skits on a larger variety of mobile devices and at a time that suits them. According to Carey and Elton (2010), the mobile aspect of social entertainment has led to the audience's development of "expectations that they should be able to get what they want, when they want it, and where they want it" (p. 170).

Skits can be enjoyed anywhere, at any time, at school, at work, while commuting, or even while on the go, thanks to the availability of internet connectivity on various mobile devices in the twenty-first century. It does away with

the restrictions of conventional broadcast scheduling and the requirement that viewers have physical access to a television set in order to be delighted.

The growing popularity of skits in the social media era has changed how youths consume media, what they demand, and how entertainment content is produced. While the youths starts to discover new ways to enjoy themselves, it only makes sense that this new exposure will affect how they use broadcast media, whose statutory duties include entertainment. Holt and Sanson (2014)'s proposal for "media industries to integrate digital technology and socially networked communication with traditional screen media practices" (p. 1) is justified in light of this.

#### **2.4 Factors That Enhances Interest in Comedy Skits**

It is clear that new, highly skilled skit creators are dominating the film industry. They produce buzz-worthy content, particularly comedy, for their social media accounts, particularly Instagram. In contrast to recent movies, many fans like watching them on their various pages. A typical Nigerian can simply and happily spend 200 naira on data to watch various skits on Instagram rather than 500 naira to purchase conventional home films.

Fans now have an easier way to connect with these skit creators thanks to social media, particularly Instagram, where they can also easily share their various videos for the world to see how talented they are. This costs them less than making

regular movies, which are more difficult and expensive to produce. Viewers frequently love these Instagram skit creators' work. Their skits are typically shorter and take less time to complete than movies, which can last up to three hours when necessary and at least one hour and twenty minutes to finish a full movie.

The only thing that most fans want to watch these days is a skit that will make them laugh and help them forget their worries at that particular time. This is especially true given the current state of the country. not wasting more than an hour watching a pointless, uninteresting movie with no lessons to be learned. With time, these comedians have built up a sizable fan base and have become independent celebrities. Their fans now prefer to watch them frequently and feel more at ease purchasing data just to watch their skits, which include those by comedians like Broda Shaggi, Mr. Macaroni, Cute Abiola, Mark Angel Comedy, Yawa Skit Crew, and Woli Agba, among others.

In part because of their costumes and precise portrayals of their roles without needless, drawn-out drama, some fans or members of the audience also like seeing them. With their roles in significant films and blockbuster projects, they are displacing the normal practitioners off the stage thanks to all of their talents and fan

connections. Due to their exceptional talent, skit performers come to identify with each character they play, which draws a diverse audience to them. Consider the fact that Broda Shaggi consistently plays the part of a gangster in his sketches. In his portrayal as a shady Sugar Daddy in his skits and many more, Mr. Macaroni rose to fame.

Viewers also choose to watch these skit creators since they consistently produce amusing fresh material. They never run out of material. Unlike movies with an excessive number of similar plots, where spectators can readily guess the outcome. A lot of fans are also drawn to them because of the content they consistently post on their accounts, as opposed to typical movie stars who appear in only a few films each year. The best of Nollywood is frequently featured in these brilliant skit creators' works in order to maintain and grow their fan base. Throughout their skits, they have included a variety of people, including Mercy Johnson, Tina Mba, Iyabo Ojo, Toyin Abraham, and many more.

## **2.5 Function of Comedy Skits**

Comedy skits has a number of different functions.

Comedy skits plays an important role in all kinds of relationships:

**Comedy skits** It can be a useful strategy for establishing a connection and getting past any awkwardness or shame in new relationships. It can assist resolve old disputes, conflicts, and minor concerns in long-term relationships by maintaining the excitement and resolving issues that have arisen in the past.(Rodriguez 2022)

**Comedy skits -sharing fosters intimacy and connections between individuals:**

Relationships that succeed have these characteristics. In fact, sharing laughs with one another forges a strong link between you. This connection serves as a protective barrier against the strain, conflicts, disappointments, and bad patches that frequently develop in a partnership.

**Acts as a defense against fear and anxiety**

By laughing at the things that scare you, you feel that you have them under control and that they're less threatening. In this sense, black humor or jokes about disasters function as a defense mechanism (.Avner Ziv 1984).

Comedy skits often helps to ease tensions and reconcile disputes. In fact, employing it frequently aids in handling even the most delicate circumstances. A joke told at the

right time can also help diffuse stressful situations and help settle arguments and minor confrontations. (Rodriguez 2022)

### **An Intellectual Game**

The main focus of comedy skits might sometimes be cerebral. It grants you a little reprieve from the dominance of logical thought. It gives you the chance to break free from the constraints of reality and embrace your originality and creative potential. It enlivens your thinking and may motivate you to come up with original answers to challenges that you encounter with others. Any explanation that disregards this more sophisticated and human purpose of humor is always constrained. (Rodriguez 2022)

The purpose of comedy skits is to make people laugh. Comedy skits impacts on the people's life and allows them to go ahead with cheer.

## **2.6 Review of Empirical Studies**

There are a number of empirical studies related to this study and they would be reviewed in this section as shown below;

**Dziegielewski, Jacinto, Rodriguez, Lauradio, S. G. A. L. (2003). Humor: An Essential Communication Tool in Therapy. *International Journal of Mental Health*. 32(3), 74-90.**

The study of Dziegielewski, Jacinto, Rodriguez, Lauradio , S. G. A. L. (2003) is related to this current study in that both studies are anchored on comedy (humor) as a therapeutic aid. In our society, attempts have been made to utilize and understand laughter as a tension reducer that assists with group cohesion and goal attainment Ziv [1988]. Freud [1905] pioneered research on the systematic exploration of the nature of humor and laughter and how it is integrated into the human personality. In *Wit and It's Relation to the Unconscious*, he observed that jokes and comical expressions enable individuals to defend against anxieties, fear, anger, and other disturbing emotions. Freud presented humor as liberating and capable of providing comfort in relieving the pain.

The major objective of Dziegielewski, Jacinto, Rodriguez, and Lauradio work is to look at Humor as an essential communication tool in therapy while the major objective of this current study is to determine the influence of comedy skits as therapeutic aid amongst students in the University of Benin. In view of this situation,

it appears interesting to explore the literature on comedy skits and examine the extent to which short comedy acts as a therapeutic tool.

This paper focused on the use of humor in therapy, groups, and teams, as well as in the classroom, where it seems to be a realistic strategy for improving student learning and expanding students' knowledge. Humor can be used in therapy to break down client resistance, relax tension, provide catharsis, and boost client/therapist rapport. The benefits of humor inside organizations and/or teams can help to improve cohesiveness and goal attainment.

Findings from this study identified that Humor should be used, like any other communication technique, to foster conversation, enable the growth of a trusting connection between the client and the therapist or among all parties involved, and establish a non-threatening environment Granick (1995) .Using humor as a coping mechanism is crucial when facing stresses in life. Giving kids a chance to relax in a safe environment, such as a classroom, can help them become more open to difficult subjects. Humor can be used in therapy sessions to reduce tension and establish connection.

More research is required to ascertain the ideal times and methods for

promoting humor, not just in the therapeutic setting but also in any situation where stress may become overpowering or tensions are high Francine (2001). More research is certainly needed to discover the exact threshold at which stress truly degrades or enhances performance, but humor is undoubtedly an element that should be taken into account. Although laughter has been identified as a means of communication, it is unclear how much humor is required for a group to be productive.

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

This study was anchored on two theoretical framework; they are:

Uses And Gratification Theory.

Technological Determinism Theory.

### **Uses and Gratification Theory.**

Uses and Gratification Theory" or "need seeking" is one of the theories of communications that focuses on social communications. According to this theory, which has a functionalistic perspective on communications and media, the audience's wants and motives are the media's primary functions. As a result, the more these

requirements are met, the greater the level of enjoyment (Windahl, Signitzer, and Olson, 2008).

The uses and pleasure theory was created in 1974 by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch to help researchers better understand how and why viewers utilize media for their own fulfillment. This theory's main tenet is that viewers actively engage with the media that they expose themselves to depending on their personal requirements or desires. These demands, according to Papacharissi (2009), are "related to the social and psychological constitution of the individual" (p. 137). The audience members' requirements in turn influence what they seek out in the media, what drives them to access the media, and how much importance they attach to the information and style of the media.

According to DeFleur and DeFleur (2016), the fundamental tenets of the uses and gratification theory are "an active audience goal directed that is, its members seek out, select, and pay attention to media content that provides some sort of satisfaction for needs or that provides some other types of gratification" (p. 189). Oh et al. (2017) point out that gratification and uses put engaged audiences in a position to choose media products to meet a variety of "information, personal identity,

integration and social engagement, and amusement demands" (p. 28). As it entails them "escape from obstacles, getting intrinsic cultural and aesthetic enjoyment, and seeking emotional release," they noted that entertainment is at the top of the list of audience requirements (Oh et al., 2017, p. 28).

The uses and gratification argument contends that since both broadcast media and comedy skits offer amusement, viewers will choose the format that best meets their individual requirements. The audience further selects the medium that best meets their entertainment demands and exposes themselves to it. The engaged, goal-oriented audience's quest for satisfaction demonstrates how useful they are in generating relevance and demand for the media entertainment industry's production effort. Several authors have claimed that comedy is transitioning from a communication channel to an entertainment channel as a result of the reality of growing audience demand and use of comedy skits for entertainment fulfillment (Brown, 2017; Bui, 2014).

Audience acceptance and interaction with entertainment can be attributed to the amusement fulfillment supplied by comedy skits. As viewers share the amusing videos to engage with their online friends, the audience's enjoyment is increased

(Hustead, 2012). The audience enjoys using comedy skits as a source of entertainment, as demonstrated by activities like reading comments and watching comedic-heavy videos, according to a study by Whiting and Williams (2013). For example, YouTube produces a variety of similar entertainment videos based on the audience's preferences.

### **Technological Determinism Theory.**

According to the technological determinism idea, every civilization undergoes socio, economic, and cultural changes as a result of technology and its derivatives. According to this hypothesis, the introduction of a new technology would cause the audience to alter their use of earlier ones, changing society in numerous ways and impacting how people learn, feel, think, and behave.

Marshall McLuhan in 1962 added media technologies to the theory, which began to reflect that the nature and strength of interaction in the society change as new media technologies evolve (Baran & Davis, 2010).

The integration of comedy skits extends beyond simply being a conduit of mass communication for the broadcast audience. It creates a new platform on which the broadcast media's entertainment content can be delivered. So, the impact of the new technology on society is deterministic. It changes how viewers learn about, feel

about, think about, perceive, and act toward entertainment, which has an impact on their entire life and society as a whole. The audience starts to get used to the new forms of entertainment that comedy skits are delivering. This starts to outline for them what amusement is. As a result, if the public accepts the new technology being used, they start to consciously and unconsciously learn to utilize it more for enjoyment, while their interest in the traditional technology (broadcast media) would decrease.

Advertisers, marketers, comedians, health communicators, and other stakeholders who use the mass media would start to adopt this method to communicate with the public as the audience starts to view entertainment in the new way it is being given via comedy skits. As a result, the technological determinism theory's hypothesis that society as a whole undergoes social change is further supported by the fact that the new technology not only affects the audience directly.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The survey research method will be adopted in this study. The term 'Survey' means the process of looking at something in its entirety. A survey is an empirical study that uses questionnaires or interviews to discover descriptive characteristics of a phenomenon. It is aimed at developing generalized proportions about human behaviors from what is called a sampled population. According to Asemah (2012), the survey research technique is a method of collecting and analyzing social data via highly structured interview or questionnaire, in order to obtain information from large number of respondents, presumed to be representative of a specific population.

Survey designs take account of the selected sample in order to understand and make descriptive assertion about a large population. This is to achieve generalized assertions about human behaviors from what is observed in a sampled population. Using the survey design enabled the researcher to focus on the students of the University of Benin.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

According to Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo and Okpanachi (2012), Population is described as all the members of any well-defined class of people, events or subjects. It is the group about which you want generalization to be made.

The population of this study is drawn from male and female students of the University of Benin. Based on a report gotten as at May 2023, the population of students in UNIBEN are 77,001 which was gotten from the institute's official website.

### **3.3 Sample Size**

According to Osula (2005), sampling is taking any portion of a population or universe as a representative of that population.

Sample size is the part of the population of study that serves as representative element of the research. Because of the enormous size of students in the various faculties, the researcher needs to cut the number to a manageable size for an adequate study.

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamene's formula, where

n – Sample size

e – Acceptable Sampling error nailed at 0.1

N – Estimated population of the study.

From the formula,  $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$

$$n = \frac{77,001}{1 + 77,001(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{77,001}{1 + 77,001(0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{77,001}{1 + 770.01}$$

$$n = \frac{77,001}{771.01}$$

$$= 99.87$$

$$= 100$$

Therefore a sample size of 100 students in UNIBEN were selected.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure**

Sampling procedure is the process involved in selecting representative elements from a given population.

The stratified random sampling technique was adopted as the sampling procedures for data collection for this study. It involves dividing the population into

homogeneous sub-groups and further taking a simple random sampling in each sub-group.

This sampling procedure enabled the researcher to be able to divide the population of the study into sub-groups. The population of this study, which comprised male and female students in UNIBEN

They were also divided into subgroups according to the various faculties they function in. This was done to enable easy administration of the research instrument for data collection.

### **3.5 Instrument for Data Collection**

This refers to the instrument used in collecting the data for the research. For the success of this research and to also make the respondents express their views, opinions and reservations freely without intimidation, jeopardy and restriction, the use of questionnaire was adopted. The questions were outlined in line with the research questions the research seeks to answer.

### **3.6 Method of Data Collection**

The study made use of primary data. To collect primary data, this research carried out survey by administering questionnaires to gather the information. A

questionnaire is a formal framework consisting of a set of questions and scales designed to generate primary raw data. It was stated that participation is voluntary, anonymous and that the information would be treated confidentially, thereby removing fears of respondents regarding traceability and possible victimization. Each questionnaire has detailed instructions and guaranteeing confidentiality. Questionnaire was used for this studies, and which contains two part, section A and Section B, section A contain some few personal information of the respondent while section B contains question related to the project topic. The Likert scale was used, coded SA=1 (Strongly Agree), A=2 (Agree), N=3 (Neutral), D=4 (Disagree), SD= 5 (Strongly Disagree). The questionnaire would contain closed-ended questions which would be divided into sections, with each of the sections focusing on a specific segment of the study.

### **3.7 Validity of Research Instrument**

Validity refers to the accuracy of a measurement (Asemah 2012). Every research work is subject to validation and approval of the research supervisor as pre-test.

After content validity the items in the questionnaire, the researcher ensured that it was validated by people who are experienced in that area of study. The research supervisor critically went through each of the items, made modifications before giving his approval.

Reliability on the other hand refers to the consistency between independent measurements of the same phenomenon. By and large, to ensure validity and reliability of the study, questionnaire will be well structured and unbiased. All corrections and instructions as directed by the project supervisor will be put into use for the purpose of having a qualitative research work.

### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the questionnaire was thoroughly analyzed using frequency tables, ensuring that percentages and tables were employed to effectively present the data, thereby facilitating the process of data analysis.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.**

**Preamble**

This chapter presents the data collected and collates via the questionnaires distributed to the respondent, as well as the discussion of findings. The first section of data analysis is the grouping of data according to items in the instrument using frequency tables and simple percentages. The second section discusses the findings of the study based on the research questions posed for this study. It is necessary to state here that the entire 100 questionnaires distributed, were not retrieved on the spot. Thus a 100% return rate was achieved and analysis was based on this figure.

**4.1 Administration of Research Instrument**

	Number	Percentage
Administered questionnaire	100	100
Questionnaire Retrieved	100	100

The data presented in the table above shows that 100 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents of which 100 were correctly completed and retrieved Hence the researcher will make use of the 100 copies of the retrieved questionnaires for data compilation.

## 4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Demographic Data

**Table 1:** Gender distribution

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Male	37	37
Female	63	63
Total	100	100

**SOURCE: field survey, 2023**

Data in table 1 shows that 63(63%) of the respondents were female, while 37(37%) were male. According to the data gathered females are more dominant than the male respondents.

**Table 2:** Age distribution

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	46	46
21-30	54	54
31-35	-	-
Total	100	100

**SOURCE: Field survey, 2023**

From the data representation presented in table 2, it shows that 46(46%) of the respondents were under the 18-20 age bracket, 54(54%) of the respondents were

under the 21-30,while no one was under 31-35 age bracket. This data presentation shows that the 21-30 age bracket were more represented.

**Table 3: Marital Status distribution**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Single	86	86
Married	13	13
Divorced	1	1
Total	100	100

**SOURCE: Field survey, 2023**

Data in Table 3 shows that 86(86%) of the respondents were single, 13(13%) were married, while 1(1%) was divorced. Therefore, a large number of respondents were single.

**Table 4: Level distribution**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
100 level	12	12
200 level	22	22
300 level	19	19
400 level	27	27
Others	20	20
Total	100	100

**SOURCE: Field survey, 2023**

Data in Table 4 shows 12 of (12%) of the respondents are in 100 level respectively. 22 of (22%) of the respondents are in 200 level respectively. 19 of (19%) of the respondents are in 300 level respectively, 27 of (27%) of the respondents are in 400 level respectively and 20 of (20%) of the respondents are in other levels respectively. Evidently, respondents have some years in level of study to their credit.

### 4.3 Presentation and Analysis of Psychographic Data

**Table 5: A. What is the level of impact of comedy skits?**

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	NS	Total	X	Decision
		5	4	3	2	1			
5i.	Comedy skits have impacted my academic performance to a large extent	-	-	52	48	-	100	2..52	Rejected
		-	-	156	96	-	252÷100		
		-	-	52%	48%	-	100%		
5ii.	Comedy skits have not impacted my academic performance to a large extent	64	36	-	-	-	100	4.64	Accepted
		324	144	-	-	-	464÷100		
		64%	36%	-	-	-	100%		
5iii.	Comedy skit that includes ridicule have made me a victim of it	-	-	48	47	5	100	2.43	Rejected
		-	-	144	94	5	243÷100		
		-	-	48%	47%	5%	100%		
5iv.	Watching comedy skit serves as a high source of distraction	23	29	22	22	4	100	3.45	Accepted
		115	116	66	44	4	345÷100		
		23%	29%	22%	22%	4%	100%		
5v	Watching comedy skit does not serves as a high source of distraction	18	34	-	-	48	100	2..74	Rejected
		90	136	-	-	48	274÷100		
		18%	34%	-	-	48%	100%		
5vi	Comedy skit that includes ridicule have not made me a victim of it	49	45	-	-	6	100	4.31	Accepted
		245	180	-	-	6	431÷100		
		49%	45%	-	-	6%	100%		
5vii	Comedy skits have an impact to my social interactions	62	13	-	-	5	100	3.87	Accepted
		310	52	-	-	25	387÷100		
		62%	13%	-	-	25%	100%		
5viii	Comedy skits does not have any impact in my social interactions	-	-	28	43	29	100	1.99	Rejected
		-	-	84	86	29	199÷100		
		-	-	28%	43%	29%	100%		

**SOURCE: Field survey, 2023**

Data in table 5 reveals the level of impact of comedy skit effect of self awareness on employee performance. It shows that 52 representing 52% disagreed that comedy skits have impacted their academic performance to a large extent. 64 representing 64% strongly agreed that comedy skits have not impacted their academic performance to a large extent. 48 representing 48% disagreed that comedy skit that includes ridicule have made them a victim of it. 29 representing 29% agreed that watching comedy skit serves as a high source of distraction. 48 representing 48% couldn't decide if watching comedy skit does not serves as a high source of distraction. 49 representing 49% strongly agreed that comedy skit that includes ridicule have not made them a victim of it. 62 representing 62% strongly agreed that comedy skits have an impact on their social interactions. 43 representing 43% strongly disagreed comedy skits does not have any impact in my social interactions.

**Table 6:** What are the factors that causes sustained interest in comedy skits ?

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	NS	Total	X	Decision
	Factors that causes sustained interest in comedy skits	5	4	3	2	1			
<b>6i.</b>	Comedy skits are easily accessible on social media.	78 390 78%	22 88 22%			- - -	100 478÷100 100%	4.78	Accepted
<b>6ii.</b>	Comedy skits are shorter than movies.	98 490 98%	2 8 2%	- - -	- - -	- - -	100 498÷100 100%	4.98	Accepted
<b>6iii.</b>	The hilarious costumes worn by the skit makers	87 435 87%	13 52 13%	- - -	- - -	- - -	100 487÷100 100%	4.87	Accepted
<b>6iv.</b>	The funny roles skit makers play	89 445 89%	11 44 11%	- - -	- - -	- - -	100 489÷100 100%	4.89	Accepted
<b>6v</b>	Comedy skits are not easily accessible on social media.	- - -	- - -	88 264 88%	12 24 12%		100 288÷100 100%	2.88	Rejected
<b>6vi</b>	Comedy skits are not shorter than movies.	- - -	- - -	6 18 6%	94 188 94%	- - -	100 206÷100 100%	2..06	Rejected
<b>6vii</b>	The hilarious costumes worn by the skit makers does not interest me	- - -	- - -	52 156 52%	48 96 48%	- - -	100 252÷100 100%	2..52	Rejected
<b>6viii</b>	The funny roles skit makers play does not interest me	- - -	- - -	36 108 36%	64 128 64%	- - -	100 236÷100 100%	2..36	Rejected

**SOURCE:** Field survey, 2023

Data in table 6 reveals the factors that causes sustained interest in comedy skits. It shows that 78 representing 78% strongly agreed that it is because comedy skits are easily accessible on social media. 98 representing 98% strongly agreed that it is because comedy skits are shorter than movies. 87 representing 87% strongly agreed that it is because of the hilarious costumes worn by the skit makers. 89 representing 89% strongly agreed that it is because of the funny roles skit makers play. 88 representing 88% disagreed that it is because comedy skits are not easily accessible on social media. 94 representing 94% strongly disagreed that it is because comedy skits are not shorter than movies. 52 representing 52% disagreed that it is because of the hilarious costumes worn by the skit makers does not interest them. 64 representing 64% strongly disagreed that it is because the funny roles skit makers play does not interest them.

**Table 7: What are the functions of comedy skits?**

Item	Details	SA	A	D	SD	NS	Total	X	Decision
	Functions of comedy skits	5	4	3	2				
7i.	Comedy skits ridicules people and make them anxious		-	52	-	48	100	2.04	Rejected
			-	156	-	48	204÷100		
			-	52%	-	48%	100%		
7ii.	Comedy skits can lift peoples mood	64	36	-	-	-	100	4.64	Accepted
		324	144	-	-	-	464÷100		
		64%	36%	-	-	-	100%		
7iii.	Comedy skit serves as a big source of entertainment	98	2	-	-	-	100	4.98	Rejected
		490	8	-	-	-	498÷100		
		98%	2%	-	-	-	100%		
7iv.	It helps students to unwind after a stressful day in school	83	17	-	-	-	100	4.83	Accepted
		415	68	-	-	-	483÷100		
		83%	17%	-	-	-	100%		
7v	It does not help students to unwind after a stressful day in school	-	-	48	52	-	100	2..48	Rejected
		-	-	144	10	-	248÷100		
		-	-	48%	4	-	100%		
					52%				
7vi	Comedy skit does not serves as a big source of entertainment	-	-	4	96	-	100	2..04	Rejected
		-	-	12	19	-	204÷100		
		-	-	4%	2	-	100%		
					96%				
7vii	Comedy skits does not ridicules people and make them anxious	-	-	75	-	25	100	2..5	Rejected
		-	-	225	-	25	250÷100		
		-	-	75%	-	25%	100%		
7viii	Comedy skits cannot lift peoples mood	-	-	37	63	-	100	2..37	Rejected
		-	-	111	12	-	237÷100		
		-	-	37%	6	-	100%		
					63%				

**SOURCE: Field survey, 2023**

Data in table 7 reveals the Functions of comedy skits as perceived by UNIBEN students. It shows that 52 representing 52% disagreed that comedy skits ridicules people and make them anxious. 64 representing 64% strongly agreed that comedy skits can lift peoples mood. 98 representing 98% strongly agreed that comedy skit serves as a big source of entertainment. 83 representing 83% strongly agreed that it helps students to unwind after a stressful day in school. 52 representing 52% strongly disagreed that it does not help students to unwind after a stressful day in school. 96 representing 96% strongly disagreed that comedy skits does not serves as a big source of entertainment. 75 representing 75% disagreed that comedy skits does not ridicules people and make them anxious. 63 representing 63% strongly disagreed that comedy skits comedy skits cannot lift peoples mood.

#### **4.4 Discussion of findings**

In order to ensure that the aims of this study were achieved, the three research questions posed for the study were answered with the aid of the data generated from the questionnaire. Apart from section A, which is concerned with the bio data of the respondents, tables in Sections B sought answers to the three research questions formulated for this study from the questionnaire. This discussion is based on the answers to the research questions as collected and collated from the items in the questionnaire by the respondents.

**RQ1: What is the level of impact of comedy skits on students of the University of Benin, Nigeria?**

According to the findings of this research work, table 5 gave answer to research question 1. The findings from the data suggest a complex and varied perspective on the impact of comedy skits on students of the University of Benin, Nigeria. While a significant portion of students may not perceive a substantial impact on their academic performance or personal experiences, there is a notable recognition of comedy skits influencing social interactions and attention levels.

**RQ2: What are the factors that cause sustained interest in comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin?**

From the findings of this research work, table 6 gave answer to research question 2. Evidently, the findings reveal that several key factors contribute to the sustained interest in comedy skits among UNIBEN students. These factors include easy accessibility on social media, shorter duration, the appeal of hilarious costumes, and the entertaining role play by skit makers. The contrasting viewpoints on potential barriers further emphasize the overall positive perception of these factors in keeping the students engaged and entertained by comedy skits.

**RQ3: What are the functions of comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin?**

According to the findings of this work, table 7 gave answer to research question 3. The functions of comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin encompass a range of aspects, including mood elevation, entertainment, stress relief, and emotional impact. These findings reflect the multi-faceted nature of comedy skits and their significance in providing laughter, entertainment, and a sense of relaxation to UNIBEN students. The data also highlights the diverse perspectives on the potential for ridicule and anxiety, indicating that while comedy skits serve various positive functions, there is room for differing interpretations of their impact.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

#### **5.1 Summary of the Findings**

The findings of this study show that:

1. In measuring the level of impact of comedy skits on students of the University of Benin, a significant portion of students stated it had little or no impact on their academic performance. However, there is a notable recognition of comedy skits influencing social interactions and attention levels.
2. The factors that causes sustained interest in comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin are the fact that they are easy accessibility on social media, have shorter duration than movies, the appeal of hilarious costumes, and the entertaining role play by skit makers.
3. The functions of comedy skits as perceived by the students of the University of Benin are it helps in mood elevation, serve as a source of entertainment, stress relief, and good emotional impact.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

It is clear that while comedy skits may not be widely seen as significantly affecting academic performance, there's a recognition of their potential to positively influence social interactions. The emotional benefits, including mood elevation,

entertainment, and stress relief, emerge as prominent functions that comedy skits fulfill within the UNIBEN student community. Furthermore, the ease of accessing comedy skits on social media, their concise format, amusing costumes, and engaging role play collectively serve as compelling factors that sustain students' interest. These elements combine to create a dynamic and captivating entertainment experience that resonates well with the fast-paced digital landscape.

It's important to note that diverse viewpoints exist on certain aspects, such as the potential for comedy skits to induce ridicule and anxiety. These varying opinions underscore the intricate nature of interpreting the effects and roles of comedy skits in the lives of students. In conclusion, it highlights the substantial impact of comedy skits on shaping UNIBEN students' perceptions and experiences. Comedy skits are valued for their role in providing entertainment, enhancing moods, offering stress relief, and fostering positive social interactions. The accessibility of these skits through social media, coupled with engaging elements like costumes and role play, collectively contribute to their sustained popularity. This comprehensive understanding underscores the importance of delving further into the multifaceted functions and impacts of comedy skits in the university context.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The following are the recommendations made by the researcher in order to assess the influence of comedy skits as a therapeutic aid among students of the

University of Benin.

1. Considering the varied perceptions regarding the impact of comedy skits on academic performance, it is advisable to raise awareness among UNIBEN students about the potential effects of excessive consumption., by encouraging students to strike a balance between enjoying comedy skits for entertainment and ensuring their academic responsibilities remain a priority.
2. Acknowledging the role of comedy skits in mood elevation and stress relief, universities could consider integrating comedy-based activities or events as part of stress management programs. Collaborations with comedians or hosting comedy shows on campus can provide students with healthy outlets to unwind and manage stress.
3. To address differing perceptions and potential concerns about the content of comedy skits, UNIBEN could incorporate media literacy workshops or courses. These initiatives would empower students to critically evaluate and analyze comedic content, helping them navigate potential sources of anxiety and making informed choices about what they consume.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

The following topics are suggested for further examination in order to assess the influence of comedy skits as a therapeutic aid among students of the University of Benin.

1. The relationship between media consumption and therapeutic nature of comedy skits.
2. The impact of comedy skits on cognitive processes and academic performance among University of Benin students.
3. Investigating the role of comedy skits in enhancing emotional resilience and coping mechanisms in the face of stress for students.

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## **APPENDIX**

Department of Mass Communication,  
Faculty of Arts.  
University of Benin.  
Edo State.  
July 2023

Dear Respondents,

### **REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am **OKODUA ONOSETA JOAN**, a final year student of the above-named department and institution. I am currently doing a study on the topic: **ASSESSMENT OF THE INFLUENCE OF COMEDY SKITS AS THERAPEUTIC AID AMONG STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, NIGERIA**. This research is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mass Communication.

Please, kindly fill the questionnaire to the best of your knowledge, and in all honesty.

Be assured that answers given will be treated with outmost confidentiality as the information you provide is for academic purpose only.

Thanks for your anticipated response.

Yours faithfully,

**OKODUA ONOSETA JOAN**  
Research

**INSTRUCTION: Please tick [ ] against your choice of opinion**

**PART A: DEMOGRAPHY**

1. Gender: Female [ ] Male [ ]
2. Age: 18-20 [ ] 21-30 [ ] 31-35 [ ]
3. Marital status: Single ( ) married: ( ) Divorced: ( )
4. Level: 100( ) 200 ( ) 300( ) 400( ) Others ( )

**PART B: PSYCHOLOGY**

Please read the following statements carefully and tick appropriately to show the extent of your agreement or disagreement to each statement. SA=Strongly Agree; ‘A=Agree; ‘U=Undecided’; ‘D=Disagree’; and ‘SD = Strongly Disagree

5. What is the level of impact of comedy skits?

S/N	Level of impact of Comedy Skit	SA	A	D	SD	NS
i	Comedy skits have impacted my academic performance to a large extent					
ii	Comedy skits have not impacted my academic performance to a large extent					
iii	Comedy skit that includes ridicule have made me a victim of it					
iv	Watching comedy skit serves as a high source of distraction					
v	Watching comedy skit does not serves as a high source of distraction					
vi	Comedy skit that includes ridicule have not made me a victim of it					
vii	Comedy skits have an impact to my social interactions					
viii	Comedy skits does not have any impact in my social interactions					

6. What are the functions of comedy skits?

S/N	Functions of Comedy Skit	SA	A	D	SD	NS
I	Comedy skits ridicules people and make them anxious					
Ii	Comedy skits can lift peoples mood					
Iii	Comedy skit serves as a big source of entertainment					
Iv	It helps students to unwind after a stressful day in school					
V	It does not help students to unwind after a stressful day in school					
Vi	Comedy skit does not serves as a big source of entertainment					
Vii	Comedy skits does not ridicules people and make them anxious					
Viii	Comedy skits cannot lift peoples mood					

7. What are the factors that causes sustained interest in comedy skits ?

S/N	Factors that causes sustained interest in Comedy Skits.	SA	A	D	SD	NS
I	Comedy skits are easily accessible on social media.					
Ii	Comedy skits are shorter than movies.					
Iii	The hilarious costumes worn by the skit makers					
Iv	The funny roles skit makers play					
V	Comedy skits are not easily accessible on social media.					
Vi	Comedy skits are not shorter than movies.					
Vii	The hilarious costumes worn by the skit makers does not interest me					
Viii	The funny roles skit makers play does not interest me					

