

**SATIRIC PERFORMATIVITY OF STAND-UP COMEDY IN
NIGERIA**

BY

ADEKUNLE IDOWU JAMES. B.A, M.A. (Ibadan)

MATRIC NO: 98288

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH,
FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN,
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M.PHIL)
ENGLISH**

MARCH, 2014

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out by Adekunle, Idowu James in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan, under my supervision.

Supervisor:

Prof. Ademola Dasylva.
B.A , M.A (Ife), Ph.D. (Ibadan)
Department of English,
University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

DEDICATION

This dissertation is solely dedicated to God the Most High, the Author and the Finisher of my faith, who is and who was and who is to come; the Almighty that has made this academic dream a reality.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My utmost praises and thanks go first to God the Almighty that made this academic pursuit a reality and a worthy one. Thanks, Baba, for your immensurable support in all ramifications.

My thanks are also due to my great Erudite Supervisor, Prof. Ademola Dasylva, who also doubled as my Resource Manager in the course of harnessing materials for this academic effort. Baba, words are not enough to express my sincerest gratitude. Your appropriate corrections have, no doubt, made the work much better.

My incomparable trailer of gratitude goes to my father, Solomon Adekunle and late mother, Christiana Adekunle, for their financial, material and spiritual assistances. Your words of wisdom have served as mirror, precept, guide and counsel to me. My generation will not forget you.

I will not forget to specially thank my lovely brother, Pastor Adekunle Olushola Johnson for his brotherly care and love. You are an epitome of Success.

My complimentary gratitude goes to Dads and Mums, Prof. & Mrs. A. L. Oyeleye and Mr. & Mrs. Oyeleye (Lagos) for care and love, especially for making my academic dream a reality. God will bless you and your generations.

My profound appreciation goes to my intellectual starlights and university Dons, Prof. Remi-Raji Oyelade, Prof. Obododnima Oha, Prof. N. Fashina, Prof. Ayo Kehinde and Drs- D. Adeyanju, A. Ogunsiji, A. Akinjobi (Big Sister), R. Oriaku, O.B. Jegede (Mum), T.M. Lamidi, B. Odebunmi, A. Sunday, K. Adebisi and Mr. Babajide. I sincerely appreciate Baba Basse, the departmental secretary for his ever-present support giving to me.

I want to specially thank my external examiner, Prof. Hammed Yerima, and internal examiner, Dr. H.O. Ekwuazi, for their intellectual contributions to this dissertation.

My thankful appreciation also goes to my H.O.D., Prof. E. B. Omobowale for his fatherly care and tutelage. There is no doubt; sky is the limit of your greatness.

Special thanks to Kehinde, Taye, Adeola, Adebowale, Adetutu, Mr. & Mrs. Taye Adekunle, Mr. & Mrs. Wale Ayelangba, Mr. & Mrs. F. Adekunle, Mr. & Mrs. B. Adekunle and Mrs. J. Adekunle, Mr. & Mrs. Ogunluyi. I am incredibly fortunate to have the benefits of your invaluable guidance as siblings.

I also want to use this medium to thank my friends, Charles Akinsete, Kole Bamidele, Tolu Adebisi, Akin Tella, Dr. Romanus Aboh, Dr. Funke Oni, John Fasasi, Christopher Usiagwu, Solomon Olaniyan, Seun Ojo, James Akinola, Olanipekun Atilola Abosedo, Arimi Kayode, Theophilus Joshua and others, who I cannot remember now. Thanks.

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ABSTRACT

Stand-up comedy, an oral dramatic performance commonly enacted by a solo-performer before a live audience, is today one of the most popular forms of performance in Nigeria. Studies of this performance genre have tended to examine its humorous and cultural dimensions to the neglect of its satiric import. This study, therefore, examined the satiric and performative devices deployed by selected stand-up comedians in Nigeria with a view to determining the role of stand-up comedy as a veritable source of socio-economic consciousness and a medium of social criticism.

Schechner's performance theory and aspects of the Freudian and Jungian psychoanalytic theories were used to analyse the embodied behaviours of the performers and the rationale behind their phenomenal popularity with their audiences. Based on their profound employment of satiric and performative styles, four digital video discs containing 20 live recordings of performances were purposively selected for the study. These include *Comedy Klinik Ward 1* and *Comedy Klinik Ward 2* by Godwin Komone (Gordons (14)), and *A Nite of a Thousand Laughs* Vol 15 and 16 jointly presented by Bright Okpocha (Basket Mouth (2)), Francis Agoda (I Go Dye (2)) and Godwin Komone (2). These performances were subjected to performance and literary analyses.

All the comedians orient to three types of satire, which are Juvenalian and Horatian in orientation, namely, political, social and religious. Basket Mouth evokes political satire, I Go Dye, social satire and Gordons, religious satire. While both Gordon and Basket Mouth utilise unshielded satiric (Horatian) humour, I Go Dye engages indirect satiric (Juvenalian) resources. In *A Nite of a Thousand Laughs* vol.15 and 16, Basket Mouth satirises Nigerian politicians, senior civil servants and other top government functionaries who are incompetent and who engage in bribery, corruption and political injustice through witticism, sarcasm, and paradoxical metaphors. Through burlesque, Gordons lampoons religious leaders, religious fanatics and the bourgeoisie in the society who use religion to perpetuate evil through violence and ethnic militia in the society. I Go Dye also criticises family conflicts which demonstrate the catastrophic effects of mindless pursuits of personal interests through farcical procedures. In all these performances, serious national issues are presented through the use of symbolism, caricature, subtle irony and humour. The performances are generally characterised by vocal dexterity, mimesis, blazer costume, zig-zag movement, subject-constrained facial and bodily gestures, audience-dependent improvisation and interactivity.

The stand-up comedies of Basket Mouth, I Go Dye and Gordons, which are a veritable mode of socio-political criticism in Nigeria, rely on nuanced deployment of both performative and linguistic devices which provoke laughter and aesthetic pleasure. Thus, these versions of comic performance function both as a cathartic device through which psychological and physical strains are eased out, and as a tool for critiquing social problems.

Key words: Satire, Stand-up comedy, Performance theory, Humour, Social criticism.

Word count: 450

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Comedy as a genre of literature has its own value and satiric performativity. It is highly appreciative when an in-depth analysis is being considered to view its total components, via its intellectual discourse, research-findings, sociological impact and its satirical performativity. It has been a relevant issue and a constant genre of literature that bestows a liveable ease on its target-audience or society. This is why scholars and researchers showcased its performative significance in literature through its numerous characterisations and reflections on humanity.

On this note, Oyewo comments:

Comedy, as a salient genre of drama, lends itself to various definitions by a number of scholars from various perspectives. Each of these scholars has found a convenient theoretical framework within which to situate his own definition. One observes that while some of these definitions and theories are still relevant and practicable, modern trends in dramaturgy have rendered some of them impotent. It is pertinent to examine some of these definitions of theories in forming the basis for our own argument (Oyewo, 2006:153).

According to Bamidele:

Comedy is a vibrant art that no theoretical formula can contain. It depends on the demand of a popular theatre from ancient Greeks to the modern times. It allows for creative ingenuity of writers from age to age and clime to clime as against tragedy that has a universal theme of man being manhandled by fate. Criticism of comedy under its various terms must have been enormous or is it just on the increase lately as against the situation some few years ago when criticism of comedy lags far behind that of tragedy. Is it really true to say that the critical literature of comedy is light when compared with that of tragedy? The fact that comedy tolerates and provides a bewildering variety of views because of its craftsmanship and purpose could be seen in Antonio Raccoon's view (Bamidele, 2001:7).

The critic believes that its cultural parameters, the ever-changing cultural idioms and the criticism reveal that comedy is a genre that is studied in diverse art forms, in cartoon, song, graffiti and jocular art in oral literature.

Possible Origin of Comedy.

Classical Greece

This ritualistic performance of comedy can also be traceable and likewise equal to the Greek ritual festival rites of Dionysus, a god of vegetation. The word comedy is directly associated with the Greek verb which means “to revel”. It originates from vegetable ritual (Easterling, 1997c:36-53, Bieber 1961, Cark 1965, Wickham 1992, Ley 2006). Aristotle’s *Poetics*, views that comedy originated in *phallic* songs and that, like tragedy, it began in creativeness (Ibid). For tragedy, it can easily be given a high consideration because of its thematic preoccupation that is always centred around severe issues, while the progress of comedy is disregarded because it was not taken seriously. When tragedy and comedy are examined, the playwright goes for one or the other, according to their natural bent. Those of the graver class, who might formerly have been liable to celebrate the actions of the great men in epic poetry, take side with tragedy; playwrights of a lesser sort, who had set out the doings of the dishonourable in invectives, take side with comedy. The differentiation is fundamental to the Aristotelian distinction between tragedy and comedy. Tragedy emulates men who are better than the average, and comedy men who are of inferior qualities (Ibid, Bamidele 2001).

The traditional origin of comedy which was believed to have commenced with Aristotle in ancient Greece of the 4th century BC and which also continues to this present age, is that, it is principally concerned with man as a social being, rather than as a private person, and that its purpose is candidly corrective (Kitto 1961; Nicoll, 1949). Apart from this, its comic performer’s function is to hold a mirror up to society to refract and reflect its follies and vices, in the hope of bringing a positive change to the society. On this note, Henri Bergson sheds more light on this corrective purpose of laughter. Laughter, according to him, is intended to bring the comic character back into conformity with his society, whose logic and conventions he abandons when “he slackens in the attention that is due to life” (Clark 1965, Britannica 2010). Here, comedy is considered primarily as a literary genre and for its manifestations in the other arts.

Comedy in its natural presumption of commencement in ritual performance celebrates artistic energy which acknowledges man’s animalistic tendencies, the animal

masquerades and phallic processions. Moreover, comedy in its actual performance also bears witness to man's physical vitality, his choice and pleasure in life and above all, his desire to go on living. It is highly festive in merriment, when the rhythm of life is situated within the civilized perspective of human community.

Medieval England

The drama that is most meaningful and relevant to a society is that which merges from it and is not imposed upon it. The texts of plays show the various functions they served at different times. Some plays always involved the whole community in a particular religious celebration, as when all the male citizens of a Greek city-state assembled to honour their gods; or when the annual Feast of Corpus Christi was celebrated with the great medieval Christian mystery cycles of Medieval Europe (Young 1933, Craig 1955; Clark 1965; Handison 1965; Stratman 1972, Britannica 2010). The content of the mystery cycles speaks specifically for the orthodox dogma of the church which places its plays at the centre of medieval life. There are elements of comic in those plays that provoke the audience to laughter and humorous ecstasy. Such of these plays is the Holy birth of Jesus Christ by the Virgin Mary which is displayed in the York (England) cycle of mystery plays in 14th-16th centuries. It is a mystery play of balanced didacticism that explains the concepts of amazement of Joseph on how Virgin Mary conceived and on how the angel reveals the mystery behind the conception of Mary to him. The humour behind this scene is a reflection of the simplicity of the audience and at the same time reveals the perfect faith that allowed the near-blasphemy of the joke which created a form of comic laughter. In the tragedies Shakespeare wrote for the Elizabethan theatre, he had the same gift of satisfying deep communal needs while meeting a whole range of individual interests present in his audience (Fastman 1968).

Apart from this, drama is also used for didactic purpose as shown in morality plays of the later Middle Ages, some 19th-century melodrama, and the 20th-century plays of Bertolt Brecht and George Bernard Shaw. The plays are directly used to satirize, or reveal the human weaknesses. This is why plays are not only representing life but they are also ways of seeing it. They show the greatness and the limitations of man in tragedy or in contemporary naturalistic playwrightings which are used to probe or reveal man's mind. From this point of view, Dr. Samuel Johnson is of the opinion that, there

can be no certain limit to the modes of composition open to the dramatist (Britannica 2010). In this case, drama is seen as the most wide-ranging of all the arts.

Dramatists maintained the moral tone of religious drama while using popular legendary stories to infuse their plays with a romantic and sometimes sensational quality. Another drama of this age is a miracle play which is solely based on unique events in the scripture. The play came into existence abruptly after the Mystery play. It centres round the lives of saints displaying events of torture and martyrdom. It also reveals the secular romance with infrequent appearance of a saint or the Virgin Mary acting as *Deus ex machina* performing a miracle to resolve the conflict (Dasylyva 2004).

Eastern Asian Origin of Drama

Japan

Similarly, in Japan, drama is also originated from religious festivals that are only performed for the feudal aristocracy at the ceremonious temple ritual of the early *nō* drama. The drama is exclusive preservation of both ritual rites and didactic purpose (Lambard 1928, Bowers 1952). The drama is highly ritualistic in nature and likewise maintains a special refinement that appeals to the intellect of its aristocratic audiences. The symbolism of setting and costume and the exquisite artistry of mime and gesture are two major factors in the enactment of the *nō drama*. In 17th century, this drama became the most popular drama among the Japanese. This *nō drama* is called “Kabuki”. Kabuki is a group of morphological compositions that makes a whole. Its name implies its composition: *ka*, “singing”; *bu*, “dancing”; *ki*, “acting” (Scott 1928). It gets its materials from popular histories and domestic stories. Its actors without masks move freely without appearing to be realistic. The plays are always ferociously energetic and wildly emotional in the way they are presented before a target audience. The written form of *nō drama* is pious in tone and highly poetic. The play is formal in its sparse plotting and restrained in verbal expression. Besides, there is an adequate use of imaginative ideas, spectacle, sensational actions, fastidious elements, acrobatics and mime to show moments of realism. Also, there can be moments of slapstick, but also moments of violent passion. In all, the words are subordinate to performance in the Kabuki. *Nō* theatre can be compared to the religious tragedy of the Greeks in its

legendary content, in its masked heroic characters, in its limit of two actors and a chorus. Kabuki play in its static and oratorical majesty of its style has the same features and high profound stand like the religious tragedy of the Greeks in its legendary content.

Another form of this *Oriental drama* is the classical theatre of Hindu India and its derivatives in China, Japan, Bali, Thailand, Java, and Malaya of Burma (Keith 1924; Well 1963; 1965; Scott 1957). During the period of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the West, it was at its peak in East Asia. It is conservative, stable, and highly reverence in its customs. Oriental culture purely distances itself from West culture by placing little emphasis on authors and their individual achievements. It does not follow the dogmatic principles of Western chronology and advancement of drama. Although the possible origins of Orient are lost, it still maintains its characteristic styles and themes as usual, before the advent of record keepings. Recently, Oriental theatre has just been shaped by the Western theatre, just in the same way the theatrical wealth of the East informs the modern theatre of the West. This influence of the Eastern theatre on the West can be seen in the experimental drama of William Butler Yeats and Thornton Wilder in English, of Paul Claudel and Antonin Artaud in French, and of Bertolt Brecht in German (Evans 1984, Gassner 1954).

Indigenous Africa

Drama and communal belief

Drama, in some form, is found in almost every society, primitive and civilized, and has served a wide variety of functions in the community. It is generally thought that ritual drama, like that of the West, had its beginnings in religious festivals such is the case of indigenous African society. It was a derivational tradition of a cultural milieu that is rooted in religious festival which is contextualised from ritual to drama. It focuses on the pre-colonial rituals, pre-Christian festivals, and pre-Islamic customs in indigenous cultural history before westernization. African scholars and researchers such as Bioaku (1957), Idowu (1962), Babalola (1966), Nketia (1975), Abimbola (1975), Olatunji (1976), Okpewho (1979), and Dasyuva (2003) see African ritual drama as a product of cultural divergence of their culture, civilization and knowledge that occurred before western civilization. For this reason, Ogunba urges Africans to dispense with the

western dramatic and theatrical conventions if they are ready to see their traditional ritual festival performances as drama (Ogundeji, 2003). Dasyuva argues “it is important to note that sacred ritual performances and ritual festival performances form the componential parts of the ‘traditional’ festival” (Dasyuva, 2003:8). Adedeji (1973) and Darah (1981) observed that the noticeable performance structure of the traditional festival may be compared with that of acts and scenes in modern drama.

African drama is highly sacred, serious and ritualistic in nature in its theatrical performance. It is highly symbolic in the traditional way of worships of gods, goddesses and ancestors. The traditional modes of performance are maintained at various degrees which include procession, Open-air arena setting, episodic and symbolic actions, an active audience, masking, music and dancing, etc (Dasyuva 2003). In African society, the ancestral occult and worship is a practicable convention in traditional festivals. The society is predominantly animistic in tradition. For instance, the masquerade and the ancestral occult are common phenomena. The masquerade is believed to be as a supernatural ancestral figure or spirit that has to be revered and feared. Masquerading is the most common traditional dramatic form of ritual festival in Africa. Ogundeji explains:

During the (ancestral) festival, masks of the dead fathers are brought out using theatrical effects as a means of ritual celebration. Masquerading is, in addition, used for purposes other than sacred or cultic function. It is for example, used for political, judicial and entertainment purposes. These other functions, however, are generally considered secondary (Ritual as Theatre, Theatre as Ritual, 2000:4-5)

According to Dasyuva (2004:6):

The significance of the *egungun* festival is the visiting spirit of the ancestor. It called for reverence and worship. There are such ceremonials as drumming, songs, dancing, acrobatic display, pouring of libations, exchange of gifts, and prayers (evocatory and invocatory), ushering in the New Year’s blessings, prosperity, peace, etc. For all we know, the “life” in the masquerade dress (costume) could have a relation or a common neighbour who belongs to the masquerade lineage. It is a taboo to treat him irreverently because the masquerade is a visiting “ancestor”.

The masquerade's gestures, guttural voice, dress (costume), holding of long cane or cudgel (hand props) certified him as an actor playing the role of an ancestral spirit. The worshippers and the lookers-on form the audience. The priests and the priestesses during performance are usually representing the gods, goddesses, and spirits who served as principle heroes and heroines. In the same vein, the paraphernalia attached to the songs, dancing drumming, spectacle and likes are all veritable aesthetics for stage effect in the course of the unfolding action (Dasyilva 2004).

In actual performance of traditional festival ritual rite-of-passage, involves shedding of blood of animals, and ritual cleansing of the societies used to ward off evil. For example, the ritual festival performance of Yoruba *Gelede* dancing masquerades in the market, Edi festival in Ile-Ife, the Obatala ritual play at Ede, *Okee Badan* festival in Ibadan, are practically used to ward off evil. Also, the diurnal counterpart of the *Eyo* mask, and the *Eyo* festival performance at Idumota in Lagos where the *Eyo Adimu* masquerade's role as a scapegoat are used as illustrations of ritual festival performances (Ogundeji 2000:17). In the *Eyo* festival in Lagos, all the evil of the community believed to have been collected by the other *Eyo Fansi* (the fanciful *Eyo*) masquerades who have been roaming the streets of the town since dawn are symbolically shaken upon the *Eyo Adimu* masquerade while passing through the guard of honour, the *Eyo Fansi* masquerade held for him. The social evil carrier is the scapegoat of the society. The significance of the societal evil carrier does not imply in the substantial thing he carries but in the symbolic spiritual burden upon him (Adedeji 1973, Sofola 1983, Osanyin 1983, Awolalu 1987, Ogundeji 2000, Dasyilva 2003). Ogundeji affirms:

When a sacred ritual performance is enacted in an open place, it is usually done in the dead of the night when people are sleeping. A curfew may also be declared to prevent members of the public audience from seeing such performances. Such as *oro* festival and the *Igbagan* sacred ritual performance that serves as prelude to *egungun* festival in some Yoruba towns (2003:23).

Other Yoruba traditional ritual festivals in societal functions are Orisa Oko, Ogun, Yemoja, Sango, Oya, Esu, etc. (Ojo 1973, Dagunduro 1982, Drewal 1989, Ogundeji 2000, Dasyilva 2003).

In the Northern part of Nigeria, among the Hausa people, the *Borin Gida* performance of pre-Islamic Hausa was a common practice. It is an exclusive preserve of a small

trance ritual attended only by women within the walls of the dwelling compound (Horn 1981:189-190). Apart from this, the Hausa *BorinJama*, a public *Bori* performance, is a ritual festival performance. It is a public performance in an open place where men and women equally watch the theatrical show. When the music and praise chants are rendered to a spirit called *Iska*, the *Bori* medium (*Mai Bori*) who is always possessed by the spirit will come out in proper costume, holding the spirit's emblem (*Tsere*) and starts to dance and moving erratically by jumping in the air and landing squarely on the buttocks with legs spread apart. At this instance of actual performance, the worshippers who constituted the audience give gifts which they place on the mat before the medium. The *Iska*, in exchange may "...converse with the spectators, foretell individual fates, offer guidance in personal conduct, issue orders or 'speak in tongues.'" (Horn 1981:190; Dasylva 2003:11).

From the Eastern part of the country, the Aboh's *Egwu Amala* dance theatre (Okwesa 1988) which was founded in 1948, and *Udje* dance performance (1981) are forms of ritual performance from the region. In these cultural dances, the most general arrangement in their traditional places of performance is the circular arena, where the audience encircles the performers who are in the centre. In the *Egwu Amala*, the arena is called *Ogbo Egwu* (Okwesa 1988:27). At *Udje* dance show, some members of the audience may caution others to keep silent in order to maintain order during the live performance. Darah (1981:514) and Ogundeji (2003:24) confirm this opinion that: "someone may say "a *doo!*" ("Silence please") or "'a *vb'eho ghwa ayen*" ("receive the song through the ear)"). Some other physical measurements that are applied for delimiting performance and maintaining order are the use of strong rope to prevent the audience from moving near the performers and the use of whips by the masquerades to restrain the onlookers from coming close to them (Ogunba, 2000:62-66) .

In the Igbo traditional circle, *Mmmonwu* traditional central place of performance is known as *Obom*. In the processional performance, members of the audience either move on with the procession where they are traditionally allowed to join the procession or stay by the sides of the route and frontage of their houses to watch the mobile show as it passes by when they are not traditionally permitted to join the show (Dasylva 2003:24). Ogbalu asserts (*year of publication not indicated*):

Forceful Masquerades: These are very active and sometimes almost violent in behaviour especially with their whips. They entertain by flogging or pursuing men or one another including their attendants. Old men do not run when they meet them and are not flogged. Instead they call them by their honour names (aha otutu) and they respond by saying 'Mmoo'. They do not pursue or flog women advanced in age but they must demonstrate their ignorance of what Mmoo is and show signs of apparent fear and respect. This class of masquerades are believed to carry harmful charms with which they contend with their opponents—men and other masquerades. As a matter of fact, the owners of masquerades whether they gentle or forceful ones usually equip them with 'medicine' or charms as a protection against the evil machination of their opponents who might seek to disgrace the particular quarters or village who owns the masquerade. Examples of this class are mmoo ogologo, ike-udo, mgbedike, oganachi, agaba, iduu, etc. There are those that operate only in the night so that women, children, and persons weak in charms might not see or meet them by chance. They considered to be very dangerous (p.43).

Other preventive measures and conservative traditional order types of performance space arrangement are rectangular stage and the picture frame stage which can be compared to the western proscenium stage (Ogunba: 57-66). These techniques are applied to preserve the traditional ritual performances from being bastardised or overlooked. Ritual festival and sacred ritual in Nigeria and Africa at large are highly preservative before western civilisation.

Comedy Practice in Indigenous African Ritual Performance

Due to western civilization in Indigenous African society, over the years, the sacred ritual performances and the ritual festival performances have become so overpowering that the public has nearly forgotten the origin of their religious aim, purpose, and sociological significance. Westernisation impact and its theatrical influence have drastically overwhelmed the deritualising and deritualised the enactments. The aesthetic functions, the public entertainments and memorable pleasure draw from these enactments have gradually eroded the sacred and traditional sensibility behind the performances. The artistic values, such as chanting, drumming, dancing, singing and masquerading that are usually traditional rites and practice in religious worship, are now full made use of in secular festival and any social functions wholly for entertainment. These forms of entertainments are often employed by many African

societies in the services of national ceremonies and state visits of Presidents, Governors and other dignitaries within and outside African communities. The national and the state cultural troupes are seen as the main entertaining teams who amuse such public figures with ritual dances, masquerading, songs, drumming, chanting and the likes without any connection to religious rites. This is why Ogundeji says:

In sacred ritual and ritual festival performances, the aesthetic is the means by which the ritualistic religious end is achieved. In the deritualising and deritualised performances, ritualistic and religious means form part of the process of achieving the aesthetic goals (2003:25).

These aesthetic values and amusing trends are forms of comedic practice in both ancient past and contemporary African societies. The Yoruba *Eegun Alare* and the *AgbeIgijo* (masquerade players) masquerade performances are special groups of such kind. These types of performers are professionally trained in comic entertainments or performances. The practice of the Yoruba *Eegun Alare* deritualising theatrical performance has built up a class of family or lineage professionalism where a child is taught and permitted to perform in public as early as when he is two or three years old (Obuh 1989:114-115; Dasylva, 2003:15). The male children are permitted to engage in masquerading known as *tombolo* or *kunduke* without the cultic background and general ritual sophistication of the adult performance (Aremu 1983:51). Another form of children's initiation into an actual performance is *Ekun Meran* (the leopard catches the one plays the goat), a Yoruba hide –and- seek game. When a child is performing the leopard's role chases the one playing a goat's role in and out of the ring made the other kids who render the chorus that gives the environment a liveable atmosphere, the game-play brings into an action a comedic mood (Ogundeji 1991: 100-101; Dasylva 2003:15).

The Yoruba *Agbegijo* masquerade performance is a kind of comedic sacred ritual drama. *Agbegijo* masquerade literally means “taking wood to dance”. It is a special group of *Egungun* society that plays an entertaining role in any public ceremonies. The group dances at an occasion of funerals, naming ceremonies, weddings, annual sacrifices of the *Orisas* etc. This set of entertainers is trained for comic entertainment. The comic performances are sectioned into different categories. The first set of performers comprises of those who imitates other ethnic groups, like Ibos, Hausas,

Nupes and sometimes the Europeans. The second group imitates people with odd physical features, like people with big ears, small noses, small mouths, big eye balls, etc. Third groups are those making fun of people in the society, such as the police, the drunkard, the prostitute, etc. The fourth set imitates animals, such as leopards, snakes, baboons (Roscoe 1971).

The *Agbegijo* show follows a systematic pattern in public performances. In the awesome appearance of *Agbegijo* masquerades in public performances, *Iwi Egungun* song is used as an accomplishment to the arena of entertainments. *Iwi* is a type of songs that is exclusively rendered by *Egungun* poetry group. Immediately after this rendition and *Agbegijo* appearance, comes a popular display where tricks of all sorts are performed. *Ekun* masquerade appears and dashes into the crowd. And suddenly disappears unto the top of the nearby roof, making threatening gestures. He will not come down until someone provides chicken to appease him. In this ritual entertainment, the chicken's head will be removed abruptly and the blood that gushes off the chicken will be poured into *Ekun's* mouth. Thereafter, many masquerades appear in quick succession. They disguise as different characters, such as Gambari, Tapa, Dahomy, Sango, Oya, Ogun, Esu, Orisa oko, Iyemoja, etc. This entertainment show is a form of ridicule imitational displays of personalities.

Apart from this, some set of masquerades also appear zoo morphic images to create comic laughter, such as baboon, python, goat, etc. Another category includes that of drunkard, *Omuti fara sofo*, meaning a drunkard with a wasted life. The drunkard displays his straggery life in the public show before the audience. The fourth group features *Oyinbo*, that is, the Europeans with pointed noses, and smooth black hair saying "How do you do". And likewise the group displays the ridiculous bathroom dance of European tradition. The fifth set characterises the life of *Asewo*, a prostitute. The prostitute is always accompanied by a policeman. The sixth group displays *Osomalo* that is, the Ijesa creditor who forces his debtors to pay. The *Osomalo*, character squats on the stage as he poses to collect his money. There are other forms of masks that appear on the stage with unusual physiques, like *Onimuoru* (One with a big nose), *Eletikoloba* (one with big ears), *Elekedidi* (One with large cheeks) and the *Elenurobo* (One with round mouth). The final mask on the theatrical show is *Iyawo paalo*, that is, a parlour's wife who is jobless, extremely beautiful, and highly

extravagant in appearance, with different layers of clothes wrapped on her. She takes off the layers of clothes wrapped on her, one after the other, and lastly refuses a baby on her back. The baby is a made carved wood. The baby is taken forward and fed from a long flat cloth's breast (Roscoe 1971).

As displayed above, *Agbegijo* is a humorous and noisy exhibition. Not only this, it is also a form of satire that mocks certain behavioural mannerisms in the society through humour and irony. The spectacle is sustained by songs, dances, drums, chants and the likes. There is also use of costumes and grotesque masks. The performers are still the members of *Egungun* cult and the general cultic rules of the society are binding on them (Dasylva 2003). The members are solely males. The theatrical setting is the village square and the audience is linked with the casts. Both the performers and the audience convergence at the village square give a sense of acknowledgement to show and fears which they hold in common. The entertainment in general is an instrument of social peace and conformity in African society at large.

In people's religious rites, this artistic nature of comedy is practically showcased through ritual performance in which symbolic figures or characters are caricatured. Although, these symbolic figures are used to provoke laughter, they also serve as didactic elements which sometime appear in a cynical manner. The typical example of this performance can also be seen in "Oke Ibadan" Festival, where naked pictures or bizarre appearances of male and female are displayed publicly as a form of satire to create a healthy sensibility in the minds of the viewers. This performance combines different things in a way that produces an effective ritual performance and a pleasant result that makes its performance a serious one and a liveable ritual.

Bamidele corroborates this fact:

This is the result of Oke-Ibadan festival with its abuse of the phallus not purposely to laugh at those anatomical parts but to point out the aberrations in those anatomical parts as metaphors of the society's aberrations and paradoxes so that we can live together happily. This is the influence such festivals have on Zulu *Sofa The Sweet Trap* in the battle of the sexes and this is what the wordless rite or the pantomimic drama in the Kanute comic performances of the Ogoni people of Bordo in River State of Nigeria means in making the society laugh at itself with innocuous display of mine, mask and

gestural jokes to ease tension and anxiety and energize happy moments and mood in the community (Bamidele, 2001:11).

Therefore, it is actual believed that this secularization of these professional entertaining theatrical groups of traditional ritual, has given birth to different dramatic cultures, such as *Etiyeri* and *Efe folkloric* traditions and the skilled *Alarinjo* drama groups in Yoruba tradition (Ogundeji 2003)

More also, the *Borin Wasa* (Borin player) of the Hausa pre-Islamic tradition which is predominantly entertainment kind of the *Borin Jama'a* (*public Bori*) belongs to this category (Ogundeji 2003). In its enactment, the entertainment is the sole aim and *Mai Bori*, that is, the *Borin* medium, is no longer possessed by the spirit of *Iska*. So, the heightened emotional status of trance's invocation of the possessed character is out rightly eliminated and spirit-audience interaction is cut off. The ritual performance is relegated to the background.

The *Mmonwu* performances of the Igbo, the *Udje* dance performance of the Urhobo and the *Egwu Alama* performance of the Aboh also geared towards entertaining groups, Ugonna (1981, 1983), Darah (1983) Okwesa (1988), Dasyuva (2003). For instance, *Egwu Amala*, a traditional dance theatre, of the Aboh people of Delta State is always used in public entertainment in several communal occasions, such as traditional festivals, naming ceremonies, wedding feasts, and all forms of social festivities (Okwesa 1988). Dasyuva (2003:12) and Okwesa (1988:21) clearly state that, each of the plays displays thematic significance premised upon the performers' cultural experience such as their work and art beliefs, such as canoe, paddling, bathing, childcare and traditional festivals, like mammy water mermaid (mermaid, Alishi festival, Udje festival) and royal marriage.

The *Kwagh-hir* (Enem 1981) and *Dogodogo* (Ellison 1981) puppet theatrical groups of Tiv and Bornu are another two deritualised entertaining traditional puppet performances. The ritualistic role has been out rightly removed. For instance, in the *Kwagh-hir* performance, the masquerades are seen alongside with puppets in the theatrical shows. Its scenic enactments take narrative temple that gives a highly structured show in public entertainments. In this narrative pattern, there is usually a

narrator that assists the public audience in the accurate interpretation of the various dramatic sketches in *Kwagh-hir* theatre put together by a production of crew with the support of a chorus and the instrumentalists. But in the case of *Dogodogo* there is always one narrator that is usually involved (Ogundeji 2003). In both performances, briefs dramatic sketches appear in different social interactions.

This dramatisation of comedy in theatrical exhibitions can also be seen among Mende people of Sierra-Leone in the religious festivals and worships (Roscoe 1971). The performers are also members of a secret cult who are paid to impersonate spirits, animals, gods, goddesses, and other moral and historical personages masked by players before the general public in an open arena, for the purpose of entertainment. They visit their clients' homes dressed in wooden mask and cape of raffia. Right on the spot, they convey the messages from the dead through mimicking miming.

In Ghanaian society, the performance takes another outlook. The practice starts with a subtle satire of an actor using a dramatic formula by telling the audience "we don't really mean to say so". This statement is a protective mechanism which permits the actor to vent their complaints and sad criticisms. They narrate tales about gods, fetishes, ancestors, chiefs, the sick and, occasionally, sexual matters in a profane manner. Occasionally, when the narratives are on, two or three characters will come on the stage to impersonate characters to whom references are made (Roscoe 1971).

Among the Nyakyusa of Tanzania, there is also a funeral dance that is highly entertaining and noteworthy in its own way. The ritual dance is performed by women in the honour of the decease at the funeral burial to express their heartfelt, sympathy and sadness for the beloved one. The women dance because as they uttered "there is war in our heart a passion of grief and fear, exasperate us" (Roscoe 1971). This expression is an emphatic oration and highly notable rendition because such explanation record agrees with the ancient Aristotelian's view of tragedy with its catharsis of fear and pity.

In Egypt 2,000 years before Christ and Thespis in the 6th century BC in ancient Greece, there are also records of a sacred drama which gave birth to ritual entertaining comic drama. On this note, the religious drama of ancient Greece, the mystery cycles of medieval Europe, the temple drama of early India and Japan, the African indigenous

drama, they all have something in common that goes beyond their religious beliefs and contents. In each society, theatre serves as a place of worship and it takes cognizance of the root belief of that society. This is why drama in its actual enactment reveals man's totality in life both as individual and as a social being. Drama in its totality is a representation of life.

Comedy Renaissance in the Sixties on the Nigerian Theatrical Stage.

This is an upsurge of traditional theatrical shows in which the talented, the skilled and the more professionalised Nigerian theatrical groups came into public entertainments. This form of dramatic entertainments is usually done on theatrical stages and open-air arena settings for the public audience. In the actual enactment, this celebratory performance often makes use of the opening procession, episodic and symbolic actions, drumming, singing, chanting, masquerading, costuming, impersonation, music, dialogue, dancing, acrobatic display, spectacle and other attached paraphernalia which are the important aesthetic dramatic imports for stage effect in the course of the unfolding actions.

The artistic age of comedy renaissance in Nigeria has helped to popularise comedy beyond the coasts of Africa. It is a theatrical orchestration part of the entertainment industry that started to grow and show various levels of development. Nigerian comedic shows now get show on satellite TV and have managed to gain a fellowship from a number of African countries. This acclaimed fact is as a result of some comics who are getting international deeds. Based on this artistic nature of the Nigerian comedic actors, the industry has managed to burst beyond the country's shore and likewise enjoyed all the rights and privileges of government's incentives.

The advent of Moses Olaiya (a.k.a Baba Sala) on the Nigerian theatrical stages, televisions, and cinematic shows gave rise to the birth and proliferation of comic drama groups in Nigeria. Before then, the theatres of Hubert Ogunde, Duro Ladipo and Kola Ogunmola had promoted drama on the Nigerian Stage with mythical, historical, political and social plays that had to deal with modern-day events (Bamidele 2001:53). These groups of dramatists were comic entertainers of the old province towns in colonial era before the establishment of the television stations in Nigeria. They travelled round the country, most especially to Yoruba speaking regions for their theatrical performances by providing advertisement for people who love leisure and

fun. Their plays were seen as folk operas that were predominantly revolved round dancing and music. These fun fair shows were Moses Olaiya met on ground at the theatrical stage. He chose to distinguish himself by concentrating on comic skits which he believed would provoke thought and ease the tension of a people who by nature are rather fun-lovers than being sedate in nature (Bamidele 2001). He only imitated his predecessors in the area of joke and visible arousal of comic excitement with the titillating dancing of the girls. In order to make his theatrical shows highly entertaining, he employed a mechanism device of incongruities on the stage to create a comic effect that creates laughter and amusement to the live audience. For instance, his appearance on theatrical stage gave an eccentric look with pot-belly and playful tricks. Sometimes, he opened the performance with clownish show bordering on childish of intrigues and jack-in-the-box pranks.

In the same vein, this aesthetic manifestation of theatrical performance of Moses Olaiya's tradition has given birth to different new terms in the Yoruba comedy both on theatrical shows and television stations, such as, Ajimajasan, Aluwe, Baba Suwe, Iya Kete, Jacob and Papalolo, Papa Ajasco, Koledowo, Pa Kasunmu, Samanja, Baba Sabiko, Mr.Latin and a host of others in comic entertainment. These are the comics who have taken bits here and there of Baba Sala features to create comic scenes and sketches for Nigerian audience (Bamidele 2001). Apart from this, they also created a device and language of comedy that has some comic features, like that of Moses Olaiya's tradition through different approaches such as Awada, Apanilerin, Komedi, Tujuka, Efe, Komikati, Apari, Alatipa, Eti Yeri, etc. This is why Bamidele sees Moses Olaiya as a pathfinder of Renaissance comedy in Nigeria:

We can, with his bag of theatrical tricks, describe him as "Le premier farceur de Nigeria". Expressed in Yoruba he is 'Asuwaju elere awada to gbajumo ni Nigeria'. The foremost and popular comedian in Nigeria (2001:54).

He also stresses it further to say:

Moses Olaiya has played all sorts of roles in his plays to convince us that comic art is an art of the actor rather than of the playwright. The actor must be versatile in any comedy to draw laughter from his audience. He has convinced us that it is not much of the language you use in the comedy that could excite the audience to laughter but how much of the ability to act your roles. It is in this light that he sets for us the theory of incongruity and to a

large extent the idea of “mechanical encrustation upon the living.” (2001:54)

This mechanical encrustation upon the living is a comic device in which the comic plays a dual role on the theatrical stage when he reveals his natural traits and also impersonated somebody else at the same time. The comic devices may be impersonation or disguise of the lame, the drunk, the mad and all sorts of the childish tricks on the stage. These are all and many other forms of the stock-in-trade postures of comic art popularised by Moses Olaiya which his followers have used too often to make audience laugh while watching a play on stage or on television. Every part of his plays is reduced to Awada kerikeri, that is, mere fun. His movement from reality to fantasy is a ready source of comedy even in ordinary life which a comedian like him, makes use of.

On these facts, Bamidele argued that Moliere and Baba Sala share the same method and mode of the incongruity theory and so a comparative study of these two hopes to be a fruitful academic venture (2001:55). To the students of farce, Baba Sala has produced something on the style and tradition of acting which is now part of the popular performance style of comedians at social gatherings and functions. An example of jokes and songs is Omo Oloku that has become a household name among the comic entertainers in Nigeria. The choice of words is peculiar in a way that his use of the Yoruba language is play on the tropes and the metaphor in which a supposedly ignorant person to the language may derive new but contrary meaning. According to Bamidele, that Niyi Osundare has reappraised Baba Sala’s use of language as a fascinating mark of the archetypal tortoise in folklore that is ready to change words to his own advantage (2001:56). Baba Sala has proved that language of comedy is both verbal and gestural. On this note, Ben Tomoloju argued that comedy of Baba Sala is hard to typologise (Bamidele 2001).

Historical Origin of Stand-up Comedy

Stand-comedy is an art form that is particularly rich in historical events of socio-political and eco-cultural cataclysms which are aesthetically portrayed through oral-narratives. This term or coinage ‘stand-up comedy’ came into play in 1966 when both the Oxford English Dictionary and Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary started to recognizing the term (Mendrinós2004). That was just the first time it was given a

name. Although, stand-up is a decidedly American invention with its root dated back to the mid-1800s. Before then, comedy had been exclusive show of theatrical performance. The first proponent and grandfather of stand-up comedy was Thomas Dartmouth “Daddy” Rice, the one who was credited with inventing the minstrel performances (Mendrinis2004).

The minstrel performances were in all probability one of the most grotesque forms of entertainments in history. It was solely structured on negative racial stereotypes and the ridicule of a race of people who were already relegated to their background. The comedic actors did perform in blackface and the long- term effect of minstrel performance can still be found in today’s market of mainstream clubs and black comedy clubs across the country. As time goes on, the minstrels erred from the rigid confines of normal theatre productions. Performances were no more seen from the perspective of a plot, but rather a theme, and a loose set of characters. There was a satiric monologue that provoked fun at modern-day life and political figures. It was likewise the first of its kind in which something credible akin to stand-up comedy was performed before a live audience. Vaudeville houses where theatrical shows were displayed also refined the style of comedy, with emcees speaking rather than singer their comedy. Vaudeville showed that comedy could work on large stages, but burlesque proved that it worked even better in an intimate setting (Mendrinis 2004).

Radio stations, film industries and more so television stations had had great impact on stand-up comedy through their widespread mediums that had indirectly shaped the art form. As these mass popular entertainment types grew stronger, the desire for vaudeville and burlesque style shows declined, and the larger houses closed.

In the late 50’s, there was a generation of comedic actors who grew up under these environments. This first generation of stand-up comedians included; Lenny Bruce, Lord Buckley, Dick Gregory, Bob Newhart, Bill Cosby, and the first person to bring a new sensibility to the comedy stage, Mort Sahl (Mendrinis 2004). These stand-up comics and many others took the lesson they learned under the tutelage of Danny Thomas, Bob Hope, and Myron Cohen, modernized the comedy, and passed it down to another generation of comics, namely, Richard Pryor, Robert Klein and Freddie Prinze.

Based on these conglomerating effects on theatrical orchestrations, Vaudeville and burlesque houses are divided into smaller venues that showed specialized entertainment. Such specialized venues are developed into strip clubs, music clubs and off-off Broadway theatres. In order to look fun, the comic actors used to be dancers, or jugglers, or singers. Currently stand-up comedy has its own technical mode of operations. Its market and art form has persisted to reduce in scope, but not in size. Stand-up comedy entertainment industry has greatly enjoyed people's patronage everywhere nowadays.

All the aforementioned discussions stated above gave birth to what we have today has stand-up comedy. As Mendrinós (2004) puts it that, "Had radio not become popular, or if TV didn't dazzle the American audience, perhaps live variety entertainment would have survived, and "stand-up" would be a small piece of what became your act".

The Birth of the Nigerian Stand –up Comedy

The growth, development and popularization of Nigerian stand-up comedy for the comatose stage art have foreclosed the resurrection of theatre art. The creative and aesthetic potentials of this genre stand –up comedy have created a need for it in Nigerian society which marked the dead-end of theatre tradition. Its arrival into theatrical stage has hugely compensated for a truly sad loss for those who have been disheartened by the persistent decline of Nigeria theatrical tradition. The audience's nostalgic feelings of loss is quite understandable because in the hey days of the Nigerian theatre institution, there was hardly a more potent form of social criticism ,or a more colourful medium of cultural exhibition, or even a more subtle vehicle for satire other than that vehicle of stage (Onyerionwu 2007). This, she further to say:

But today as we have come to see the only artistic medium that has undisputedly inherited these and more laudable responsibilities of the theatre tradition is stand-up comedy. It is perhaps to the credit of many characteristics which both genres share that an overlap-free transition has been guaranteed. First, like the core dramatic theatre, stand-up comedy is essentially a stage art (Onyerionwu, 2007:1).

On this notion, the possible origin and earliest pioneers of stand-up comedy can be dated back to the classic days of comic performances on radios, birth of the comedy clubs in the 1970s, boom of stand-up comedy in 1980s and modern-day alternative

comedic movement and tradition. These historical facts have given stand-up comedy a new outlook. Birth of stand-up comedy was properly marked out in the 1970s when it gave birth to a new generation of comedians to the rise of the comedy clubs. This was an historical decade that gave life and at the time changed stand-up comedy forever. Apart from this, stand-up comedy also boomed in 1980s. In 1990s, stand-up comedy drastically experienced a setback until it bounced back to life in the 2000s. The incessant proliferation of new TV comedic shows and comedy clubs over the decades has given birth to what we have now in our contemporary world.

New and young generation of comedic performers in Nigeria include, Gbenga Adeboye, Gbenga Adeyinka (Laffmattaz), Bright Okpocha (Basket Mouth), Francis Agoda (I Go Dye), Klint De Drunk, Godwin Komone (Gordons), AY, Elenu, Sir Jeff, Funny Bone, Meleke, Frank Edoho, Omotola Jalade, Federation Mallam, Mc Shakara, Mc Pawee, Jedi, Koffi, Emeka Smith, Seyi Law, Ali Baba and a host of others who have helped to shaping and likewise keep on moving Nigerian stand-up comedy to the world-class.

Comedy, to many scholars, means different things, but this research work distances itself from these scholars' assertions claimed above. It is viewed from the dimension of satiric import in a bid to correct social ills. This is why I think that comedy, in actual sense, goes beyond the level of entertainment, cultural practice, intellectual discourse and its sarcastic nature of human events and behavioural patterns of the socio-cultural milieu. In the ancient Greek, Roman world and Elizabethan tradition, comedy was less significant when compared with tragedy which shows human brutality and dehumanization in its cinematic orchestration and theatrical performance.

Comedy through its orature gave rise to what I 'satiric-comedy' which serves as a societal lampooner. Its comedian makes the atmosphere of performances a liveable and teachable environment. The comic laughter of the comedians or literary creators provides performer-audience's dual response. This form of responses can be likened to call and response as a feedback got through laughter. This is an exchange of emotional feelings that brings the comedians and live audience to the level of equilibrium where they ease out their nervous tension and tediousness. This fact is a pragmatic ideation that enhances human life via psychological soundness, physiological fitness and emotional stability. This satiric-comedy purges the society from the societal foibles in

order to create a health sensibility. Apart from all these, the manifestation of this comic orature or rendition practically gives a relaxed atmosphere from the world of pessimism, gloominess, and disenchantment that is characterised by disillusionments into paradisiacal world of laughter. In this contemporaneous existence, it welcomes and likewise stimulates its viewers into participatory world of performative dynamisms of performance that appeals to human's psyche as a therapeutic radiation that gives a good physical outlook to life's situations. On this note, human's anxieties are practically reduced.

To justify this idiosyncratic nature of comedy, the popular and modern-day Stand-up Comedy of the Nigerian comic orature shall be practically applied to prove how Stand-comedy distances it from the aforesaid assertions of comedy through its satirical significance. Stand-up comedy is the art of vocal performances that has a variety of expressions which reflects on the sociological events that is aesthetically portrayed and emotionally excited. Its aural aesthetic expression functions as a satiric purgation of societal excesses. Its texture of language is highly flavoured that sometimes it is embellished in metaphor, pun, simile and the likes. Its satirical significance from theatre to the doorsteps of the audience is a unique one in oral performance. This research finding portrays comedians as peace-makers who reconcile the society with life's threatened situations. It appropriately addresses the issues of sociological upheavals and likewise proffers solutions to the challenges. This has drastically helped to reveal the people's social misfits which paraded their lives. It promotes goodwill of comedy over tragedy. This singular reality shows that comedy in totality is a satire.

SATIRE

Satire is a form of literary art that practically lampoons or ridicules the social vices and follies of the society in a bid to correct and transform the society through humour that evokes laughter. Its laughter combines a mixture of criticism and wit and other literary devices, such as parody, irony, sarcasm, farce, grotesque, burlesque, caricature, hyperbole, mimicry, etc. to expose the foibles and absurdities of man and his socio-political and eco-cultural institutions. The individuals, communities, nations or groups are caricatured in a way that provokes laughter in order to reveal their stupidities through caustic wit, irony and burlesque. The satirical purpose is used to draw readers' attentions to what the satirist is attacking rather than creating situations and characters.

The concept, satire, is invented from the act of mockery to correct the ills of the society. Satire could be found in literary writings, songs, music, comedy, and dramatic enactments.

Besides the aforesaid points, it may also be found in entertainment, play, comic and novel in which topical issues and absurdities are held up to scorn by means of ridicule and irony. Raillery, mockery and masquade are significant satiric weapons used to concretize the follies of the individuals in the society. Abrams (1967) thematically stated that satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward its attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation. For example, the satiric works of Earl of Rochester's "A Satyre against Mankind" (1675) and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726, Book IV) are satiric weapons used to attack human vices and stupidities. Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* directly attacked the puritanical Malvolio of his fatuous and hypocritical puritan. Also, Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1607) showcased a type of person whose cleverness and folly are put at the service of his cupidity while John Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe* (1682) lampoons the living notable author through a pretentious poetaster. Alexander Pope also affirmed that "those who are ashamed of nothing else are so of being ridiculous" Abrams (1999). Achebe cited by Olu Obafemi (1992) stressed further to reveal the role of satiric artists in the society that an African creative writer who tries to avoid the big socio-political issues of contemporary African society will surely end up being completely irrelevant. He sees African artists as revolutionary vanguards whose primary duties are meant to sanitize the society through their work of art. The sole responsibility of artists is to do justice to the societal anomalies by x-raying socio-political malpractices of people, via corruption, violence, ethnic militia, injustice, exploitation, oppression, religious gullibility and lust for materialism. On this note, Oyin Ogunba (1975) sees Soyinka as an artist who engages in practical transformation of his society. To him, Soyinka sees his community as moribund and raises alarm against such. He is of the opinion that Soyinka must keep hammering his point until drastic changes occur. The singular aim of Soyinka's satiric purpose is to ridicule the oddities and expose crimes of his society by emphasizing what is desirable behaviour in society. A good example of his satiric works is *A Play of Giants*. The play was purposely written to depict a savage portrait of a group of dictatorial African leaders at bay in embassy in New York.

Clark (1971) proved that satire goes beyond the level of didacticism, but completely gears towards aggression and criticism previous to the era of existentialistic nihilism that has always implied as systematic measure of good and bad. He viewed satire as a weapon of criticism that subjects an object of discourse to critical analysis in order to expose the shortcomings of its expected standard. Thrall, et al (436) see it as literary manner which blends a critical attitude with humour and wit to the end that human institutions and entire humanity are critically structured in a way that revealed their shortfalls. In this intent, Robert Horris (2004) opined that satire does seek to do harm or damage by its ridicule but seek to create a shock of recognition and to make vice repulsive so that the vice will be expunged from the person or society under attack regardless of who is the immediate object of attack. He likened satire to honey and medicine which convey through laughter and wit. To him, it is far being destructive but rather constructive. This corrective lampooned mode of satire has brought about different arguments and intellectual discourses in different ages past by its critics.

In furtherance of this accepted proposition by above critics, Waingrow Marshall's "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift" affirmed how Swift publicly denied any malicious intent in his works by particularly stating his purposive opinion as a correction of societal vices:

As with a moral view designed
To cure the vices of mankind:
His vein, ironically grave,
Expos'd the Fool, and lashed the knave,

Yet, Malice never was his Aim;
He lash'd the Vice but spar'd Name.
No Individual could resent,

Where Thousands equally were meant,
His satyr points at no Defect,
But what all mortals may correct...
(11:313-316,459-464)

In number III of *Intelligencer*, Swift directly disclaimed malice as a correction of vices and a restatement of virtues. He stated two philosophical ideologies in writing satire. One is less noble than the other as regarding to the private satisfaction and leisure of the writer but without any view toward personal malice. The second one is a public spirit that revealed men of genius and virtue who are meant to transform the world for

better. Swift sees himself as one of the reformers whose interest is purely desired to transform the society. He sees his intention as a reward of good labour being an artist who preoccupies himself with the work of sanity. He uses his literary works to sanitize the society from socio-political excesses.

Based on this satiric value and significance, Mack Maynard (1951) claimed that satire primary duty is to assert the validity and necessity of norms, systematic values, and meanings that are contained by recognizable codes. This fact of his proved that satire is a phenomenon that is pragmatically structured and systematic in application when is applied to any literary work. On the contrary, Haas (1970) opined that satire is not bounded by form and structure but exists as an approach to a situation which can be present in any of the many literary forms. To him, satire is a loose literary weapon that can be manipulated because the application of the satiric method can be quite broad. This is to the fact that satire is more of an attitude or stance than any genre of literature. To synthesize these two binary ideological concepts of Maynard and Haas, Worcester (1960) opined that among writers of the twentieth century, some use the word satire to signify the particular kind of verse known as formal satire. Some will allow it to embrace any type of verse written with satire intent while others would have it that satire is a formal genre of literature that includes prose as well as verse, yet possesses uniform characteristics. Some finally convinced that anyone of the two styles can be used in writing satire. He stipulated that Formal theory must involve contradictions and anomalies that identify a work of literature as satire by its motive and spirit alone. Satire usually contains recognizable truth about mankind, that is, human's weaknesses and vices as a weapon to expose this truth with the intention of correcting them.

Satire operates in different dimensions within the ambits of its recognizable truth. In Greek, Old Irish, and Arabic literatures, it is applied to ritualistic invective and magic songs. These societies hold up an assumption that ritual curse has powerful effects. In Africa, it could be used in magical realities, songs, theatrical performances and poetry. From the world goes in Africa especially in Yoruba tradition of West Africa, Nigeria, satire is held up to high esteem in the sense that it is used to correct and checkmate kings' excesses through poetry. Only the bards in the kings' palaces and public

functions are invested with the power to lampoon the kings through their poetry with the intention of correcting them.

TYPES OF SATIRE

Direct Satire

Satire is categorized into two types, namely: formal/direct satire and indirect satire. In case of formal satire, the satiric persona usually speaks out in the first person. The satiric voice ‘I’ may address himself either to the readers or to a character within the work of art. The character is called the adversarius whose main role is to guide and elicit the satiric speaker’s comments. A good example of this is in Pope’s ‘Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot’. Arbuthnot is seen here as an adversarius. Two types of formal satire are originated from two great Roman satirists Horace and Juvenal. The two types are identified by the character of the persona whom the author presents as his first-person satiric speaker and by the attitude and tone that such a persona manifests toward his subject matter and audience (Abrams 1981). This form of satire is invective that is straightforward and its abusive language is purely directed against a cause or a person. This is a form of lampooner that uses harsh revelation to unfold a damaging truth about its subject. Here, caricature is a weapon used as an exaggeration to expose evil practices of mankind while the good characteristics are de-emphasized.

Horatian Satire

Horatian satire is known to be urbane, gentle, and witty that is particularly used to correct individuals, institutions and nations by gentle and sympathetic laughter. This satiric mode uses mild mockery as the most standard way of writing and passing on messages to target audience. The satire is a reflection of the writer’s attitude towards his subject. He often uses a relaxed and informal language to evoke a smile at the societal stupidities and foibles which sometimes may include his own follies. The character of the speaker or the writer is a tolerant man of the world whose concern is all about the follies he sees all around but moved towards the part of laughter than that of rage. The gentle mockery of Horace is also known as ‘mild satire’. This is because the satiric nature of Horace is of a lighter mood to life. Based on this fact, John Dryden, a 17th century English poet sees Horatian satire as comic satire. A good example of Horatian satire is Pope’s *Moral Essays*.

Juvenalian Satire

The satirist, Juvenal, is a radical upright man and enraged moralist who completely condemned the social decadence and corruption of his days. These social vices and anomalies provoke anger and frustration in him rather than laughter. Juvenalian satire is harsh and bitter. Dryden sees Juvenal as a tragic satirist because of his harshness of tone and bitter approach to human follies and foibles. Jonson's "The Vanity of Human Wishes" (1749) and "London" (1738) are good examples of Juvenalian satire.

Indirect Satire

Indirect satire is that genre that can be seen in literary works, comic performances and other art forms through which the characters render themselves ridiculous by their actions and speech. Literary modes, like parody, irony, travesty and burlesque are good examples of indirect satire. More also, contrastive analyses between action and statement are key figures of satiric weapons in this kind of satire. The use of other literary devices, such as understatement, sarcasm and allegory, gives a thorough exposition of human's follies. An instance of indirect satire is "Menippean satire". It is developed by a Greek philosopher named Menippus. It is also called "Varronian satire". This is named after Varro, a Roman, who takes after Menippus's philosophy. Northrop Frye also called it "anatomy" after an example of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). Other examples of indirect satire could be seen in the works of Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928), Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1564), Bertolt Brecht's *The Three Penny Opera* (1928), T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) and John Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel", a poem.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

In order to make an attempt towards a thorough analysis of this research work, psychoanalytic theory will be used to closely examine and analyse the view of *Stand-up Comedy as satirical import* that reveals humans' follies in a bid to create mutual intelligibility and correct social ills in the society. This theory explains the personal consciousness and collective unconsciousness of the individuals in a society. These

personal consciousness and collective unconsciousness may be represented through archetypes, icons, themes, images and narrative patterns of a society, or an individual experience. Out of the chaos of real life, psychoanalytic theory, has succeeded in creating a concept and a pragmatic framework that explores human experience as well as builds a body of knowledge that gives a deep insight into human behaviour, society, and nature in the state of projection, introjection, displacement, eruption, repression, sublimation and condensation that explain the personal conscious and collective unconscious of individuals in a society which may be archetypes, icons, themes, images and narrative patterns of a society or individuals' experiences (Tyson 1999). This projection of individual unconscious may be as a result of defense mechanism as a desire for freedom, self-determination and resistance or repression from all forms of unwanted desires. It is also an introjection of an innate desire or reflection of pleasant emotional feelings in one. Psychoanalysis history begins in childhood experiences in the family and each template of adolescent and adult behaviour is directly linked to his early experience (Tyson 1999). Everyone is a product of the role that is given to him or her in the family complex.

Psychoanalytic theory has helped to understand the world better, solve human's problems and likewise eliminate psychological traumas which trouble mankind. These societal ill-healths are treated through satiric performance as a counselling medium through *free association* in which the patients relax and talk out their problems to the therapist instead of repressing their painful experiences in the unconscious. Through this medium of free association of counselling mode, therapist understands better people's psychological traumas from dreams, feelings, ideas, fantasies, sexuality and dream symbols that are uttered during counselling period. This concept also helps to create conducive environment for proper children's emotional nourishment. Besides this, it also gives an insight the fields of sociology, anthropology, social science and humanity. This concept is a psychological principle that is established by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) in his clinical work with humanity.

Sigmund Freud, an Austrian physician, a neurologist, a founder of psychoanalysis, was born on May 6, 1856, in Freiberg, Moravia, a province that is now part of Czechoslovakia. He was a graduate of the University of Vienna (a medical school) in the year 1881. In 1885, he went Paris to study under a renowned neurologist, Jean-Martin Charcot. He returned to Venna 1886 and began to work passionately with

hysterical patients. He revolutionized ideas on how the human mind operates. He initiated ideas about the origin and treatment of mental illness by using a term called *psychoanalysis*. Freud was also a specialist in the field of neurology. Neurology is a field that talks on the treatment of disorders of the nervous system. His theory that unconscious motives control much behaviour has drastically advanced the field of psychiatry. All the theories of Freud gave rise to new approaches in sociology, education, child rearing and also provided new themes for artists and authors in the professions. He died of mouth cancer in 1939. Some of his works are: *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), *Totem and Taboo* (1913), *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1920), *The Ego and Id* (1923), and *Civilization Its Discontents* (1930).

In Freudian analysis, there are three formulated concepts that explain the human mind, or psyche. These are *id*, *ego*, and *superego* (Tyson 1999). The *id* is the mental reservoir or symbol of our biological instincts, libido, sexual drives and pleasure-pain impulses within the unconscious. It possesses all sorts of wishes, via power, wealth, position of authority, sexual pleasure, amusement, food to satisfy hunger, etc. without looking at consequences of the actions.

The *ego* controls memory, voluntary movement and decision making. Its memory components work through the sensitivity of hearing, seeing, feeling and voluntarily govern the movement like walking and dancing. *Ego* also regulates desires and impulses that might not be culturally acceptable to the society. It gives a practical view about internal mind and external reality. It is a referee between *id* and *superego*.

The *super ego* or conscience is the sense of moral behaviour. It is the ethical standard that governs and regulates ego's decision making, and its voluntary movement. Its sense of social value limits the behaviour on the drives of *id*. The *super ego* allows the mind to know the right and wrong. Its criticisms, inhibitions, and prohibitions formed a standard template of moral codes for the individuals in the society which is socially acceptable in the society. The moral value also helps children to identify their parental cultural values and moral standard. In psychologically healthy individuals, these components work in harmony. But where they failed, there is likely to have emotional distortions.

Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, was born on July 26, 1875, in Kesswil, Switzerland. He graduated from the universities of Basel and Zurich in medicine in 1920, with a broad background in paleontology, biology and archaeology. These studies brought him to limelight of global recognition and honour that led to a close collaboration with Freud. During his last 50 years of earth-stay, he drew a wide knowledge of mythology and history. Jung died on June 6, 1961. Some of his publications include: *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912; trans. 1916), *Psychological Types* (1921; trans. 1923), and *Psychology and Literature* (1930).

In the same vein, Carl Jung in his analytical psychology sees the individuals' experiences as the existence of a collective unconscious, that is, racial memory inherited by all members of the human family and connecting modern man with his primitive roots (Tyson 1999). The collective unconscious is manifested in the recurrence of certain images, stories, residual of unlimited experiences of the same types. To him, the dogmatic teaching of sexual instincts in human behaviour was too narrow. He believed that sexuality would not come to play until a child gets to puberty stage. He also observed that the personalities of parents are the fundamental influences on a child. Jung proved that there are many factors besides sex that stimulate human behaviour. In order for him to distance his psychoanalytical theory from Freudian's psychoanalysis, he uses the terms introvert and extrovert to classify people. Introverts rely principally on themselves, while the extroverts look for the companionship of other individuals for personal fulfilment. He urged that therapists should assist the patients to balance the personality categories in themselves.

Jung further postulates that, the collective conscious of a race forms a template called archetype or primordial, which links individual to her ancestral root. He opined that the collectivization contains wisdom that guides all humanity. Jung believed that every therapist should reveal this collective unconscious to patients for their personal discovery. In his research-findings, he brought out this inherited or collective conscious which finds expression in psychological conscious that he represented as themes, symbols, and images that come out spontaneously in myths, dreams, fantasies, delusions, religions, in childhood's experiences and fairy stories that manifested in human behaviour.

These archetypal figures manifest in various ways, such as in geometrical shapes, supernatural images, numbers and in persons. Some other chief archetypes also include God, unity, birth, the child, power, death, the hero, magic, the demon, the animal, the mother earth, and old wise man. Jung also elucidated more on the issue of human bisexuality. He made known the concepts of the man's feminine archetype, *anima* and woman's masculine's archetype, the *animus*. These archetypes allow each sex to display features of the opposite sex and likewise influence the fantasies, perceptions, misconceptions relating to the other sex.

RICHARD SCHECHNER'S PERFORMANCE THEORY

Richard Schechner is a renowned professor of Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. He got his B.A. from Cornell University (1956), M.A. from the University of Iowa (1958), and bagged PhD from Tulane University (1962). He is one of the people that founded Performance Studies department of the Tisch of the Arts, New York University (NYU). He is the founder of the Performance Group of New York in 1967. He was artistic director of The Performance Group (TPG) from the year 1967 until 1980 when he changed the group name to The Wooster Group (TWG). The permanent stage home of both TPG and TWG is the Performing Garage in New York's SoHo district which was acquired by Schechner in 1968. He is also a founder and the artistic director of East Coast Artists in 1992 until 2009 when Benjamin Mosse took over from him. He was the one that initiated "rasaboxes," a technique of emotional training for performers and others in the 1990s. He has edited several books such as: *Public Domain* (1968), *Environmental Theater* (1973), *Theatres, Spaces, and Environments* (1975 with Jerry Rojo and Brooks McNamara), *Essays on Performance Theory* (1976), *The End of Humanism* (1981), *From the Ramlila to the Avantgarde* (1983), *Between Theater and Anthropology* (1985), *The Englebert Stories* (1987, with Samuel MacIntosh Schechner), *The Future of Ritual* (1993), *Performance Theory* (a revised version of *Essays on Performance Theory*, 1988, revised again, 2004), *Performance Studies—An Introduction* (2002, revised second edition 2006) and *Over, Under, and Around* (2004). These collections of books have been translated into many languages of the world.

Schnechner's performance Theory deals with all human endeavours or activities in consonance with every societal rule and regulation of any given race. It is a reflection

and a refraction of human activities that take place in everyday realities. Such are ceremonial activities, ritual performances, hunting of animals, theatrical shows, cinematic orchestrations, dramas and other endeavours, like games, sports, plays, scripts, dances, and music. This is why Schechner says “performance is inclusive term” (Schechner 1994: xiv). Historical events, artistic performances and speculative ideas are performative in nature. These are deep structures which include preparations for performances via training, workshop, rehearsals, preparations and spectators’ satisfactions and what goes on after a performance (Schechner 1994: xiv-xv). These are the systems of social and aesthetic life of every society.

Apart from this, performance is also a portrayal of a dramatic enactment that reveals the pyramid of actions that expresses conflicts. In this case, the performers put themselves in a disadvantageous position by changing their natural physiologies and then displaying how they regain their balance psychophysically, narratively and socially. These physiological transformations occur when the performers change to other people, animals, trees, spirits, demons, gods, whether temporarily in a play as make-believe or permanently as in ritual performances. It includes unites of time of an action. Schnechner affirms:

Performances are make-believe, in play, for fun. OR, as Victor Turner said, in the subjunctive mood, the mood, the famous “as if”. Or, as Sanskrit aesthetics would have it, performances are *lilas*-sports, play- and *maya*, illusory. But, the Sanskrit tradition emphasizes, so is all life *lila* and *maya*. Performance is an illusion of an illusion and, as such, might be considered more “truthful” more “real” than ordinary experience. This, too, was Aristotle’s opinion in his *Poetics* where theater did not so much reflect living as essentialize it, present paradigms of it. As *lilas*, performances not only play out play out modes, they play with modes, leaving actions hanging and unfinished, so theatrical events are fundamentally experimental: provisional (1994: xv).

Dramatic enactment of tragedy was believed to be originated from annual rites celebration of a god called Dionysus. These ritual rites of Dionysus’s festival were dated back to the primitive religion of the Greeks. This assumption also gives us a clear

and wide range of understanding of sources of poetry in different cultural backgrounds including theatre, music and ceremonial activities in every tradition of human race. The cultural signification of Greek tragedy is also seen in modern poetry. Little things are known about the rites of the Dionysian Festival and the poets that made tragic form out of ritual. Some Cambridge anthropologists such as Frazer, Cornford, Harrison, Murray and colleagues and followers have given us a clear-cut of what we now know as Greek tragedy which gave birth to comedy. Harrison's *Themis* (1912), Murray's *The Four Stages of Greek's Religion* (1912a-later Five Stages, 1925), Cornford's *The Origin of Attic Comedy* (1914) are known as a Cambridge thesis that revealed the origin of tragedy and comedy and their cultural significations. These books are used as established universal concept of basic form of theatre both in the west and other global regions. Cornford's book is purely devoted to theatre which has become a household name among the theatre people. Apart from this, Fergusson's *The Idea of a Theater* (1949) is most well-known American example. Murray opines this that:

The following note presupposes certain general views about the origin and essential nature of Greek Tragedy. It assumes that Tragedy is in origin a Ritual Dance, a Sacer *Ludus*.... Further, it assumes, in accord with the overwhelming weight of ancient tradition, that the Dance in question is originally or centrally that of Dionysus, performed at his feast, in his theatre....It regards Dionysus in this connection as an "Eniautos-Daimon," or vegetation god, like Adonis, Osiris, etc., who represents the cyclic death and rebirth of the earth and the world, i.e., for practical purposes, of the tribe's own lands and the tribe itself. It seems clear, further, that Comedy and Tragedy represent different stages in the life of this Year Spirit (Murray 1912b:341).

The ideation behind this proposition proves that over the years nothing concrete has been fully expressed about all the elements of drama and primal ritual. Murray observed that, the examination of the kind of myth, which seems to underlie the various 'Eniautos' [death/birth] celebrations, reveals an Agon, a Pathos, a Messenger, a Thernos or lamentation, an Anagristis-discovery or recognition and a Theophany (1912b:343-344). The promoters of the Cambridge thesis believed that this a nucleus action of the Primal Ritual, the surviving fragments of the dithyramb, and Greek tragedy. In this regards, Cornford's supporting view was purely devoted for comedy and phallic dance while other Cambridge anthropologists contributed to the development of tragedy and dithyramb. In the same vein, Athenian Comedy arose out

of a ritual drama most importantly in the same way Murray derived Athenian Tragedy (Cornford 1914:190, Schechner1994:3). Greek tragedy rose from dithyramb dedicated to the god, Dionysus while phallic dance gave birth to what we now known as comedy. These are identical propositions. This is why Murray opined that when we look back at to the beginning of European literature, we find everywhere drama and always derived from a religious ritual designed to ensure the rebirth of a death a world (Murray 1961:9). In this case, Aristotle was in the support of the view in his Poetics (Butcher' translation, 1961) that, tragedy as also comedy was at first mere improvisation. The one originated with the authors of the Dithyramb, the other with those of the phallic songs, which are stilled used in many of our cities. The characteristics of Greek tragedies are catharsis, audience involvement, and dramatic actions via conflicts, mutilations, and deaths.

The emergence of Christian theatre from medieval church is one of the sources of ritual drama. The Christian ritual theatre uses biblical characters to portray the public performance activities of humans. The world creation, sacrificial offerings of animals , the birth, death and resurrection of the Saviour, Jesus Christ, the death of the martyrs, and the oncoming judgment are examples of ritual performances of medieval ritual theatre. This is why Turner says:

Theater is but one of the many inheritors of that multifaced system of preindustrial ritual which Embraces ideas and images of cosmos and chaos, interdigitates clowns and their foolery with gods and their solemnity, and uses all the sensory codes to produce symphonies in more than music: the intertwining of dance, body languages of many kinds, song, chant, architectural forms (temples, amphitheatre) , incense, burnt offerings, ritualized feasting and drinking, painting, body markings of many kinds, including circumcision and scarification, the application of lotions and drinking potions, the enacting of mythic and heroic plots drawn from oral traditions. And so much more. Rapid advances in the scale and complexity of society, particularly after industrialization, have passed this unified liminal configuration through the analytical prism of the division of labor, with its specialization and professionalization, reducing each of these sensory domains to a set of entertainment genres flourishing in the leisure time of the society , no longer in a central , driving place. The pronounced numinous supernatural character of archaic ritual has been greatly attenuated (Turner 1985:295-297).

In African society, the performance of storytelling is a reconstruction and a perpetuation into the historic myths of the past in order to better our contemporaneous existence of modern age and ritual continuum. The art of storytelling performance includes ritual performances, festive celebrations, comic arts and impartation of moral sensibility. This art of creation creates a theatrical stage on which the performance could take place. The oral performance is an attempt to reconstruct a detail of African cosmology in order to illuminate the African philosophical base of African theatre and its cultural performances. The epic cultural origin of African sacred and secular ritual is revealed. The performance goes with theatrical features, such as voices, acts, call and response, drumming, props, dancing, costumes and voice modulations.

The performance is tending towards African sacred and secular performance through the oral traditions, folktales, religions and theatrical orchestrations. The use of specific symbolic patterns of actions and words in performance and recapping of historic events in acts of cultural significations and communal creation of the stages on which the performance is staged is a unique one. This is a form of cultural continuity in performance rituals of both sacred and secular in African. African cultural philosophy is rich in symbolic systems of performances. Jackson confirms by:

In this pan-African context, and perhaps in line with true folk meaning, the term performance refers to a broad spectrum of cultural acts—from religious ritual, to playing mass carnival, to children's circle games. These cultural performance acts are all, at root, a defined series of symbolic gestures, done in a set manner, having set meanings, and performed with a particular end in mind (even if the meanings and ends have lost or forgotten over time and nothing but the gestures and their ontological "spirit" have survived). These performance acts, in the African context, create a discrete ritual by potent and potential moment, a theater, in time(2010:4).

Oral performance is centred on the given socio-political events and historic past of the African people by mirroring the condition of races and classes of people and societal plights embattling the society in a bid to find lasting solution and co-existence in the society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been observed that most critics regard comic orature at the level of performance as more of a mere entertainment. This study intends to prove that comic orature transcends a mere theatrical entertainment and its cultural significance but, in addition, serves as a satirical purgation that reveals societal foibles through its cinematic orchestration and theatrical performance in order to create moral sanity and mutual intelligibility in the society.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study examined the satiric and performative devices deployed by selected stand-up comedians in Nigeria with a view to determining the role of stand-up comedy as a veritable source of socio-economic consciousness and a medium of social criticism. Thus, these versions of comic performance function both as a cathartic device through which psychological and physical strains are eased out, and as a tool for critiquing social problems. It is also proved that, the conversational technique employed by comedians in their performances served as advice-giving style, counselling method, and teaching aid.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses satirical performativity of Stand-up comedy in this study. The selected Nigerian contemporary comic orature materials area *Nite of a Thousand Laughs* vol.15 and 16 of Ernest Essien (Basket Mouth), Francis Agoda (I Go Dye) and Godwin Komone (Gordons) and *Gordons Comedy Clinic Ward One and Two* (2009). It mainly centres on its satiric performativity and its socio-economic significance and religious relevance on its society.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research work has some limitations in the area of selection and collection of comic materials that are required for this study. Logistic problem is another factor that caused a hindrance in the course of fieldwork.

In order to solve these problems, four digital video discs containing 20 live recordings of performances were purposively selected for the study. In area logistic problem, the research is carried out in the nearest place where the research materials can be collected.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER TWO

Comedy in all its manifestations exhibits utilitarian functions in several ways. The functions have taken the researchers into the world of research and intellectual discourse. Its scholastic technicalities and approaches have tremendously revealed different outlooks and definitions of comedy. According to Ademola Dasyuva, for example:

Comedy is a term loosely used, and generally applied to a wide range of dramatic writings. As a form of drama, comedy is concerned with man's relation to society, and deals with experience considered rather suitable than questionable. Comedy as a dramatic form varies in terms of mode, topicality, technique and quality (Dasyuva, 2004:57).

He views it as a cultural phenomenon that is closely related to man and his environment. He postulates further that comedy had served and, still serves, a definite function like tragedy. It is also remotely connected with the religious rites of fertility and reproduction.

Dasyuva distinguishes comedy as practice that goes beyond a literary meaning or definition, but is deeply rooted in people's religious rites. This nature of comedy is practically showcased through ritual performance in which symbolic figures or characters are caricatured. Although these symbolic figures are used to provoke laughter, they also serve as didactic elements which sometime appear in a cynical manner. These figures are highly significant representations that can be likened to Yoruba ritual performances in which a female figure in a naked posture and a male stature with a long penis are being displayed publicly for public view. In "Oke Ibadan" Festival, such demonstration is pragmatically revealed in ritual performance for public consumption and for moral purpose.

Scaliger, who lived between 1408 and 1558, believes that:

Comedy is a dramatic poem, which is filled with intrigue, full of action, happy in its come, and written, in a popular style. (Bernard, 1974:139, as cited in Oyewo, 2006:154).

This proposition put up by Scaliger is centred against imprecise characterization of Latin Comedy which postulates it as "a plot free from the suggestion of danger,

dealing with the life and affairs of the private citizens'' (cited in Oyewo: 154). Apart from this, he argues further that comedy is not out of danger experiences, but its ominous dangers are habitually under control. To justify this assertion, he uses *Merchant of Venice* (1994) as a literary specimen to buttress his argument. In this literary material, an imminent danger is tamed when Anthonio is taken to court for his inability to pay back the debt owed Shylock, as written in the agreement. Through court intervention, Shylock is told to take his pound of flesh from Anthonio's chest without a single drop of blood.

Aelius Donatus strikes this heated argument more by saying:

Comedy employs a story involving the various peculiarities of public and private behaviour, which teaches us what is practical in life and what on the contrary is to be avoided (Bernard, 1974:99-100, as cited in Oyewo, 2006:155).

He juxtaposes these premises of peculiarities of public and private behaviour of individuals in the society whether high or low. To him, comedy takes cognizance of these two parties in its dramatic performance which does not only talk on private life but also on public issues. He also shows a clear-cut distinction between virtues and vices, as possessed by the characters in the comedy to create moral sensibility. This type of play is called a morality play, which was fashionable in the sixteenth century

On this thoughtful ground, Eugene Ionesco pictures comedy as:

a play which is a "make-believe" is an "imaginative truth" which should be considered "to be more profound, more loaded with significance, than everyday reality" (Bernard, 1974:767, as cited in Oyewo, 2006:156).

Ionesco bases his argument on the assumption that plays are creative works of a playwright that have the elements of imaginative truth which are achievable in a real sense of life.

Cicero believed that, Comedy is an imitation of life, a mirror of custom, an image of reality (1543). Cicero's perception is indefinite, because every work is an imitation and a mirror of its society that produces it. No work of art exists in a vacuum. It is always a representation of the imaginative reality of its sociological world view.

George Meredith posits:

Comedy is the fountain of sound sense ...the laughter of comedy is impersonal and of unrivalled politeness, near a smile; often no more than a smile. It laughs through the mind, for the mind directs it; and it might be called the humour of the mind (Meredith, 1877:618-624).

This opinion of his totally distanced itself from the prior definitions of comedy mentioned above. To him, comedy is not a bizarre appearance of comedians that provokes laughter, but an innate psychological humour of the mind. It is a thoughtful laughter that is psychologically oriented.

According to Aristotle, comedy is a picture of the frailties of the lower part of mankind, so as to distinguish it from tragedy, which is an exhibition of the misfortunes of the great, there, when comedy depicts the characters of Princes and Generals, it is out of its way (Ibid, 425). To him, comedy is mere play of the lower strata of the society which is contrary to its tragic form that is the exclusive preserve of the royal family and the aristocrat.

On this note, Clark Griffith (1976) proves that comedy has some certain characteristics it inherent in its form:

Comedy that contains a potential tragedy within itself but differs from the tragic by transporting life from the cave to the sunlight. (Griffith, 1976: 215).

To Clark, Aristotelian's view on the note that, there is no comic in tragedy and no tragic act in comedy is sheer fallacy. He also goes against the dogmatic opinion of Aristotle that comedy must be simplicity in form, and strictly adherent to a single genre (Griffith, 1976). Base on this observation, comes a definitive form called tragic-comedy. To prove his point, he bases his judgement on dark comedy of William Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*.

John Gassner (1941) argues further that if a play has a happy ending, provoking laughter or simplicity in form, such a play is out rightly out of its comic reality. He believes that comedy has certain traits that have made it different from tragedy and other forms of literature. To him, it must not be a one way thing. This is why he said that the most elementary kind of fun known as farce and the more intelligent laughter of high comedy (1941). On this claim, he throws more light by saying life regarded in this manner becomes comparatively light and playful; it includes smiles, if not

laughter; it asks of an audience detached observation instead of emotional involvement (Gassner, 1941:48).

Apart from this, he opines further that “comedy is a way of looking at life with the mind rather than with the passions”.

Based on these variant definitions of comedy as postulated above by its exponents and scholars, Lanrele Bamidele says:

Effects to define comedy in dramatic literature often oscillate between making a descriptive analysis of its structure and making an evaluative criticism of the cause of laughter. (Bamidele, 2001: 1)

Due to the ever-changing phase and dynamism of comedy, Holman reveals:

Since the Renaissance, comedy has taken many forms in Western literature: the artifice of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*; the broad humor of Moliere and the English Elizabethans; the Restoration comedies of manners; the genial realism of Goldoni; the intricate high comedy of Chekhov; the witty farces of Oscar Wilde; and the comedies of ideas of George Bernard Shaw. (Holman, 2010:363)

To some like John Adebayo Afolabi views its oral performance by saying:

indeed, one of the most effective means of expressing the intellectual, physical and spiritual experiences of man in its most natural form (p.8)

In light of this, Ime Ikiddeh(1987) describes it as:

an expression of man's innermost being in words, an articulation of the changes mores and modes of communities and times in memorable verbal composition (p.134)

Its oral network mostly centres on cosmological events which are thoughtful and deeply rooted in utilitarian functions which explain the concepts of man and his relationship to his environment. Comedy, as it were, is believed to be at loggerheads with tragedy based on assumptions that it treats trivial issues while tragedy focuses on serious issues. This is why Bamidele goes against the contrary frivolous suppositions of comedy by saying:

From *Coislinian Tractate* which is descriptive on what comedy is as art to Arthur Koestler's essay which is evaluative on what

laughter or comedy is in entertainment we have found that from the criticism of comedy, though some seem to think that it is not as prodigious as the criticism of tragedy, the two perspectives of art and entertainment have about a consideration of the term and its varied intermediary terms. Each of the intermediary terms sometimes deserves to be defined and identified as being different in prescriptive terms from the main term (Bamidele, 2001:1).

Over-projection or assertion that comedy is mere entertainment of frivolous events and not a purposeful art, to him, is sheer fallacy. Although it is a popular belief that comedy is a play that ends merrily, while tragedy is play that has an unhappy ending or a U-turn of fortune for the worst or lots of corpses at the end, does not make comedy a purposeless art, rather it gives a colourful analysis of its definitive forms. Its comic nature about life is proven to have outlooks of funny actions or light-hearted events of its cosmological milieu that portrays life as a simple element in order to save humanity from catastrophic psychological traumas of sociological pessimisms that paraded her. This definitive nature of comedy has made its scholars and researchers to say that it has more terms than tragedy that has many dark and brooding event of death or sorrow ending. Its cultural yardstick and light heartedness give thoughtful and satiric significance of comedy to the society.

On this broader sense, Ademola Dasyuva postulates further by saying that:

Comedy had served and, still serves, a definite function like tragedy. It is also remotely connected with the religious rites of fertility and reproduction. (Dasyuva, 2004:58)

To him, both comedy and tragedy play equal roles on the societies they belonged. Their differentiations in religious rites of fertility and production are slim. The fusion or harmonisation of these two genres at the level of ritual performances gives credence and colourful adoration to its enactments. Both genres of literature are blended together to make a complete ritual performance. The typical example of this blended performance can be seen in “Oke Ibadan” Festival where naked pictures or bizarre appearances of male and female are displayed publicly, as a form of satire to create a healthy sensibility in the minds of viewers. This performance combines different things in a way that produces an effective ritual performance, and a pleasant result that makes its performance a serious one and a liveable ritual.

Bamidele establishes this fact:

This is the result of Oke-Ibadan festival with its abuse of the phallus not purposely to laugh at those anatomical parts but to point out the aberrations in those anatomical parts as metaphors of the society's aberrations and paradoxes so that we can live together happily. This is the influence such festivals have on Zulu *Sofa The Sweet Trap* in the battle of the sexes and this is what the wordless rite or the pantomimic drama in the Kanute comic performances of the Ogoni people of Bordo in River State of Nigeria means in making the society laugh at itself with innocuous display of mime, mask and gestural jokes to ease tension and anxiety and energize happy moments and mood in the community (Bamidele, 2001:11).

This ritualistic performance of comedy can also be traced and likewise equal to the Greek ritual festival rites of Dionysus, a god of vegetation. The word comedy is directly associated with the Greek verb which means "to revel". It is originated from vegetable ritual (Easterling, 1997c:36-53, Bieber 1961, Cark 1965, Wickham 1992, Ley 2006). Aristotle's *Poetics*, views that comedy is originated in *phallic* songs and that, like tragedy, it began in creativeness (Ibid). For tragedy, it can easily be given a high consideration because of its thematic preoccupation that is always centres around severe issues, while the progress of comedy is disregarded because it was not taken seriously. When tragedy and comedy are examined, the playwright goes for one or the other, according to their natural bent. Those of the graver class, who might formerly have been liable to celebrate the actions of the great men in epic poetry, take side with tragedy; playwrights of a lesser sort, who had set out the doings of the dishonourable in invectives, take side with comedy. The differentiation is fundamental to the Aristotelian distinction between tragedy and comedy. Tragedy emulates men who are better than the average, and comedy, men who are of inferior qualities (Dasylyva 2004, Britannica 2010).

Apart from this, for years, the deliberate efforts of defining what comedy is assumed to be, is tailored along the Aristotlian concept. The opinion that tragedy deals with personages of noble estate, and comedy deals with lowly kinds; that tragedy portrays the matters of great public import, while comedy is purely concerned with the private affairs of mundane life, or activities, are of a great significance of comedy appraisal.

The notions that tragedy's characters and events are historic and so, in some ways are practical true, while the humbler materials of comedy are but in some sense are pretentious in nature. The absolute fact in Aristotle's distinction in styles is deemed suitable to the treatment of tragic and comic stories. The ancient Roman poet, Horace, who wrote on this stylistic differentiation, stated the special effects that can be attained when comedy raises its voice in *pseudotragic rant* and when tragedy takes on the prosaic form that is affecting the language of comedy. The conscious combination of the mixture of styles produces the burlesque, in which the grand manner of either epic or tragic is applied to an inconsequential issue, or of a serious matter that is subjected to a vulgar treatment that has ludicrous effect (Bamidele 2001, Hoy 1964, Britannica 2010). Henry Fielding, an English novelist, in the preface to *Joseph Andrew* (1742), meticulously makes a clear distinction between the comic and the burlesque. To him, the burlesque centres on the monstrous and unnatural and by this gives pleasure through the surprising absurdity it shows in appropriating the manners of the highest to the lowest, or vice versa . The former, in contrast, limits itself to the imitation of nature. In this case, Fielding holds that the comic artist is not to be excused for deviating from it. Fielding's subject is the ridiculous, not the monstrous as assumed, being a writer of burlesque; and the nature he is to portray is human nature, as seen in the everyday scenes of civilized society.

M.H. Abrams (1981) observes comedy by saying that:

A comedy is a work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to interest and amuse us: the characters and their discomfortures engage our delighted attention rather than our profound concern, we feel confident that no great disaster will occur, and usually the action turns out happily for the chief characters. The term "comedy" is customarily applied only to dramas; it should be noted, however, that the comic form, so defined, also occurs in prose fiction and narrative poetry (p.25).

To Abrams, comedy is an amusement entertainment that creates a joyous and a relaxable atmosphere for its audience.

Based on these definitive reformed assertions and multi-facet approaches, Gordons views comedy in variant ways by saying:

Comedy, a universal form of expression and a major dramatic genre that is intended to amuse. Comedy is associated with humorous behavior, wordplay, pleasurable feeling, release of tension, and laughter. Imbued with a playful spirit, comic entertainment frequently exposes incongruous, ridiculous, or grotesque aspects of human nature. It generally follows a fixed pattern of theatrical surprises that leads to a sense of exhilaration in the spectator. Of all dramatic genres, comedy is the most widely performed (Gordons, 2009:1)

On this judgement, comedy is assumed to play a liveable role of amusing its audience by revealing foibles of mankind in a caricature manner. This assumed tendency mentioned goes against the sceptical postulation and sanctimonious hypocrisy tenet of tragedy over comedy. In this view, it also affirms that the wordplays of comedy give a colourful admiration to its theatrical entertainment and performance.

The traditional origin of comedy, which commences with Aristotle in ancient Greece of the 4th century BC that also continues to this present age, cleaves to the opinion that it is principally concerned with man as a social being, rather than as a private person, and that its purpose is candidly corrective. Apart from this, its comic performer's function is to hold a mirror up to society to refract and reflect its follies and vices, in the hope of bringing a positive change to the society. On this note, a French philosopher, Henri Bergson, of the 20th century sheds more light on this corrective purpose of laughter. He felt that laughter is intended to bring the comic character back into conformity with his society, whose logic and conventions he abandons when "he slackens in the attention that is due to life." (B. H. Clark 1965, Britannica 2010). Here, comedy is considered primarily as a literary genre, but also is considered in its manifestations in the other arts.

On human contradiction, in relating mankind as a social being, it is fully observed that the whole great comic comedians are in the face of a contradiction, and behind this social being, there is an element of animal being whose mannerism always goes against the order of the societal canons. Comedy in its natural presumption of commencement in ritual performance, pragmatically celebrates artistic energy which acknowledges man's animal nature, the animal masquerades and phallic processions.

Moreover, comedy in its actual performance bears witness to man's physical vitality, his choice and pleasure in life, and above all, his desire to go on living. It is highly

festive in merriment, when the rhythm of life is situated within the civilized perspective of human community. The avoidance of this harmonisation of creatural intuitions and the states of development, diverse strains and dissatisfactions is geared to the contradictory nature of man that tends toward radical dualism of comic view. By this, man's desire to follow the way of rational sobriety is perpetually interrupted by the infirmities of the flesh.

The proposition that the duality that tragedy is a fatal contradiction in the nature of things, and comedy is more of the incongruous reality that everyman must hold on to as best he can, made Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish Existentialist, of the 19th-century in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (1846), to say "Wherever there is life, there is contradiction". Apart from this, he goes further to say that "and wherever there is contradiction, the comical is present". He argues this further that both tragic and comedy are binary oppositions. In this opinion he states "the tragic is the suffering is the contradiction, comical, painless contradiction." By this, comedy's contradiction proffers solutions to its form while tragedy displays despondencies of a way out of the contradiction.

On this note, William Hazlitt in his essay "On Wit and Humour" says "Man is the only animal that laughs and weeps; for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are, and what they ought to be." in a book entitled *English Comic Writers* (1819).

Comedy can also be seen from the perspective of binary forms of man's incongruous mixture of bodily instinct and logical intellect that is purely ironic in form which has a dual function. The comic play takes into cognisance the characteristics of satire which dwell on its virtues and vices. Satire is an independent yardstick in which comic virtues and vices are examined.

This is why Bamidele views that:

Satire as a genre is a form of social control. Someone in theorizing about satire in society says that the genre came about in a cultural climate that saw the form of literature in the service of its didactic intent. In all facets of life, man needs to conform to a social norm and so satire in its various methods and styles is ready weapon. The style or methods could be through irony, parody, invective, sarcasm and wit. In most cases our enjoyment and the

understanding of satire in text or on stage derives from our thought of political ineptitude or inadequacy of a leader, a system or an institution. Satire acts as target of political wit. Political wit can be directed against social groups, circles, or strata whose social position is contested: the nobility, the nouveau rich, the conqueror, the police, the judges, doctors, priests, religious leaders. These people become the butt of satirical jibes or jokes when they act at variance with the norms of civilized society.

M. H. Abram (1981) states:

Satiric ridicules political policies or philosophical doctrines, or else attacks the disorders of society by making ridiculous the violates of its standards of morals or manners (p.25).

The void of human's actions of virtue and inhumanity is the ironic perception that darkens and deepens the incongruous mixture of man's bodily instinct and rational intellect. The admixture of this incongruous view is geared towards grotesque that shows the element of contradictions between illusion and reality. By this, proposes the incongruity of things as they are and the way they ought to be. This reveals one of the limitations of comedy that has proven is satiric extreme as get to the boundaries of tragedy. This is why Kierkgaard (1846) says, "despairs of a way out of the contradictions that life present".

Apart from this, romance is another form of dramatic elements that regulates the activities of comedy. As satiric comedy presents divergence between the ideal and the reality which go against the pretension that reveals a figment of imaginations, it also states the convergence of the two. In the same vein, romantic comedy portrays the conflict between the ideal life of things as hero or heroine were wish to be and the certainties of life with which they are encountered, but naturally it ends by invoking the ideal, regardless of whatever troubles reality has placed on its way. This can't be achieved devoid of a good deal of machination, and the plot of the typical romantic comedy is an assortment of clear scheming, designed coincidence, and incredible discovery, all of which contributes greatly to making the events answer exactly to the hero's or heroine's desires. The plot of this kind has had a long stage tradition which is not fully represented in comedy. This sort is the first of kind in the tragicomedies of the ancient Greek dramatist, Euripides, such as *Alcestis*, *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, *Ion*, *Helen*. In full flesh, William Shakespeare explored prospects of the romantic means of

comedy. The possibilities by which happy ending is achieved in romantic comedy and displayed all manners of goodwill that are part of stock-in-trade of all comic dramatists down to 20th century playwrights like T.S. Eliot's *The Confidential Clerk* and Jean Anouilh's *Le Voyageur sans baggage*.

Considering the unnatural dramatic comedies of William Shakespeare of high plots which are good examples of perfect foil in opposition to the reality of the characters' feelings and attitudes, are in the posture of naturalness that are used to convey serious dramatic statements. The manifestation of noteworthy discoveries, unusual coincidence and wonderful reunions is insignificant compared to emotions of relief, and awe that they do arouse. The utilitarian functions of the said comedies are giving rise to emotions that are practically expressed through plangent poetry in which end by going beyond the situations that necessitated them.

To support this view, Bamidele says:

Shakespeare's comedies admit characters of all classes; they present light-hearted studies of love and adventure in which the happy union of the lovers in the last acts is always an important part of the appeal. Shakespeare is not interested in the satire of human being arising out of ingeniously contrived situation. The appetite he whets in the audience is for music and poetry and the rhythm of dance in the happy union (Bamidele, 2001:5).

He claimed that in Shakespeare's happy comedies, the sense of performance is the most obvious in the scenes of clowning, dancing, and music and ritual carnival. His comedies teach us the language and the dialogue of love and romance which are the traditions of comedy he learnt from the medieval romance and Roman tradition.

To Dasyuva:

Shakespeare's comedies are often categorized as humorous comedy, often having a pastoral and romantic setting. Similarly the plots are almost unrealistic and one might wonder if some of them are realized on a modern stage (Dasyuva, 2004:66).

On this deep thought, Wright and IaMAR consider Shakespeare's comedy to be a duel between lovers in their comment on the comedic work entitled *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*:

In *Much Ado about Nothing*, Shakespeare treats a theme that he found congenial, the play of wit between a sparkling and clever woman and a man who is fascinated by her mind no less than by her physical charms. Few other dramatists showed so much appreciation of the feminine mind; Shakespeare's plays are filled with bright women who are living personalities, women who use their intelligence to delight us without sacrificing their feminine charms to parade as bluestockings. What this tells about Shakespeare's own taste in women we can guess; what it tells about his personal life, and the feminine friends that he must have known remains a mystery never to be unravelled. It is unlikely that he found the stimulation for his characterization of Portia and Beatrice back in Stratford. But whatever the source of his inspiration, we must rejoice at its manifestation in the creation of a gallery of delightful and intelligent women of whom Rosalind, Viola, Portia, and Beatrice are the favourites. Of these none has excelled Beatrice in the pleasure that she has given readers and spectators of the play (Wright and IaMAR, 1964).

Dasylyva also affirms:

The subject of love that engaged his social vision in some of his tragedies is, again, the main and dominating emotions in most Shakespearian comedies. The hero is a lover, and the syntax of actions is determined by the course of love which does not run without complications, when it is genuine. The plot is manipulated in such a way that both fancy and intrigues are balanced in equal proportions. Therefore, through some complexities, the ending proves pleasurable and satisfactory (Dasylyva, 2001:67).

M.H.Abrams (1981) opines:

as developed by Shakespeare and some of his Elizabethan contemporaries, is concerned with a love affair that involves a beautiful and idealized heroine (sometimes disguised as a man); the course of this love does not run smooth, but overcomes all difficulties to end in a happy union (p.25).

The primary aim of employing such device is to get rid of the impediments to the happy ending such that can be seen in the sentimental comedy of the 18th and early 19th centuries that stood as imaginatively impoverished dramatic clichés. In this age, the playwrights were seriously dedicated to writing exemplary plays in virtues were rewarded and vices were jettisoned. This type is a little bit different from melodrama

that flourished in the 19th century theatre. The kind of distresses that the hero and heroine go through, in melodrama goes beyond the comic urgency; nevertheless the means of rescue are in a possession of comic forms such as when a secret of events is made known, the long-lost child is seen, and hard heart made unexpectedly capable of pity. Melodrama is a kind of daydream that goes on according to its own childish, and to some extent egoistic logic; hero and heroine are pure, anyone who be in opposition to them is a villain, and the limpidness that has exposed them to dangers must ensure their eventual safety and happiness. In this sense, melodrama is to tragedy while farce is to comedy. There are manifestations of fantasy that are visibly seen in melodrama and in farce. As melodrama presents a fantasy in which the hero suffers for his virtues, yet is finally rewarded for them, in the same vein, farce provides a fantasy in which the centre character sets about pleasing his most roguish, wilful, mischievous, destructive desires and manages to do accordingly with impunity.

Northrop Frye's *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) also revealed that a number of Shakespeare's romantic comedies engaged a shifting paradigm of moving from the normal world of conflict and trouble into the green world as portrayed in *As You Like It*' the Forest of Arden and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*'s the fairy-haunted wood in which the difficulties and inequalities of the ordinary world are mysteriously dissolved, enemies reconciled, and true lovers united. He sees this as festival conclusion in the social ritual of a wedding, a feast, a dance as evidence that comic plots show in the primitive myths and rituals celebrating the victory of spring over winter.

Sir James George Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915) merges studies of primitive religion and culture in the studies that combine literary criticism and anthropology. It traces comedy and tragedy to a prehistoric death-and-resurrection ceremonial, a periodical pantomime in which the older year, in the guise of the old king, hero or god, is killed and the new spirit of fruitfulness, the initiation; the resurrection of the young king is brought in. The comedic rite critically occasioned a ritual combat between the representatives of the past king and the newly enthroned king. It also displays a banquet that the sacrificial body of the slain king was consumed, as well as the marriage involving the triumphant of the lately enthroned king and his preferred bride. Apart from this, it likewise featured an ultimate victorious procession in festivity of the reincarnation or resurrection of the slain god. The aspect of the total rite is geared towards societal cleansing through the expulsion of a scapegoat, who bears the whole

sins of the past year. This expulsion of scapegoats as Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1957) puts it is followed by a season of wide-ranging license and a desertion of the ordinary restraints of society during which all shortcomings with the exception of the gravest go scot-free. From ancient Greece through medieval Europe, this Saturnalia's quality is a feature of comedy.

Northrop Frye, a present-day Canadian critic, emphasizes the seasonal rites that celebrate the yearly cycle of birth, death, and rebirth which serve as the foundation for the general plots of comedy, tragedy, irony, satire and romance. These four cardinal points aforesaid, foreshadow the fate of a hero and the society he brings into play. The protagonist of comedy indicating the season of spring that comes into sight in a society governed by hindering characters and succeeds in wresting it from their hands. This type of comedy pragmatically substitutes falsehood with genuineness and illusion with certainty. Its hero, being in total control of his newly acquired society, goes for adventures which are characteristics of romance (summer), while tragedy as a representation of autumn, celebrates the death and passion of a hero. Satire and irony that figure as winter showcase a world from which the hero has vanished, a visualization of unidealised reality. The spring serves as a period in which the hero is born anew.

Comedy is also viewed from the angle of moral sense. For instance, its characters portrayed in *Tractatus* (1922) orchestrate themselves in a familiar template in which a clever protagonist is besieged by tricksters of different categories, such as boors, impostors and buffoons. The hero may be a prankster who dissimulates his powers, while taking advantage of other people weak points that surround him. This comic template is an ever-present one that often occurs from ages, right from the ancient Greek comedy and farces of ancient Italy in 16th-century in which the commedia dell'arte existed. Apart from this, it also includes the habitual involvement of a comedian and his straight man in the nightclub acts and the television assortment shows of the contemporary age. The main aim of this predilection is to make folly ridiculous, by laughing it out of sight which is one of the major characteristics of comedy. This is a moral force of comedy.

This commedia Dell'arte, an Italian Renaissance Comedy, is a form of comic drama developed by guilds of professional Italian actors of the above century. The dialogue is

invented round a given scenario by the actors playing stock characters. It's a play of a short outline of a drama that shows the entrance of the main characters and the sequence of the action. This group of professional actors is called "commedia erudite" (Dasyuva, 2004). Roman poet, Plautus (c.254-184 BC) and Terence (186/185-159 BC), whose comedies were extensively known and copying the Renaissance are good examples of this comic drama.

Dasyuva reveals:

The comedies of Plautus and Terence, which were valued as models of oral styles and productions based on these influences, were presented at the courts and Academies. They were performed by court poets, court architects and painters and acted by courtiers to the music of court musicians. They were simply called *Commedia erudite* but the productions were largely amateurish (Dasyuva, 2004:63)

He goes further:

However, there were other plays performed by professional troupes whose works could be traced to Atellan Farces of Rome, traceable to, and preserved since, the Middle Ages. These were the comedies of the professional players that were later referred to as comedies of the *commedia dell'arte*. It marked the beginning of opera, as well as a revival of pastoral drama (p.63).

Amy Richlin (2005:21) also comments on the audience and venues:

So far I have been imaging a pretty trashy context for the production of Roman comedy: the actors, musicians, and playwrights are a bunch of rubies, runaway, army vets, ex-cons, ex-slaves, slaves, and lowlifes who may have done time together at the county farm and, when in Rome, may have met up at the local *popina*...What kind of audience could such a group possibly have pleased?.

Furthermore, in Aristotle's *Poetics*, emphasis was placed on the sarcastic nature of comedy as an appendage to morality by Renaissance critics. This evidence can be vividly seen in the work of an Italian scholar, Gian Giorgio Trissino that was written in the 1530s in his *Poetica*. He stressed that as tragedy teaches by means of pity, and fear, comedy teaches by deriding things that are vile. On this, focus is also centred on the source of laughter on different fundamental treatises of this type. This is why

Trissino says that, laughter is aroused by objects that are in some way ugly and especially by that from which better qualities were hoped. This proves that comic is geared towards incongruous. On this note, a French poet, Charles Baudelaire, views that laughter betokens the fallen nature of man in which Baudelaire terms as man's satanic nature (Baudelaire, 1855). He punctuates that man laughs for the reason that he is jealous and malicious, and by no means takes pleasure in the good of others apart from when he is being hopeful of getting something beneficial to him.

In support of this supposition, Sir Philip Sidney in *The Defence of Poesie* (1595) says:

comedy is an imitation of the common errors of our life, which [the comic dramatist] representeth in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be, so as it is impossible that any beholder can be content to be such a one(p.15).

He stressed that, although laughter comes from the delight, not all objects of delight cause laughter:

we are ravished with delight to see a fair woman, and yet are far from being moved to laughter. We laugh at deformed creatures, wherein certainly we cannot delight (p.16).

Sidney in account of scornful laughter practically showcases the element of the incongruous. To prove this further, he uses the image of the hero of Greek legend, Heracles, who has great beard and furious countenance, in woman's dress, spinning at the instructions of his lovely queen, Omphale. He made this declaration that this assertion arouses laughter and delight.

Comedy is also viewed from the perspective of characterisation which syndicates the relationship between comedy and characters in comical plays. John Dryden, an English poet, in *Of Dramatick Poesie, an Essay* (1668) distinctively portrays the same point as Sidney by illustrating the same kind of laughter produced by the ancient Greek comedy, *The Cloud*, written by Aristophanes. In the comedic enactment, the character of Socrates is revealed in ridiculous manner by acting very unlike the true Socrates. The character comes into view in childish and looks incongruous rather than with the gravity of the true Socrates. He critically examines the laughable quality of comedy in the opinion to show its diverse forms which occurred in different ages of

dramatic movement in the time past. On the contrary, Aristophanic comedy does not view its own laughable quality from the imitation of man. It does take cognisance of its incongruous manner of obscene. Menander's New Comedy in the late 4th century BC, made writers to give proper view on ethos or the characters as seen in their tragedies. They stated the pathos of mankind in their comedies.

Aristophanes (448-385 BC) was the great of all the writers in his generation. He was fortunate to have had most of his plays preserved. The 11 surviving plays of Aristophanes stand for the earliest existing body of comic drama; what is known of Greek old comedy is derived from these plays, the earliest of which, *The Acharnians*, was produced in 425 BC. The quality of his plays showed that he was a man of exceptional ability and great wit. Aristophanic comedy has a unique formal design, but displays very little plot in any conventional sense. His comedies were treated by the Athenians as trivial issues. Most of his dramatic compositions, including *The Frogs*, *The Birds*, *The Clouds* and *The Wasps*, which derived their titles from the choruses used in the plays. The role of the choruses has given mixture of ribaldry, satire and poetry (Dasylyva, 2004). Aristophanes used comedy for political reasons by taking part in the national debate in his days. He obviously reveals that comedy is merely for social commentary not only for laughter provocations. This shows that satirical comedies provoke serious thoughts. Good example for this defence can be in his literary material, *Lysistrata*.

On this view, Bamidele speaks:

As Aristophanes uses comedy to talk about on the leadership crisis in society; he talks also about the rule of the state by women, he discusses equal distribution of wealth on a communist basis and some other economic problems that were peculiar to Athens of his days (Bamidele, 2001:4).

Dasylyva (2004):

Aristophanes imposed a more direct sociological function on comedy. With him, comedy became an instrument of attack on social and political misdemeanor. It became an invective against Athenian leaders and institutions that constituted themselves into agents of oppression and corruption (p.58)

This is why Holman says:

Comedy is a form of dramatic literature designed to amuse and often to correct or instruct through ridicule. It generally ends happily. To achieve its effects, it exposes incongruity, absurdity, and foolishness, and its treatment of characters frequently has elements of exaggeration and caricature (Holman, 2010: 363).

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* also supports this view by distinctively showing the differentiation in given circumstance between ethos, disposition, moral character or a man's natural bent, emotional show and pathos (1922). Apart from this, in the first century AD, Quintilian, a Latin rhetorician, claimed that, ethos is akin to comedy and pathos to tragedy (Britannica 2010). In Renaissance and Neoclassical suppositions, the above postulation is a vital issue in tragic representation and subject of comic enactment. Here, in relation to emotion, ethos is seen as an ever-present nature of an average man in mild way while pathos, is an impermanent emotional state that regularly prompts to violence. Comedy often shows the characters of men in the ordinary situations of everyday life; tragedy portrays the agonies of a particular man in unusual periods of severe emotion.

On the notion that comedy acts on humour and wit is burnt out of man's instinct that plays on folly is a product of laughter. These two types are designed to amuse or to excite mirth in the minds of the intended readers and the target audience. Wit is a mental creativity of agility and linguistic power that is endowed in conscious art. Abram declares:

The most common present use of the term derives from its seventeenth century application to a brilliant and paradoxical style. "Wit" that is, now denotes a kind of verbal expression which is brief, deft, and intentionally contrived to produce a shock of comic surprise. The surprise is usually the result of an unforeseen connection or distribution between words or concepts, which frustrates the listener's expectation only to satisfy it in a different way (M. H. Abram, 1981:207).

Sigmund Freud's *Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious* (1905) proved that wit is made but humour is found. He said laughter arouses at actions that seem immoderate and unsuitable, at excessive expenditures of energy. Laughter states a pleasurable sense of the supremacy felt on such occurrences.

Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* also examines some tincture of learning, urbanity, charm, saltiness or elegance, and sharpness and polish on wit. Dryden's *An Evening's*

Love (1671) shows disparity on the excelling wit and humour of Ben Jonson, Shakespeare and his contemporary John Fletcher. This clear distinction is also made known in *Of Dramatick Poesie, an Essay*, between the characters of Morose in Jonson's play, *Epiccene*, that purely endowed with humour and Shakespeare's *Falstaff* that symbolizes a miscellany of humours that is singular in saying things that are unexpected by the audience (Britannica 2010). Hazlitt's "On Wit and Humour" (1964) expressed that humour is the describing the ludicrous as it is in itself; wit is the exposing it, by comparing or contrasting it with something else. Humour is, as it were, the growth of nature and accident; wit is the product of art and fancy.

Ben Jonson, the Elizabethan playwright, who succeeded William Shakespeare, is always informed by theories for any of his attempts in writing of his comic plays. His comedy has a social function which is to relieve man's folly and ridicule the foibles and vices of the society. One of such theories associated with him is the comedy of humours. M. H. Abram (1981) sees this theory as "physiological theory of four humours" while Dasyuva (2004) views it as a concept fore-grounded in medieval physiology which to somewhat informed his comedies. In viewing men's activities in normal affairs of life, the comic playwrights have a tendency to portray the individuals in terms of some single elements that override personal trait or habit. They applied a technique based on this physiological concept of the four humours or bodily fluids. These understanding concepts of human physiology and psychology of Jonsonian's humours such as blood, phlegm, yellow bile (choler), and black bile (melancholy), are said to determine the health and mental stability of every individual in the society while an excess or deficiency of any one of them brought disease (Abram 1981). The concepts give the individual a healthy mind in a healthy body. Since the humours governed temperament, an irregular distribution of them was considered to result not only in bodily sickness, but also in derangements of personality and behaviour, as well, which served for Jonson, as the origin of comic characters. The resultant comedy of humours is distinctly English, as Dryden notes, and particularly identified with the comedies of Ben Jonson. Jonson's comedies, *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) and *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599), revealed this theory through the eccentricities of the characters.

M.H. Abram (1981) proves Jonson's humours as:

based on the ancient but current physiological theory of the four humours. The “humour” were held to be the four primary fluids –blood, phlegm, choler (or yellow bile), and melancholy (or black bile)-whose “temperament,” or mixture, determined both a man’s physical state and his character type. An imbalance of one or another humour in a temperament was said to produce four kinds of disposition, whose names have survived the underlying theory: sanguine (from the Latin *sanguis*, blood), phlegmatic, choleric, and melancholic. In Jonson’s comedy of humours each of the major characters, instead of being a well-balanced individual, has a preponderant humour that gives him a characteristic distortion or eccentricity of disposition. Jonson expounds his theory in the “Induction” to his play *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) and exemplifies the mode in his later comedies as well (p.27).

Bamidele (2001):

In modern terms, the science and terms for humour is derived from the psychological and physiological principles of Ben Jonson’s day. The Humours were the four elements that controlled human body vis-a-viz blood, black bile, yellow bile and phlegm which all existed in harmony. When one of these becomes predominant, there is an imbalance in the temperament of the individual as the titles of his plays show in *Everyman in His Humour* and *Everyman out of His Humour* (p.47)

Dasylyva affirms:

They include *Everyman in His Humour*, and *Everyman out of His Humour*. However, in terms of vigour, topicality and plot technicalities, they cannot compare with what is now known as his four masterpieces: *Volpone*; *The Alchemist*; *Epicoene*; and *Batholomew Fair* (Dasylyva, 2004:71).

Jonsonian’s comedy is a purely “satire-comedy” that serves as a medico-therapy in human’s life. Jonson’s plays are the rise of realistic comedy in 17th-century England that is purely based on a satiric observation of modern-day approach and traditions which are solely meant for didactic purpose. Jonson’s *Every Man Out of his Humour* (1599), opines that comedy is an imitation of life, a glass of life, a glass of custom, and an image of truth.

Comic also manifests in form of grotesques which comes in form of creative arts. This is why Baudelaire’s *On the Essence of Laughter* (1855) sees it as an imitation mixed

with a special creative ability. The grotesque is a creation mixed with a certain imitative faculty, that is, an imitative of elements found in nature. These elements give birth to laughter expressive of an idea of superiority in the comic that shows the superiority of man over man, while in the grotesque, the superiority of man over nature is revealed. The kind of laughter provoked by grotesque makes known something more profound and primitive. These are the things have much closer realities to the innocent life than the laughter provoked by the comic in man's behaviour

On this notion, Henri Bergson, the French philosopher (1859-1941) in his essay entitled "Laughter", pragmatically analysed the dialectic of comedy that dwells on the spirit of contradiction which explains the concept of life and comedy. His own opinion is on the binary oppositions of the mechanical and the living. This is a show between reality and artificial. This is why he stresses that the comic consists of something mechanical encrusted on the living. He proves this theory on the comedic elements of situations, characters and language. He likens every individual in a society has a comic who goes on his own without having anything to do with others. To him, the aim of laughter is to awake him from his daydream (1957). Three situations are meant to necessitate this. The characters must be unsociable which makes him ridiculous in nature in, a theatrical performance. And the spectator must be insensible to the character's condition because the laughter is irreconcilable with his emotion and the character must operate automatically (Bergson cites the systematic absentmindedness of Don Quixote). He clearly stated the fact that comedy deals with the general of people is against the tragedy that deals with class. He believed that comedy is bound up with the corrective aim of laughter which is aimed to reach a great number of persons as much as possible for corrective purposes. Above all, to him, comedy is seen as a genre of literature that deals with peculiarities which are not indissolubly bound up with the individuality of a single person.

In the same vein, George Meredith, in popular essay entitled "On the Idea of Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit" (1877), authentically displays the actual influence of comedy in its truth spirit. He sees the mind as a controlling power of comedic laughter in which civilization is revealed in common sense. To him, this will endow one to hear the comic spirit when it laughs folly out of one's countenance.

Jeremy Collier's *Short view of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage* (1698) also sees comedy as genre that celebrates virtues and jettisons vices. He viewed that it is the business of a comic poet to paint the vices and follies of humankind for the purpose of correcting them through ridicule. He recommends this opinion for all comedic plays. This is sentimental comedy of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Encyclopaedia Britannica (2010) states:

Concerning the sentimental comedy it must be noted that it is only in the matter of appropriating for the bourgeoisie a seriousness of tone and a dignity of representational style previously considered the exclusive property of the nobility that the form can be said to stand in any significant relationship to the development of a more realistic mimetic mode than the traditional tragic and comic ones. The plots of sentimental comedy are as contrived as anything in Plautus and Terence (which with their fondness for foundling heroes who turn out to be long-lost sons of rich merchants, they often resemble); and with their delicate feelings and genteel moral atmosphere, comedies of this sort seem as affected in matters of sentiment as Restoration comedy seems in matters of wit.

At the inception of the 18th century, another form of play was introduced to create class distinction between those earlier forms. This was a period when there was a blending of the tragic and comic genres to form an entity. The two genres were synthesized together as one entity called "tragicomedy". This form of the new genre was established in England with the publication of John Fletcher's *Faithfull Shepheardesse* (c. 1608), an imitation of the *Pastor fido*, by the Italian poet, Battista Guarini. Guarini's *Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry* (1601) also clearly revealed that this new form of genre is a form of poetic sort that is completely different from either the tragic or comic. To him, tragicomedy takes from tragedy its great persons but not its great action, its movement of the feelings but not its disturbance of them, its pleasure but not its sadness; its danger but not its death; from comedy it takes laughter that is not excessive, modest amusement, feigned difficulty, and happy reversal (Britannica 2010). Good examples of tragicomedy plays can be seen in Beaumont's *Phylaster* (1610) and Fletcher's *A King and No King* (1611).

George Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara* (1905), in its preface views tragi-comic as an irony of the conflict between real life and the romantic imagination. To Thomas Mann,

life is a tragicomedy (Britannica, 2010). The tragicomedy of Ibsen's *Wild Duck* (1884), portrays this attribute in the life of a young man who lives happily with his family before an external intruder who is designated to ideal of complete truth reveals all their guilty secrets with catastrophic consequences. Anton Chekhov, a Russian writer, in all his plays mirrors that the mixture of inarticulate joy and dull pain is essence of the tragicomic view of life (Britannica, 2010). August Strindberg's *Dance of Death* (1901) also showcases these forms of binary oppositions in the lives of a couple who were overshadowed by cruelty and pain that are bestowed by vigorous pleasure. These attributes are portrayed in the lives of the characters in form of grotesque in plays as in Eugène Ionesco's *Victims of Duty* (1953) and Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962), Frank Wedekind's *Earth Spirit* (1895), and *Pandora's Box* (written 1892–1901) are practical works that dwelt on tragicomedy.

Donatus, a Latin grammarian of the 4th century, sees comedy as a comic genre that begins in trouble and ends in peace, while tragedy starts in calm and ends in tempest (Britannica, 2010). On this thoughtful ground, he called his great poem *La Commedia* which he later entitled “Divine Comedy”. He exclaimed this comic attribute in his dedicatory letter, which begins amid the horrors of hell but ends amid the pleasures of heaven. This opinion of his can practically be seen in the comic genre of William Shakespeare's last plays, which start amid the distresses of the world and end in a supernatural peace. Other examples of comic plays in resemblance of Shakespeare's *Tempest* are Mozart's *Magic Flute* (1791), Henrik Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* (1894), August Strindberg's *To Damascus* (1898-1904), T.S. Eliot's last play, *The Elder Statesman* (1958) and the Spanish dramatist Calderon's *Vida es sueño* (1635; “Life Is a Dream”)

On this ground, an American philosopher, Susanne K. Langer writes:

In Asia the designation “Divine Comedy” would fit numberless plays; especially in India triumphant gods, divine lovers united after various trials [as in the perennially popular romance of Rama and Sita], are the favourite themes of a theater that knows no “tragic rhythm.” The classical Sanskrit drama was heroic comedy—high poetry, noble action, themes almost always taken from the myths—a serious, religiously conceived drama, yet in the “comic” pattern, which is not a complete organic development reaching a foregone, inevitable conclusion, but is episodic, restoring a lost

balance, and implying a new future. The reason for this consistently “comic” image of life in India is obvious enough: both Hindu and Buddhist regard life as an episode in the much longer career of the soul which has to accomplish many incarnations before it reaches its goal, nirvana (From *Feeling and Form*; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953).

He believes that its struggles in the world do not exhaust the significant role of divine comedy in the sense of satire, farces, and dialogue. The major characters whose fortunes are critically interesting are the eternal gods; and for them there is no death, no limit of potentialities and without them no destiny can be fulfilled. This is a balanced rhythm of sentience and emotion that is safeguarding itself amid the changes of material nature.

Comic outside the corridor of theatre is another dramatic satire that practically displayed some attributes of comedy. The good example of this comedic show that aesthetically portrays the furious of man’s frivolity and ferociousness can be seen in Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). Swift’s *Modest Proposal* (1729) is another magnum opus of comic incongruity that is embedded with charming blend of rational deliberation and savage ending. Alexander Pope’s *The Rape of Lock* (1712-1714) is a satiric portraiture in range of moral and imaginative vision. Its sublimely inane conclusion is invoked from the scene that closes *The Dunciad* (1728). *The Dunciad* (1728) is used as an apocalyptic judgement that narrates what will happen when the vulgarizers of word have taken over the day. Other comic plays in the same satirical forms are John Gay’s *Beggar’s Opera* (1728), and the morality of Richardson’s *Pamela* in his *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews* (1742).

Apart from this, comedy is also used to convey the vision of an exhausted civilization and a chaotic world. This confession is practically demonstrated in the comic works of Samuel Beckett and Ionesco where they transported their plays from tragicomedy to farce. Beckett’s plays reveal the ideal endurance of life amid the grotesque situations which absolutely portrays human ability of conveying on to the end an ironic reflection on the absurdity of doing so (Britannia, 2010). Silence infrequently occurs in the theatre of Ionesco which is embedded in voices raised in a habitually mindless clamour. There is use of dialogue overflowing with clichés and non sequiturs. This makes it known that characters don’t have self-opinions on what to say or do. They

don't have the mind of the own. The characters are manipulated on what action to take. What they utter is always at grotesque dissimilarity with their actions. Besides, the moral platitudes provoke violence that portrays the societal upheavals in which words and actions become fatally disjunctive.

On this thoughtful opinion, Ionesco's comic nous is clearly obvious as well in his illustration of human beings as automata, their movements ordered by forces they have never questioned or sought to understand. There is something incontrovertibly farcical in Ionesco's exhibitions of human regimentation, of men and women at the mercy of things (e.g., the stage full of chairs in *The Chairs* or the growing corpse in *Amédée*); the comic value here is one that Bergson would have cherished. But the comic in Ionesco's most grave work, as in so much of the modern-day theatre, has portentous implications that give to it a distinctly grotesque phase. Apart from these, the grotesquerie of the tragicomic vision completely reveals the declining state of human virtues and casual violence that characterise the world as reflected in Friedrich Durrenmatt's *The Physicists* (1962), Max Frish's *The Firebugs* (1958), and in Ionesco's *Victims of Duty* and *The Killer* (1959), as in the works of his Swiss counterparts, *Der Besuch der alten Dame* (performed 1956; *The Visit*, 1958).

This chaotic life exposes diverse forms of apocalyptic nightmare of tyranny, deliberate collapse of a society into anarchy and terror in several novels, such as Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* (1930-43), Thomas Mann's *Confessions of Felix Krull* (1954), Kafka's *The Trial* (1925) and *The Castle* (1926), Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall* (1928), Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* (1954), Angus Wilson's *Anglo-Saxon Attitude* (1956), John Barth's *Giles Goat-Boy* (1966) and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s *Slaughterhouse Five* (1969).

Comic representation is also seen in visual arts as a portrayal of the ever-increasing reality and great spiritual mysteries in the affairs of common life (Craig 1955, Hardison 1965, Young 1933). This philosophical pictorial ideology is evident in the scenes of medieval mystery cycles. Good examples of these mystery cycles are the comic episodes involving Noah's stubborn wife who deeply entangled herself with worldly affairs and riches. Another mystery play of spiritual mysteries is that of angelic ministrations to the Virgin Mary. Angel Gabriel comes into sight of Virgin Mary in the foreground while a man is cutting wood in the yard outside. These are the

reflections of everyday realities of the mundane world's pleasures and labours in illuminated manuscripts of medieval artists. The periodic round of life's activities such as sowing, plowing, mowing and reaping intermingled with hunting, hawking, feasts, and wedding, that showed episodes of exquisite miniatures of such that could be seen in the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*. After some periods of time, Pieter Bruegel's famous painting landscape with the Fall of Icarus by the mid-16th century takes over seasons by revealing terrestrial realities of men and women such as the plowman tilling the soil and at the same time, the shepherd is taking care of his flock. While the activities of the plowman and the shepherd are going on, the legs of Icarus disappear unnoticeably into the sea. Although Bruegel is not a comic artist, his artistic works take side with what all great comic arts celebrate via peasant wedding, peasant dance, and the basic rhythm of life that could be compared with Shakespearian comic characters. His paintings like "Children's Games" and his "Fight Between Carnival and Lent" are joyous depictions of human energy.

Apart from this, there are different seasons of the labours of the months such as "Hunters in the Snow" for January, "Haymaking" for July, "Harvesters" for August, "Return of the Herd" for November have practically proven the picturesque treatment to a favourite subject of the medieval miniaturists.

Above all, allusion must be made to Bruegel's mastery of the grotesque, remarkably in "The Triumph of Death" and in the "Dulle Griet," in which demons swarm over a ruined landscape.

Again, it is through the artistic creativity of caricature that the significant potentiality of comedy comes into play directly into painting. Its template is originated from the portraits of ridiculously exaggerated characteristics made by the Carracci, an Italian household of artists of early 17th century. In showing differentiation on the ideological concepts of beauty, these portraits put emphasis on the characteristics that made one man different from another. The aesthetic potentiality is quite different from other comic performances that use humour of heroic personages on theatrical stages which Ben Jonson was developing at about the same time in the London theatre. As the dramatists use exaggeration for comic effect, so it was as obvious to painters. Its usefulness as a means of social and political satire is fully acknowledged by Hogarth. Hogarth sees caricature as a human comedy that has a richly comprehensive detail as

revealed in fiction by his contemporary Balzac. To Daumier, another contemporary of his, sees comic as a concept that goes beyond caricature. Daumier's different treatments of scenes from Molière's plays and, most remarkably, his drawings and canvases of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza bear witness to the pathos that can lie below the comic mask (Nicoll 1931, Duchartre 1966, Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010).

Music is another aesthetic value that is highly enriched in comic humours. This representation of comic arts in music gives colourful adoration to comedy in its satiric form it gives to human's soul. Its simplicity and nervous jocularity give a difference and a commentary on the surrounding splendour.

On this note, proven the broad range of imitative sounds of which musical instruments and the human voice are capable of operating upon give room for comic effects to the composer who wants to use them. The humorous adjuncts to a larger composition, such as the loud noise with which the 18th-century Austrian composer Joseph Haydn astonishes his listeners in *Symphony No. 94* or the sound of the ticking clock in *No. 101*. Also, the scherzo, which Ludwig van Beethoven instituted into symphonic music in the early 19th century, has integrated a musical joke of a highly abstract type. The musical nervous jocularity gives a contrast and a commentary on the surrounding splendour that is purely predicated on irony which later grew into grotesque scherzos, as revealed in the musical works of Gustav Mahler after a century of Beethoven. The musical exhibition of comic themes and attitudes comes into actual reality when a composer draws his inspiration directly from a work of comic literature, as Richard Strauss displays in his orchestral variations based on *Don Quixote* and on the merry practical jokes of *Till Eulenspiegel*.

Comedic effects can also be more pronounced on opera theatrical spectacles. Opera provides a full stage for comedy to come into actual performance in music which is very evident in the four major operas of Mozart, such as *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786), *Don Giovanni* (1787), *Così fan tutte* (1790), and *The Magic Flute* (1791), and the hosts of others who are noteworthy to be mentioned. It has strong capacity to enforce a coherent form on the complexities of feeling and action that are frequently of the quintessence in comedy in the spoken theatre. These complexities of feeling experienced by different characters are presented concurrently while in spoken comedy they are done in seriatim. For instance, when three or four characters are

talking at the same time in the spoken theatre, it will result into an incoherent babble. But the voices of three or four or even more characters are blended together in an operatic ensemble, and, while most of the words may be lost, the vocal lines will serve to identify the individual characters and the general nature of the emotions they are expressing (Britannica 2010). In operatic comedy in the music, all things are obviously ordered and harmonious, while in the episodes of the plot of spoken theatre, they appear randomly and chaotic in nature. Ultimately, it should be acknowledged that operatic comedy can likewise investigate psychological and emotional depths of character that spoken comedy would barely attempt. The typical example of this is the Countess in Mozart's *Figaro*. Countess is a very much more moving figure than she is in Beaumarchais' play. In this same vein, the Elvira of *Don Giovanni* also displays a fine extravagance that is little more than suggested in Molière's comedy.

To Bamidele:

Although *The Beggar's Opera* was richly allusive and suggestive of political satire, levelled particularly at England's Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole transcends topically. It sparkles it almost continually as a result of Gay's attitude for reversing accepted values of glamour, romance, love and marriage on the hand, and morality, political integrity and honourable business enterprises, on the other. Its hero is a high-way man whose opponent is an informer and a receiver of stolen goods. There is a truly Dadaist inversion and disassociation(sic) of morals in the work (2010:14).

Comedy is also a reflection of cinematic shows and tele-visual entertainments. Its cinematic orchestrations and theatrical performances improve the pleasant behaviours of the individuals for healthy living. Television and cinema entertainments give a distinctive humorous form of caricatures that provokes a thoughtful laughter in the mind of its audience (Newcomb1974). In the sense that comedy is purely dependent on the mercy of a large part of the public, as shown in box-office receipts or the purchase of a television sponsor's product, it hardly ever achieves a high level of art. There is nothing naive about laughter at the whims and irregularities of humankind, and radio and television and film producers have often been wary of offending their audiences with it. On both radio and television, the laughter is always self-directed to the live audience watching and listening to comic performances. This systematic

approach of self-directed with regard to comedy is also applicable to theatrical performances in Nigerian television and radio stations. A good example of these theatrical performances is Moses Olaiya's stage theatre.

Bamidele (2001:53) reveals that the emergence of Moses Olaiya (a.k.a Baba Sala) on the Nigerian stage (theatre and television/Cinema) gave rise to the birth and proliferation of comic drama groups in Nigeria. Prior to his coming into comedy, the theatres of Hubert Ogunde, Duro Ladipo and Kola Ogunmola had popularized drama on the Nigeria Stage with mythical, historical, political plays as well as social plays that had to deal with issues of contemporary concern. These dramatists were the bearers of theatre to the people in the old provincial towns. Their plays were regarded as folk opera mostly for their structures and presentation that have a fair dose or rather a large dose of music and dancing. They provided fun and entertainment to the people before the establishment of Television in Nigeria. They travelled round the country (mostly in the Yoruba speaking area) providing divertimento(sic) for a people who love leisure and fun.

These cinematic shows and theatrical entertainments can be likened to Yoruba comic shows on television and radio. Bamidele (2001) goes further to say:

A study of the various terms of the comic in Yoruba Television drama gives to comedy terms such as awada, efe, tujuka. All these appropriate to my mind those intermediary terms we in English critical idiom-such as farce, humour, burlesque and satire. Even in English critical idioms tragedy may not have developed other intermediary terms as it is also found in Yoruba language and perhaps others languages too. The other pointer is that with these various intermediary terms for comedy, the genre seems to be culture-bound and perhaps psychologically determined while tragedy presents, somehow, a universal or general appraisal or reaction to remorseless fate (p.1).

To satire, it has rarely succeeded in many ways. Instead, satire gives pleasant plays about the humorous attitude of nice people. Such plays are the loveable head of the household in Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse's *Life with Father* (1939), the indefatigable Dolly Levi in Thornton Wilder's *Matchmaker* (1954) and in her later

reincarnation in the musical *Hello, Dolly!* And the eccentric family in George S. Kaufmann and Moss Hart's *You Can't Take It with You* (1936).

Soyinka, an African-Nigeria playwright, also uses his Yoruba traditional comic plays to satirise the socio-political decadence in Nigeria and Africa in extension. Oyewo (2006:164) affirms that Soyinka's concentration is not only on artistic creation but also on the struggle for identity and emancipation. Against the back-drop of post-colonialism Soyinka had to play employ a vibrant dramaturgical characteristic. This is responsible for the satiric tone of his comedies. One observes that Soyinka even considers comedy as a weak genre for getting his message across, that is why only a few of his plays to date are entirely comic. African societies, as far as Soyinka is concerned, are undergoing a kind of transition, and an artist creating within that milieu cannot afford the luxury of romanticism in dramaturgic construct. Soyinka serves as a revolutionary vanguard and conscience of the society whose duty is not just to create recreation in form of theatrical entertainment for the society, but passionately chose to write to create awareness and pass caustic comments on his own very nascent country that was just beginning to move towards egalitarianism (Oyewo,2006:165).

On opinion, Oyin Ogun views:

Satire is, therefore, one of Soyinka's chief artistic weapons and he uses it consistently to expose the crudities and sufferings of a society in a state of transition (1975:25).

To Obi Maduakor (1991: xi):

The idiosyncratic and often solitary expressions of Soyinka's socio-political commitment find something of an analogue in the assertive aesthetic individualism of both his conception of the function of literature in African society at the present time and the actual paradigms of commitment discoverable in the protagonists of his major works in the quintessentially Soyinkan imaginative universe in which they are made to act. For unlike most of his confreres in the cannon of committed African literature, Soyinka has tenaciously turned away from overt didacticism and a realist conception of character and action. Except in the satires and light comedies among his plays and the satirical vignettes of occasional verses among his poetry, Soyinka's proclivities have not been for the obvious

themes and the typical conflicts and dilemmas of contemporary social experience in black Africa.

Femi Osofisan, a playwright, a crusader, and an outstanding literary giant, who takes after Soyinka, also, uses expressive power of comedies to articulate socio-political injustice and general oppression of the downtrodden masses in African societies. As Muiyiwa Awodiya puts it (1995:26):

The real significance of Osofisan is his experiment with the African theatre form. He obsessively creates new forms by mingling conventions with daring experiments. For example, he utilizes the power of comedy to criticize and ridicule the Nigeria society. But as he is not satisfied with the conventional genre of comedy, Osofisan mingles humour with other traditional forms like folktale, music, song and dance to create a comic opera in for example, the *Midnight Hotel* which appeals to the African audience. His dramatic structure then is indifferent to the orthodoxy; it is compact, assuming epic dimensions through the breaking up of dramatic forms, and then re-assembling them into a quintessential.

In the aforesaid points, comedy has been used in several ways, such as, theatrical shows, comic arts, musical arts, and edutainments, but this research-finding has practically distance itself from them all by looking at comedy from a different outlook through contemporary form of comedy (Stand-up Comedy) in a satiric way.

CHAPTER THREE

SATIRIC PERFORMATIVITY ON LINGUISTIC DEXTERITY AND RELIGIOUS SATIRE OF STAND-UP COMEDY OF GORDONS

Gordons' Stand-up Comedy is intellectually inclined and full of rational sensibility. It is characterised by episodic form, and plot structure. Its linguistic elements are hypertextual in nature. Its use of conceit usually reveals the shocking "truth" of an unusual logic that when it is proven further, is found to be intelligible, giving respite possible pleasure that evokes a ripple of laughter and excitement. Gordons' comic presentation is largely in form of a chain of specious rationalisation that is ordered in a chronological manner, titillating and vastly torchy. His linguistic texture is a mixture of English language and colloquialism. Gordons speaks:

Performer:

Ladies and gentlemen like my friend will say no matter how you look there is a scripture for you. Halleluyah! If you get *big mouth*, you read the book of Mathew or Philip. If you get *big eye*, you read Isaiah. For Segun Arinze na Isaac. If you like trekking, try Genesis. If you like to drink Ogogoro, try the book of Ruth. If you like *sardine*, read the book of Titus. If you get mental problem, the book of Colossians and your life will never remain the same. Halleluya!

Gordons' comic performance draws its imagery from intensely rooted scriptural materials. The use of some grammatical expressions, in the above text, serves as a comic element that creates a sharp contrast between the illustrative analyses to create a humorous effect. "Big mouth" is compared with the book of Mathew to create a rhythmic sound of /mauθ/ and /mauθu/ for comic pleasure and laughter. /ai/ sound is compared in "eye" "Isaiah" and Isaac". "Trekking" is compared with Genesis where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the children of Israelites moved from various locations to the land of Canaan. "Ogogoro", a Yoruba local wine, is compared with the book of Ruth where barley wine was a major occupation among the Israelites. "Sardine" a well-known fish is related to Titus, another class of fish. Finally, the book of Colossians is associated to a popular slang called 'Colo-mental', that is, somebody that is believed to have a mental problem.

Apart from these contrasting analyses above, those grammatical lexical choices of words are used to lampoon the individual personalities that engage in nefarious activities that are inimical to their lives and the society at large. “Big mouth” implies somebody who is lousy or speaks irrationally without considering the consequences of actions while “big eye” is a representation of somebody who engages in all things that are unprofitable to him. He oversees everything that goes around and takes advantage or action on it. “Ogogoro” is a metaphoric use of word that takes into account of the people who regularly drink alcohol or take harmful drugs and medications that are injurious to their health. Also, “sardine” is a reflection or a sign of good living to those that enjoy the good side of life. Sardine is an expensive fish that common man cannot afford. “Sardine” is a portrait of the bourgeoisie, the rich, who are living a luxury life at the expense of the poor, the class of workers who are living below their incomes. “Colo-mental” is a representation of a set of civilised people who are engrossed with western culture at the expense of their own native way of life. This satiric performance reveals individuals’ weaknesses within the framework of societal ambits. In this case, Hazlitt’s “On Wit and Humour” (1964) opines that humour describes the ludicrous act in itself which is revealed through its wit by comparing or contrasting it with something else. Humour, as it were, emanates from nature and accidental occurrences of sociological events. Its wit is the product of art and fancy. Gordons further expresses the satiric mode of humour:

Performer:

So, I love to be rich because everything about the rich is High. If they dwell in a society that society is called High Society. If dem sit don for table is called High Table. If they become monarchs, they are addressed as Royal Highnesses. When they become Chief Judges, they are addressed as High Judges. Even when they fall sick, High Blood Pressure. Hello, everything about the rich is high. I don’t like the poor men, because everything about them is Low, low blood counts, low sperm counts, low income. The only good about the poor is that the Bible says ‘Lo I Am with you always’, that is all. Everything about them is low.

‘High’ and ‘low’ are binary oppositions used by the comic character to create a sharp comic contrast in the performance in order to provoke laughter from the audience.

Although the performance looks funny, in a real sense of actions it serves a lamponer of satirical butts of the society. Based on this Gordons's analytic ideology, Willis (1990:49) reveals:

Drama has become one of the principal means of communication of ideas and, even more importantly, modes of human behaviour in our civilisation: drama provides some of the principal role models by which individuals form their identity and ideals, set patterns of communal behaviour, form values and aspirations.

These comedic cinematic orchestration and theatrical show pragmatically ease out eco-cultural tensions in a milder way that tends to promote sociological development of human-beings in every given society as orchestrated above. The performer uses his comic art to reveal the societal foibles in a bid to correct the social ills. Also, the emphasis on "high society", "high table", "royal highness", "high judges", "high blood pressure" of the rich against "low blood counts", "low sperm counts", "low income" of the poor shows a great disparity in the society. In order to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the society, Gordons practically uses biblical texts to create excitabilites that will ease out tensions. The use of "low I am with you" from the Bible is a form of psychological relief from societal strata and depressive effects of different vagaries of life occasioned by diverse socio-political and economic issues. This word of satire gives hope for brighter future for the downtrodden people who are at the mercies of God for survival. The syntactic approach and the systemic morphology of lexical structures and grammatical components serve as a satiric linguistic power used to create a peaceful atmosphere where societal anomalies are brought into play in a bid to reveal societal weaknesses. This linguistic approach is used to sanitise the society by correcting the social ills that have characterised humans' world. The pragmatic ideation or philosophical ideology behind this comic performance is to create mutual understanding and co-existence of human race without societal prejudices. This is why Lamidi (2000) says:

When people live together, they are bound to participate in activities, discuss issues, share ideas and confidence in one another. All the interactions and products of relationships and confidence build up to the knowledge shared by people at a particular time. Such shared knowledge may be personal, that is involving individuals; or communal, involving the

community. It can also be social, cultural, or traditional or all of these put together. The major ingredient is that more than one person is involved in the knowledge of particular information or culture values (258).

The actual performance of ruminating process on the appropriate linguistic choice of words has given a large room for intellectual stimulant which tries to shape, sharpen and quicken the functional components and the linguistic mentality of the comedian, Gordons in the course of delivery. In the process of delivery, he is likewise re-orientating the people about a sane way of living without wreaking havoc on one another in the society. The most significant point here is that, as this comic exercise is being carried out by the comedian on the theatrical stage, the comedian softly-softly educates the society on every form of pathological fears and depressions that has characterised Nigerian society and the African continent in general. This is why stand-up comedy serves as a veritable source of socio-political information and social criticism. In this case, it is a common knowledge that stand-up comedians have seen themselves with the teacher's mission of enlightening the world. They have also seen their roles as that of vanguards in the revolution for better society. They serve as redeemers of souls from the sociological upheavals. Just as Bamidele has conceived of it that the artists might just be a story-teller telling his tales to those who care to listen; he might just be a troubadour presenting a jest that matters; he might be a creative artist who presents to us his own precise political or moral latitude; he might even be an artist with paint and brush recording for us the mirror-image of our environment. In all these, the artist of whatever form, medium and style sees the society from his own subjective view (Bamidele 2000:27). To reveal this fact, Gordons states further:

Performer:

Ladies and gentlemen, I love my country. There is no other country on the surface of the earth that I will rather come from. Naija is the best country in the whole world, forget something wey CNN dey talk. Them dey try to paint us black. Everything wey dey bad na black, blackmaria, black Friday, blackmail, black sheep. It no concern us we don black, we don black. Put all the colours of the world together it will give you black. We are original authentic a dare raw departmental the mixture give, forget wey these Oyinbo people say we are "ritual killers". If we are ritual killers, them be serial killers. Killing na killing,

they are serial killers. We are ritual killers. All of them na killings. Na Oyinbo dey smart now because the true wey be say when America dey grown up, there was no CNN to report their mess ups. We just dey fifty now, the time America don dey reach 300years now, them don dey reach menopause. Very soon them ministries will be stagnant for a while so make them know say Nigeria we are the best on the surface of the earth. We are doing things Americans are still thinking to do. Nigerians we give beneficially, benevolently, sacrificially. Americans are still dreaming to do that. Nigeria na still the only country dey give another country light and them no get and we are comfortable. You don hear say we dey quarrel? For where? For this country, nobody go arrest you say your generator dey disturb am...Even if you call the police go say ehim! Yourself go buy take am free him window so them go harmonise the ha-ha! Ha-ha! (noise). Na so we are living peacefully here. Na so it just be.

The idea behind this satiric choice of words has in one way or the other aided brain intellectual capacity. Both, the comic and his audience must be active in intellectual, psychological, and must likewise conform with social environments simultaneously. As Gordons is performing his comic orature on the theatrical stage, the intellectual and the societal conscious of his target audience are awakened to sociological upheavals. The negative impressions about the blacks from the white society are brought to people's consciousness. The whites named every evil thing after the black race. For instance, "blackmail, blackmaria, black sheep and back Friday" are used to qualify anything evil. Apart from this, blacks are seen as ritual killers who are thought to be barbaric in nature without any sense of directions and purposes. They are seen as mere people who have bad character both in action and speech. In order to give a healthy approach to these social constrains and sense of incorrectness posed by the whites against the black race, Gordons sarcastically uses some funny approaches skilfully to create a laughable atmosphere that turns these social upheavals to a mere laughingstock of his audience. He starts his narrative above with a natural affectionate outlook for his country. He sees Nigeria, his home country as the best nation in the world and jettisons what CNN says about his beloved country. He views black colour as the best colour that surpasses all colours in the world. Gordons employs this sarcastic value for treating these sociological pains in order to maintain order in the society.

In the same vein, coming back home, Gordons lampoons the governmental system of corruption in Nigeria in a humorous way. The misnomers in Nigerian governmental operation have earned the nation a bad name in the nation. The benevolent, sacrificial,

and beneficial attitudes of Nigerian government to the outer world at the expense of her citizenry are sheer fiasco. Nigeria supplies electricity to her neighbouring nations without bothering about her own electricity's usage. Nigerians opt for generators for constant power supply. This has caused a noise pollution and a social disorderliness in the society. To satirically reveal this symptomatic syndrome of power supply, Gordons confesses that Nigerians are always living abreast of the sociological upheavals through laughter and peaceable living. These intellectual criteria means that they need to be encouraged to ask questions, process information, and make positive life changing decisions. This approach has greatly assisted the society to recognise the importance of sociological well-being in terms of good governance and environmental decadence that poses threat to life. Socially, the people are encouraged to ask relevant questions on contemporary issues in a well reasoned and constructive way by considering an ever-increasing volume of challenges has paraded the society. In this view, some actions by individuals that are demonstrably harmful to others are exposed. This enables all people to find ownership in common sense approaches to obvious problems. People are helped to find ownership in, perhaps not every solution, but the process towards solutions to more contentious issues. On this notion Gordons confesses:

Performer:

So my brother, this Gordons' comedy clinic is where you come, where all sorts of sicknesses, diseases, depressions, sadness, sorrow and bitterness are forgotten and treated forever.

The psychopathological syndromes of the psychotic disorders prompted by sociological factors are symptomatic of the tensions within the society. If proper measure is not taken to curb those cancerous societal challenges, they can actively lead to different forms of psychoses that are dysfunctional to human's life in everyday realities.

One of the practical preventive techniques applied by the comic actor against the prevalent recurrence of the societal upheavals for lasting solution is defined as *psychoanalytic theory*. The treatment of the sociological happenings is by discussing somebody's problems with them rather than giving them drugs. This is exactly what Gordons has done in the text above. He acted on the audience by discussing collective

and individual ever-present problems of everyday challenges. Gordons' comedic satiric effect ensures psychic stability and coherence in an increasingly complex Nigeria. This is why Gordons called this oral dramatic performance where all sorts of societal disorderliness and abnormalities are satirised in order to sanitise the society. In this light, the comic is "quasi or a pseudo-reformer" of the society. Comic artists are the social critics who serve as the conscience of the society. Shor (1992) supports the benefits of this active approach as knowledge that is derived from action of an object, by knowing the object is to act upon it, and to transform it. In acknowledging this fact, it is to assimilate reality into structures of transformation. These are the structures that intelligence constructs as a direct extension of our actions (Piaget cited in Shor, 1992, p.17).

As the aesthetic instinct of the comedic actor is displayed on stage, his action gives an outstanding ovation to the liveable performance shared by both the audience and the performer. This is a form of dual compatibility responses shared by the two parties engaging in the theatrical exhibitions. This mutual intelligibility is a form of liveable atmosphere where the society, Nigeria, is x-rayed from the socio-political point of view in order to create harmony in the society. Comedian reconciles his audience to the society through his comic performance. This can be likened to synaptic membranes that serve a connection between the two nerve cells. This is also a form of syndicate parameters in which both the comic and his audience work together and help each other in order to achieve a particular aim. Both of them come to the level of equilibrium to find lasting solutions to their common plights (Akinboye, 1984). So when a comedian intends to make his audience happy through his performance especially linguistic dexterity, he likewise keeps himself abreast of the sociological challenges. This is exactly what Gordons and his audience share in common in the theatrical performance of this analysis.

Performer:

So, you don't have to be slim in order to feel beautiful.
Any how you dey, you are blessed. Some were
wonderfully made, but we were all made. It does not
matter whether RMD is wonderfully made and Taribo is
fearfully made. It does not matter, we were all made. All
things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
the Lord God made them all. So, you don't have to be

slim in order to feel beautiful. As for me Gordon, I don't like them slim. I like them very many. I like them conspicuous and bogus. I like them very proud. I like those ones like Mountain Zion that can never be hidden. Alleluyah! I like the one way be like matter. Anything that has weight and that can occupy space. I like them like that, na be because the one way I Dey like Bible write for them "occupy till I come". The one way I dey like them no dey do cat's walk. Na only cat be animal? What about hippopotamus, elephant and rhinos?

This expressionism of the approach of modern art, cinematic theatre and music comedy on stage portrays people's feelings and emotions rather than showing events or objects in a realistic way. The aesthetic potency of stand-up comedy is creatively employed by Gordons to reveal different ideological concepts obsessed by Nigerian people about their physiques. Gordons does an analytical appraisal of the physiques of every individual in the society in a more refined way that gives a healthy sensibility in appreciating one's physical outlook. This is because some people don't appreciate their physical outlooks and rather sees their bodies as a burden and a physical threat to their lives. Whether you are slim or robust, you are fearfully and wonderfully made by God. To Gordons, you don't have to be slim before you look beautiful. All creatures great and small are fearfully and wonderfully made by the Lord God. No one is superior to the other. Everyone is equal before God.

Gordons practically confesses that he prefers those ladies that are robust who had seen themselves as non-compliance to their equals in physical carriage. He uses the biblical expression to correct the erroneous beliefs that people are obsessed with overtime about their physical appearances. This is why he said "you are fearfully wonderfully made by the Lord God". Therefore, comic, Gordons, here is seen as an *expressionist* that sees stand-up comedy as an art of picturesqueness of realities. Through expressionistic approach of the comic, the environment of actual performance is also clothed with liveable atmosphere. This is a conspicuous methodology or device that has linguistically enriched, repaired and medicated the linguistic faculty of comedian-audience. The technical device applied reconciles reality with illusion. So, the comedian above is revealed as a *reconciliatory comic actor* who reconciles his audience with his society.

On the other hand, he employs this comic performance to satirize people who live a non-challant life without taking into consideration of what they put on or eat. Some

don't watch the weights. They eat anything that comes their way without considering their body structures or body compositions. The edibility of food consumption has made their physiques look unattractive and unhealthy to physical outlook. Apart from this, some folks don't cultivate the habit of dressing well. Dressing well makes the body look smart both in carriage and physique. In this sense, it shows that the people in question are well-groomed, if they are well-dressed. In addition to this, cooperate dressing also earns such people a high respect in the society. Just like a slogan that says "the way you dress is the way you will be addressed". Good carriage of one's body both in comportment and speech gives respect to one in the Nigerian society. This is a satiric way of creating healthy consciousness in the hearts of Nigerian people who live out of hygienic and healthy live. This is why satire is seen as a platform in which social foibles and vices are revealed and corrected. In this case, stand-up comedy is revealed as a form of medium in which dissemination of information and enlightenment comes.

This approach has made the audience to be self-confidence in approaching the day to day realities of life rather than being self-pity or self-opinionated. Here, in this case, there is a great avoidance of mutilation, self-condemnation, and self-possessed awkward characterological traits. The inward damage of the emotional imbalanced feelings is out rightly eliminated by the help of the comic who serves as a medical practitioner in his own field. It is obvious that increased knowledge and a change in attitude about a life-style factor will lead to a change in behaviour, and eventually to a change in health outcome. The stimulation of increased knowledge and positive attitudes leads to most healthy life-styles. Improvement in the health status of individuals goes beyond the physical status and longevity of individuals in the society. So, by this, health needs of comic's audience are determined locally by the deliverers (comedians), who are actively involved with initiatives that tailored the audience to her needs. The audience's problem-oriented life-style is destroyed by the persuasive physical, mental and social artistic power of the comic actor.

Based on this singular fact, the methodology applied by the comedian actively encourages people to develop a healthier, more open attitude towards situations, people and views that differ from their own currently held ones. The people take responsibility from their comedian's theatrical shows through the process of taking

stock, reflecting upon and reviewing what they have done and planning the next steps. The methodological style promotes self-examination or appraisal of facilitating high degree of continuity of learning between all phases of an individual's life. To be more effective, the society is taught by Gordons how to be more assertive, to be able to marshal evidence and arguments to support a case and to be completely persuaded that there are alternative views to those that they presently hold. This act has empirically assisted the society to acquire the necessary skills to promote the mental well-being advocated as a crucial feature of positive healthy life-styles. To support this view, *Curriculum Guidance 5* affirmed that the emphasis in most health education curricula is on encouraging individual responsibility, awareness and informed decision-making. It is widely recognised that the provision and acquisition of information alone is unlikely to promote healthy, or discourage unhealthy behaviour (NCC, 1990c.p.7). HMSO (1986) stated that tasks for schools are to support and promote attitudes, practices, and understanding conducive to good health.

The satiric import is punctuating at a singular fact that provides a way of escape from the sociological decadence in order to have a proper outlook to the issues of life. This satiric import of stand-up comedy is synonymous to the military's songs and music that stimulates her for national clarion call. It stimulates people for physical and psychological healthy life to face social challenges. It promotes' and alike maintains healthy active life-styles of individuals in the society. Here as revealed by Gordons in above analyses, stand-up comedy shows the common pursuit of two things. It depicts the interrelationship between individual characters in comic performance and the society of which is created.

The communicative style of satiric import of stand-up comedy serves as a psychoanalytical framework that satirises the psycho-historical problems of individuals in the society. The force and range of the work was remarkable. Based on this, it would be no exaggeration to call this comic's method *a sensible rationalisation*. The last thrust of the enlightenment by which enlightenment comes. The art of intelligent, amorous, sensuous, cultivated, critical, sentimental, humane, and humorous is a quintessence ingredient in this rational sensibility. The comedian has made the deepest impression upon his audience. The unquestionably and the most important influence of a comic is in his readiness to be linguistically creative and

linguistically mould his audience into his likeable wish. A striking instance of the influence of comic in thought and mannerism is seen in this Gordons's comedic act:

Performer:

Na wa oh! I see my face one day for mirror I no happy with my parents ooh! Them for disorganise each other. Those of us wey never marry I dey encourage na now. You want to marry, marry somebody who will complement you. Somebody who will correct the rubbish in the family. If you have Big eye avoid people like Segun Arinze, Timaya, Foreverest Forever. Unless you want to born General Overseer, your children will be seen everywhere. Them dey front, them dey see back. Them dey back them dey see front ooh! They can't wear glasses because the eyes go shoot the glasses come out and it will not be good for the ministries. Aaah! If you dark as a woman as am avoid me, you want to born antichrist? When night reach them no go see your children oh! Only you go dey tell your children eeh! Smile daddy wants to know where you are. It will not be too good, so na him make me advice you. Sammy Okposo, when he want marry, he marry girl wey be like Colour TV. People say na wedding, they didn't know it was a correction of colour.

Gordons employs a sense of reasons as a pragmatic strategy to appeal to his audience's emotional sensibility. He uses his own historical background as a case study to capture the mind of his audience. This is why Bamidele (2003) views that, the work of an artist tells us of phenomena that are not usually accessible to historians. Resis (1978) also states that, apart from work of art, there is very little other evidence which allows us to appraise the temper of an age by helping us to grasp its emotional quality and its sensibility. Gordons' seductive tactics unfolds sociological mayhems within the nation and individual family units. His medium of enlightenment gives a note of warning to the people that are yet to marry to consider some physical criteria or physiognomies before choosing their spouses. He advises them to marry somebody who will complement them in order to correct the "rubbish" in their families. He sees his own physical body's deficiency as a product of his parents' carelessness. This is why he said "Na wa oh! I see my face one day for mirror I no happy with my parents ooh! Them for disorganise each other". In order to promote a good physical appearance, Gordons said "those of us wey never marry I dey encourage you na now,

you want to marry, marry somebody who will complement you, somebody who will correct the rubbish in the family”. Other linguistic comic elements like “big eye, general overseer, ministries, dark, born antichrist, night and colour TV” are satiric tools in the comic performance.

Beyond the level of entertainment, Gordons through the use of subtle irony, burlesque, humour and witticism reveals absurdities and excesses of every individual person in the Nigerian society. The ironic use of “Big eye” and “General Overseer” denotes somebody who sees every good thing round him or her with the intent of acquiring those material wealth for his or her use. This is a form of sarcastic burlesque that shows how the bourgeoisie or Nigerian upper class takes advantage of every available opportunity to cheat the poor. This is why they are connotatively seen as “General Overseer”. They are the upper class at the helm of affairs. They hold the fortunes of the nation in their hands. They are the ones that have the power to steer the ship of this nation, Nigeria, without anyone questioning their authority. The use of “children” here depicts how Nigerian poor masses are treated as “kids” who are meant to attach their livelihood to their parents (upper class). The poor have no will of their own. They are being controlled and moulded to the wishes of the upper class.

The use of “antichrist” and “darkness” shows how the siphoners of Nigerian natural resources and wealth have turned themselves to dem-gods. The “antichrist” here is made known to be the cabal that goes against the people’s wishes. “Darkness” is used as a metaphoric representation of sociological upheavals that characterised Nigerian society. It is an emblematic representation of danger, cruelty, brutality and man’s inhumane to man. This syndrome foreshadows ethnic militia, violence, anarchy and disillusionment within Nigerian society. This is why Gordons uses the word “marry” to warn Nigerians to be very careful when choosing their leaders to the position of power and authority. Nigerians are urged to choose people that have their interests in their hearts and jettison the religio-political hypocrites who use positions of authority to amass wealth for themselves. This is the reason he says “you want to marry, marry somebody who will complement you. Somebody who will correct the rubbish in the family”. Nigeria is seen as a big family with diverse ethnic groups and religious factions. “Rubbish” means societal decadence has eaten deep into socio-religious system of Nigerian nation.

Emotional tone, pitch changes, dramatic gestures, facial expressions, vocal expressiveness, rhythms of delivery, and melodic pause-effects are paralinguistic phonological and aesthetic imports that the comedian brings into the course of performances. The ways of managing knowledge and verbalization in actual enactment above show the commonality and generalisability of the power of stand-up comedy on the audience.

Another important aspect of this stand-up comedy is the psychological soundness and intellectual rationalisation that it gives. The actual recitation or the delivery device that aids intellectual faculty in course of this study is termed *mnemonic formulaic device*. It has a systematic pattern of memory stimulation that awakens people's psychological consciousness which makes his physiological appearance a hale and hearty one. The cohesion of mutual intelligibility between the comedian and his audience is an outstanding one. Stand-up comedy formulaic thought patterns and mnemonic formulas are indispensably meant for wisdom and rationalization. The fixed way of presenting comedic shows reveals the way and manner on how linguistic device display is intellectualised mnemonically and intellectually organised. In this case, Adam views comedic utterance in form of oral performance as "A group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential deal" (Adam, 1971:272). It gives an opportunity to understand and clarify personal thinking in a healthy way. It provides a chance to reflect and think about evidence in a discipline manner. Not only this, it also gives room to appreciate that having a sound mind may involve changes in the way one thinks, explains and approaches issues.

This satiric performative device is a form of behaviours and communicative skills that helps people to understand themselves and become more productive in life as individuals. Gordons' expressive device and analytical methodology in the above performances help individuals in the society to see their follies through the comic cinematic orchestration. The process of helping through speaking will often result in either insight or behavioural change or both. The comedian's conversational technique serves as advice-giving style, counselling method, instructional approach and informative scheme. The comedian as a counsellor acts as a mirror while the audience tries to identify the heart of the problem and what may be done. This counselling approach greatly helps the people to cope with their individual traumas. By this, this

device helps people to acquire healthy lives. The comic actor ventures into people's feelings and mind's opinions. Not only this, the theatrical atmosphere also encourages constructive feedback from people and this makes them disclose their feelings and express opinions which they may get challenged by their contemporaries or corrected by others, if accurately incorrect. Gordons goes thus:

Performer:

Et get watin dey fit person. Stick to what works for you. Chain no dey fit goat but it dey fit dog. Rope no dey fit dog but it dey fit goat. How them go say 2Face go advertise for contraceptive for what? Him dey use? For where! People like 2Face supposed to advertise for baby's pairs, pampers, towel and some other things that can increase him ministries, that is his calling. 2Face na him be only artist wey dey obey Bible, go ye into the world and multiple and my brother is fulfilling him ministries. Na joke 2Baba don't bring quarrel here. Na so it just be. See Basketmouth go dey go do comedy, for what? No be him mates dey sell Igbo (weed). The dada he get am for decoration ?, Go and sell something that resembles your calling. I Go Dye go dey do comedy. People like I Go Dye go suppose dey carve coffin or be undertaker. If I Go Dye go do HIV test, them no go use machine, na high gauge. So my brother, we know watin bring you here. Don't waste our time, move, move we don see am with our eyes. We have heard with our ears, move na so it just be. So stick to what works for you

The performative device employed by Gordons in the above comic orature gives a sense of purpose and deep meditation to those who had wandered away from fate. Living a purposeless life is a socio-political and economic suicide to the national development. Everyone is expected to contribute to national growth of Nigeria. This is why he says "Et get watin dey fit person. Stick to what works for you. Chain no dey fit goat but it dey fit dog. Rope no dey fit dog but it dey fit goat". "Person" signifies every hale and hearty Nigerian who has the capacity to work. It is a conscientious consciousness used to awake everyone to national clarion call, to national development and individual realisation of innate potentials. This is a conscience-stricken performance directed to those who have turned themselves to lazybones, fair-weather friends and sycophants of the up-and-coming folks or people. The proverbial sayings used by the comedian for parallel justifications of ethical sensibility behind his satiric

performance are cultural significations rooted in African culture. The use of “chain” and “rope”, “goat” and “dog” connotes a misplacement of priorities. Chain and rope are differed. One is stronger than the other. Goat and dog belong to different families of animals. Chain and rope are different entities used for different purposes. The imagery used here by Gordons is a form of binary oppositions employed to carter for different types of people. Goat is a stubborn and careless animal while dog is a very vigilant animal that always be on guard. Both shear different views with different missions. But if people are found in places, positions and professions where they should not be found, there is bound to be multiple problems. Everybody is conscienced to awake to individual responsibility.

The use of popular artists in conjunction with their professions to create a sharp contrast gives a thoughtful humour meant to provoke laughter. This is used to bring into play actions that are sensitive to people’s lives. 2Face is a popular Nigerian and international singer of great repute. Due to his human’s follies and unable to have self-control over himself, he has been found committing promiscuity in the scenes of life everywhere he goes. The application of “baby’s pairs”, “pampers”, “towel” and “some other things that can increase him ministries,” is a high form of satire used to ridicule 2Face and other indiscipline artists who have intermingled themselves with undesirable pleasures of this life in detriment to their own societal status. This is why he says “how them go say 2Face go advertise for contraceptive for what? Him dey use?”. The use of “contraceptive” symbolizes promiscuity and insanity in this performative art.

Moreover, bringing into sight the other artists, namely, Basket Mouth and I Go Dye, to create a moral sensibility gives an expository detail on moral decadence that occurs among Nigerian youths and artists. Basket Mouth’s facial expression or physiognomy is an expression of physical menace to Nigerian citizenry. When youths have gone out of their healthy sensibilities into undesirable behaviours that constitute threat to the nation, there is bound to be social problems. “smoking or selling of Igbo” that is “weed” or “marijuana” is an injurious act to the smoker or inhaler and people around them. It makes them high physically and emotionally and also empowers them to do certain crimes that go against the societal well-being. These irritant behaviours have turned our able bodied youths to societal nuisances. The use of “dada” that is,

“dreadlocks” on Basket Mouth’s head suggests an aberration of western influence on our male youths. African men are not meant to plait their hair. The cultural value of plaiting hair is only meant for women in African society apart from the Sogo worshippers. The morphosynactic analyses employed by Gordons are picturesqueness of everyday realities. Take for instance, Gordons says “If I Go Dye go do HIV test, them no go use machine, na high gauge.”. HIV is a popular syndrome of incurable diseases that has cut short the lives of many Nigerians prematurely. “HIV” and “coffin” are signs of bad omen that prefigure doom. The comedian gives a sign of warning to Nigerian youths to desist from all forms of sexual immoralities that can terminate their lives. “HIV” is a deadly disease that can ruin the future of able bodied youths.

Stand-up comedy of Gordons relies on nuanced deployment of both performative and linguistic devices which provoke laughter and aesthetic pleasure. Thus, these versions of comic performance function both as a cathartic device through which psychological and physical strains are eased out, and as a medium of critiquing social problems. The satiric device of modelling and shaping behavioural templates is a form of building behavioural capabilities. The linguistic template applied by the comedian in a jocular manner is a refined method by which audience is satirically moulded to a likeable wish. It is the style in which the audience is powerfully influenced by that which she observes, hears, feels, perceives, conceives, and participates or creates. On the theatrical stage is where the audience attempts acquire some of healing modification processes. It is a way of eliminating excessive behaviour. This process takes an assessment of organismic factors which include the audience’s personal life style, personality, experiences, attributes, physiological formation, opinions and generalisation. The factors like tolerance altitude, genetic predisposition, and intellectual faculty gravely control behaviour. Akinboye (1984) called this attitudinal approach *covert reinforcement*. Covert reinforcement is thus an imaginable rationalisation and a meditational behavioural strategy whereby a client (audience) is made to imagine behaviours which he wants to engage in and at the same time imagines reinforcing events or stimuli that can be consequences to such (Akinboye, 1984: 38). This is a behavioural contracting method that leads to effective communication and exchange of information between the satirist (comedian) and client (audience).

Besides all these, stand-up comedy also gives a sense of healthy look to civil services and social responsibilities in the society. It awakens people to their social functions and duties as a patriotic citizenry of their nation. In Nigeria nowadays, corruption is seen as the bane of the national growth and development in the nation, and many people do blame the government and those in public offices for it. It is important to note that every citizen is a stakeholder in the national development and therefore has the patriotic right and duty to stem corruption in his or her sphere of influence, or contact. All what people need to do in this country is to cultivate the habit of thinking right and act right. This is why Gordons says:

Performer:

I dey drive one day for island, I see one heavy Jeep wey brand, them write "Police Self Na Human-Being". I say oh! The ministry is moving in the direction of which it should go.

The societal assuming saddled responsibilities of the Nigerian security apparatuses on civil and security matters are seen as a collective responsibility of individuals in the society. The comedian, Gordons, reveals that the police are mere human-beings like everyone in the society. Bearing this in mind, every citizen is urged to play an active role by giving attention to the nation's plights and be willing to cause changes in our environment. Everybody must involve in the development of our society for the betterment of all. Everyone's participation must be constructive towards rendering the best service to our beloved nation, Nigeria. In our attempt to render service to humanity, we should be excellent in our delivery and be conscious of the people around us by making life easier and comfortable for them to live. This teaches us how to practically learn and practice the dignity of labour by rendering self-sacrificing services to our country, Nigeria. It is of a great harm to other citizens and the country as a whole when act of services that is meant to benefit them is rendered poorly. Lots of people in our society these days want comfort, satisfaction, and pleasure for themselves and their families alone, and not bothering to think about the welfare of others and the future generations who are the leaders of tomorrow. On a broader sense, it is very essential for us all to give a special consideration to the destitute children, or orphans, who live in our towns, villages, cities, street corners, slums, squatters' camp outs, and under the bridge. These younger generations live in abject

poverty, hopelessness, depression, squalor, and total abandonment. We all must unanimously bring hope and assurance for these frustrated and bereft ones. Many die of hunger every day without having a hope of survival while some children have turned to beggars from their tender ages a result of lack social welfare.

Based on these consequences, many have become violent adults who later take out their anger and frustration on their society and the nation at large. This is one of the major factors for rapid increase in crime rate in the society. This is the main reason why Gordons says that everyone should participate fully in this societal welfare and be security conscious. Special considerations should be made available for the needy when making decisions by both government and individuals in the society. It is our sole right as individuals to put things in place and likewise place things right to protect our society from social upheavals by making a tremendous impact. Having a personal commitment for national growth, infrastructural development and nation-building serves has ample opportunities for service to thrive around, let there be a well-built enthusiasm by an internal drive and a powerful tendency to see to it that the lives of those people around us are improved through our actions and benevolent services. We are all encouraged to be challenged and patriotically motivated by strong desire to change our society through selfless services. We are also implored by the comic as individuals to look out for people's needs and be willing to supply those needs. Gordons' words of encouragement have instilled courage to think positively and act right by serving the country with a true spirit of patriotism, loyalty and altruism.

In this same vein, our focus on the societal sacrificial development should not be predicated on money-making oriented venture. We can practically change our nation and improve her economic stature, if we all invest with all our mighty, soul, and body, that is, with the investments of our personalities, human resources, and professional skills. This comedian's orientation gives a deep sense of personal evaluation and commitment to the nation's growth and development.

Gordons also uses this performative art to lampoon our Nigerian system of government and political leaders that rule the nation. For our democratic system of government to grow stronger and highly thrive, we all must be willing to take part. By this, we all will equally save the entire nation from cruel cabal and obstinate plutocratic oligarchy, who take advantage of people's ignorance and illiteracy to perpetuate evil in order to

achieve their self-goals. In this regards, we all as a nation has helped to checkmate one another excesses. In this case, this will provoke a new way of productive thinking that will create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and co-existence in the nation. We all have capacity to transform and make a positive life-changing decision for this nation, if we all are law abiding citizens. By this, we make Nigeria a paradisaical land of achievable opportunities that is meant to be. Whatever positions we occupy in public service, private establishment and politics, let bring comfort and great relief to others. Using violent approach to address grievances is never known to solve any national problems at all, rather cause violence and disagreement that can disintegrate national unity. This can also provoke violence that can lead to destruction of lives and property. The rampant barrage of bombings and assassination by those few aggrieved people in the nation cannot proffer any positive solution. Those who involve themselves in violence and nefarious activities to foment trouble have done a great havoc to the nation. Many people have been rendered homeless, while others are briefed of lives and property. So many children have been turned to orphans and some are trying to get their feet from the shock of grieved violence.

Also, those who through political offices use artillery to express the grievances and establish political will-power are not prudent at all. They have forgotten that everyone on the surface of the earth has a purpose to fulfil. This comedic show as a satire has proven that no matter how justifiable your grievances are, you must not wreak havoc on lives and property. Rather as a sensible, brave and intelligent citizens use dialogue to resolve pressing issues. If anyone is grieved about anything and thought there is any form of injustice in the country, speaking up in an intelligent manner is the most appropriate method. It is the solution to all who are aggrieved, hopeless and the positive heal to the economic and the socio-political upheavals threatening the general peace of the nation. Gordons states:

Performer:

I was with His Excellence, Dr. Goodluck Apojiobi Jonathan, recently. And I told His Excellence, I say oga I was in the Abuja when they swear for you eh! Eh! (mimicking sarcastically as it was an error of expressions). When you are being sworn-in (quickly corrected himself), you no say politics is the only job you do they swear for you before you dey enter. Them called

am swearing in but actual them they swear for you. I tell say oga I saw you when you are making an announcement and you said you were shocked to receive the news that the President was dead. Na him I tell am say oga na me and you dey here now, tell me the truth you shock! (uttered sarcastically). You want tell me say, you no pray say God let your will be done.

The methodological approach applied by Gordons above to state a pressing issue to the high authority appears in a form of caricature that looks appealing, humorous and inoffensive. It is one of sane ways in which the correction of societal wrongs is revealed. It is practically likeable to the African traditional poets who are socially licensed to reveal the foibles of the kings through their poetic orature in a mild-mannered way. He addresses His Excellence, Dr. Goodluck Apojiobi Jonathan, in a subtle manner in order to draw his attention to a pressing issue that bothers him. A piece of information got from Mr. President that he was shocked when he heard that the late President Yaradua died. He uses the medium to satirise Mr. President that Mr. President meant the opposite of what he said. It is an ironic use of language to drive home ones points. This is why he says “you want tell me say, you no pray say God let your will be done”. “Swear” and “sworn in” are two different words that have different meanings in different contexts. “Swear” here is sarcastically used to give another meaning that connotes “curse” while “swear in” is a formal promise to be honest or loyal either because one is in the position of power or one is starting a new official job. But in Nigeria, our public and religio-political office holders are going contrary to the promises they have made to the nation. These promises have eventually turned to curses for them because they have broken the promises they ought to fulfil. Everyone is expected to pledge allegiance to the country in every respect.

Mr President here has been given a sense of rethinking and reflection on the sociological happenings of our national life. So, rather than being restive and protesting violently in public places, the comic has made us learn the value, the principle, and the practice of non-violent protests. By so doing, we have prudently learnt how to present our cases intelligently before those in the positions of authority to get the desired results. Instead of lamenting on how badly things have turned, let everyone be excited about today’s opportunities and use the moment to create a joyful atmosphere for a change. An atmosphere of joys is the right environment for peace,

progress, and prosperity. The act of making projections and proffering solutions by Gordons to present challenges has positioned everyone and the nation in general for a prosperous tomorrow. We cannot be quiet when we have to constructively take a stand for what is right and when we are supposed to speak out. So, it is good to be bold and learn to challenge the status quo when we have to. We have social responsibility and right of free-will to determine the future of this great nation.

This comic show has helped to foster unity and promote loyalty in the nation and world at large. Different types of people assemble at comedy stand for therapeutic amusement. In this humorous exhibition of comic shows, individual, tribal, communal life-styles are made known. Gordons reveals:

Performer:

There is nothing you are looking for in this world that you will not find in the Bible. Everything wey you dey find in this world it dey Bible. It have *ta* na so it *be*. Ibo people them don dey Bible it don *tail*. Luke chapter one verse five, the Bible says those days was a certain priest name Zechariah from the course of *Abia*. Hallo, Ibo Kuenu!una too much, where two or three na gather negotiation is involved. Even the three wise men, they were from the east. Hallelujah, Urohobo people came from King Solomon plenty wives and plenty children confirmed no shaking. Yoruba people came from Joseph na only Joseph comot from prison become Prime Minister. Na joke oh! I no called somebody's name oh! Just incase eeeeh. Hausa people I know know may be King David is from the north. Obviously, David should be from the north because na only King David sick them come use 13years old girl take support his ministries whether the man of God will be well. Oh! Boy when Israel come, come see David say he no touch the girl, na him them say yes no hope the death wey want kill David nothing can reverse it. Na joke oh! We are moving on and the ministry is moving.

On this view of cultural dissemination and diversity of historical linkage, Adegbite (2009:12) views psycholinguistics that, in essence, psycholinguistics is concerned with the study of the acquisition, production and reception of language as a reflection of the human mind and behaviour. It integrates the of knowledge of theories, empirical studies and experiments from different fields such as psychology, linguistics, cognitive studies, artificial intelligence (computer stimulation) and neurology to achieve that goal. Psycholinguistics may be related to other cognate fields such as 'the psychology

of language' or 'the linguistics of psychology', but we must be careful to distinguish areas that mark the different interest of scholars. Psycholinguistics is an interface between psychology and linguistics. Psychology is seen as the study of human behaviour, while linguistics is the scientific study of language. Based on this fact, both psychology and linguistics are the feasible ways of gaining access to human mind and manifestation of behavioural templates which are pragmatically reflected through language. This cognitive reflection is a representation of ideological constructs that comes from the mind via reason or experience. This has empirically determined the way we do and view things that demand some intellectual attempts to see them in any other way than that which our language suggests to us as reflected above by Gordons (Halliday, 1970:143).

Gordons uses his satiric performativity to psychoanalyse Nigerian ever-present multiple problems through his linguistic dexterity in a bid to create mutual intelligibility and harmony in the nation. The historical information has tremendously assisted to raise many difficult challenges which threaten the stability of the society. For instance, it raises the people's awareness of the importance of peace in the society by use of historical past as evidence in investigating these ever-societal conflicting issues. The death of King David and possible solution applied in indentation is a reflection and a refraction of Nigerian political history of an Ex-President of Nigeria (Yar'adua). The historical allusion of biblical Joseph who became a Prime Minister in Egypt can also be likened to contemporary Nigerian political history. Some strong political stakeholders and leaders in this country, Nigeria, became political office holders after they had left prisons. This historical connection can be traced to Nigeria's Ex-President (Obasanjo) and a strong political stakeholder (Omisoore) who got into power and positions of authority after their prison experiences. The use of King Solomon and his promiscuous act from biblical text into this narrative satirizes the polygamous life of African people. The Urohobo people are used as a representation of this African patriarchal society. Gordons also commended the industrious life of Nigerians and African as a whole. The hardworking spirit of Igbo people is used as a template to capture this image. This is why he says "Hallo, Igbo Kuenu! Una too much, where two or three na gather negotiation is involved". On these facts, the historical reflection has assisted people to develop knowledge, understanding and

skills which will enable them to participate as healthy responsible citizens in meeting the ever-increasing emergent sociological challenges.

In a nutshell, this device provides the avenue for people that the notion of the healthy society and the choice and responsibilities of the individual in that society are changing. They should also bear in mind that choices and responsibilities in health matters are purely influenced by socio-political and economic factors. Late President Yara'dua died because the nation failed to take care of his health. Some cabals wanted him to die so that they can take over from him untimely to perpetuate their nefarious activities. The President has been known for his failing health before he came into power. He should have been advised to drop his presidential ambition at early stage of his campaign for power. After the death of Mr. President, the whole nation is held into ransom. Everything stood still in the nation. The socio-economic and political sectors were held hostage. This is a satiric connotation that not only the President is sick or died but the nation as a whole. This means that some cables believed that they are stronger and larger than the society and Nigeria in general. These are fundamental factors to the natural world's life-sustaining and health-sustaining developments.

This satiric performativity also draws our attention as a nation to the malpractices that do occur in Nigeria. It is obviously shown that criminals can also become socio-political leaders in this nation. After the looting of national wealth and prison experiences, the criminals come out to squander their ill-gotten wealth to acquire positions of power and authority for themselves. These are socio-political and religious leaders which parade the nation with their luxuries.

Gordons's stand-up comedy is a satiric form of linguistic texture that practically satirizes the contemporary religious sanctimonious hypocrisy of religious actors of gullibility and bigotry. His approach of revealing this hypocritical act is through a refined way and a productive manner that create a touchy healthy sensibility in the mind of his audience. The manipulative skill and the bewitching power of religious bigots work on the psychological gullibility of their faithful followers. Gordons intends to create an atmosphere of a new nation that promotes psychological rehabilitation and other general reconstructions of socio-political and eco-cultural mentalities of healthy sensibility. This Gordons's comedy of revelation of religious bigotry and gullibility is matured simultaneously with his artistic vision in response to

the psychosocial idiosyncrasies. Gordons's intellectual consistency and cultural inclination have assisted to reveal crucial existential experience of man. His artistic faculty has creatively helped to convey both action and thought in a single utterance. Not only this, ability to manipulate the attention of his audience to crucial conflict of interests is an intelligent one.

Performer:

Make una ask you una this question! Why be say, if we go crusade anointing go catch pastor like fire. He vomits anointing give everybody whuuuuuu! Blow anointing for everybody, everybody dey falls down but the cameraman still stand mmmmh! Cameraman don dey resist anointing abi! HmMMM! That devil is a liar. In those days when you fall under the anointing no be joke because the wey people fall under the anointing now I know understand. In our days, when you fall under the anointing you need God to bring you back, but nowadays, I went to a church a girl went under the anointing her phone ring I shocked, she picked she even tell the caller say I beg call me back I dey under the anointing we go talk later. Hallelujah!

Through this performativity, it has found that some religious leaders operate under the influence of alcoholic and African magic realities to manipulate the lives of their followers. This is why Gordons says "the wey people fall under the anointing now I know understand. In our days, when you fall under the anointing you need God to bring you back, but nowadays...". Gordons here reveals that this is a sheer religious hypocrisy and total religious ignoratum of God's power.

The concept of 'falling under the anointing' is rooted in Christian religious activity (Acts 2, 10:44-46, 19:1-6) during which the priest or pastor at prayer or deliverance sessions places his hands on the heads of the parishioners or speaks of the Holy Ghost resting on an individual. The act of falling under the anointing signifies that the fallen person is oblivious of everything that goes on around him or her for some time. Gordons's mockery of the situation is to present a platform required for spiritual reformation of activities of religious leaders. The 'act' of returning a call (though impossible) by the girl who fell, creates a sarcasm for the listening audience in his portrayal of prayer sessions of some religious leaders, especially the Evangelicals. This is why Dasyilva (2004) sees this present society as a society so morally decadent,

whose secular life is morally bankrupt and even for those that care to seek refuge in God (and religion) fall prey to religious vultures’’. Nowadays, people have turned the house of God to mere entertaining theatre and act of worship to cultural routine of religious practice without having a personal encounter or experience with Supreme Being. Take for example, in the performance exhibited above, the said lady under her self-deceit and religious gullibility picked her phone call to answer her caller and tell her caller to call her back that she is under the anointing. In truth sense, Anointing of God cannot be tamed nor manipulated under the influence of man.

Furthermore, many people go into this religious practice for commercial purposes. This happens because of the economic situation of the country that has stifled the financial capacity of the individuals. In order to find a way out of these social complexities and financial mess, they find an alternative way of using religious platform to satisfy their hungry bellies and desired lust. Dasylva (2004) confirmed that there is a deliberate commercialization of religion by custodians of the otherwise sacred institution.

Creativity and innovation of job are equally portrayed by Gordons. A lot of people are out of jobs because their skills have become outdated and their specialisation is no longer required. Healthy outlook is one of the major factors that responsible for growth. It is a way of becoming more excellent than ever before by adding values to one’s life through learning a new thing. Learning new things about one’s trade or profession will greatly improve one’s positive life-style through an irresistible quality and excellent services. This virtue is a paramount thing to acquire. Thinking of better ways to serve humanity is a way of refining oneself positively. Behavioural attempt to be smart and courteous in service delivery gives the opportunities to make things right.

Performer:

Na so it be oh! Native doctors now them don package no be joke oh! If you see suit, I see native doctor wears Giorgio Armani. If you see the Amos’ style, if you see the gravid na where I know say him na native doctor when he takes slippers take wear the coat na him I know say him ministries don change. And now them don upgrade oh! Them get laptop now. Them no dey carry juju any how again them no dey smell them dey wear perfume and some other departments.

Native doctors are caricatured in a way that reveals an element of truth through a stylistic approach. They are revealed as primitive and uncivilised set of people. Due to civilisation and act of learning, they have acclimatised and acculturated to western ideologies. They have blended themselves with modern technological approach which informed their line of professions. Here, the comedian tries to update his target audience on the modern trend of life that brings life-innovation and healthy living to humanity. This approach is an ability to use imaginative and artistic capacities to develop and produce new ideas in an artistic context that adds value on individuals in the society. The comedian here wants everyone to have a new look to life via homes, places of work, professional fields, and other spheres of contact. By this, comes the proper establishment of a non-threatening environment for everyone to live.

Apart from this, Gordons' comedy has drastically assisted to create moral sense of values and norms in the society. He evidently reveals contemporary activities of humans which are societal aberration to socio-cultural values of human existence. The formative ideas or knowledge in which opposite sex is performing a role that is purely against the natural order. The practice of gay and lesbianism is a form of ideation that goes against the natural sense. This is a device where mankind tries to change the natural order to suit her lustful desires as against the natural law of God, the Creator. This has become an open practice in the western world and this act has subtly crept into the African society. This anti-cultural practice is what Gordons sees as an inordinate ambition of human-beings in the global society. It is an inimical way of eradicating human existence on the surface of the earth. This unwholesome act has largely caused discord, hatred and societal relegation of human status between the opposite sexes. Each sex believes that it does not need the bilateral agreement of the other sex for human growth. This is why Gordons emphatically satirises this inordinate practice by saying:

Performer:

But women make I ask you na you people you have started something that is provoking me. If God does not punish this generation, God must apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah yes oh! God did not create Adam and stiff. He created Adam and Eve but nowadays women are fallen in love with women. They are helping us to in our own ministries. Ladies and gentlemen, we not tell you na say

it tires us oh! Leave our properties for us, please, please leave them for us is very important and when you ask girl say why are you tripping for fellow woman, him go tell them say I no need a man. Shut up! You need us 2-4-7. God wey do am like that no be deaf and dumb.

This irritable act of irrationality between the same sexes has reduced human race to the level of an animal. By this, human race is gradually erasing and losing touch with realities of life. In the book of Genesis chapter nineteen, God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of sexual immorality of the same sex. Man marrying man or woman marrying woman is a great sin before God. It is also a grievous sin to God to have sexual intercourse with the same sex. God has wonderfully made it from the beginning of earth creation that human beings should marry the opposite sex (Genesis 3:16). God created Eve for Adam. Both beings are meant to complement each other. The comedian through provocation satirises this folly of man to create moral sense. This is the reason he says “But women make I ask you na you people you have started something that is provoking me. If God does not punish this generation, God must apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah yes oh! God did not create Adam and stiff”. It is Gordons’s tendentious aim is to promote the significance of moral living in order for everyone to coexist both male and female in our global community. To convey this message properly, he uses a comparative analysis:

Performer:

If you don’t need a man, you are going to spell a woman without a man or a female without a male or spell she without he or spell a miss without a mister, madam without an Adam. You na need our ministries you can’t run away from it. Every problem wey woman face man dey inside, manicure, man-mental breakdown, men-mental stress, men-menopause, men-menstrual pain, men even gynaecology men still dey inside the issues. You see am you na need us, the ministries must move together, together forever.

Based on the above assertions, Gordons has immensely used his comedic textual orchestration to encourage and enable people to live a healthy life-style that will unite both sexes. God has made the sexes to complement each other. One cannot do without each other. This is the main reason that Gordons practically says “If you don’t need a man, you are going to spell a woman without a man or a female without a male or spell she without he or spell a miss without a mister, madam without an Adam.” He

also goes further to show that every problem women face men are involved in them. For instance, Gordons says “Every problem wey woman face man dey inside, manicure, man-mental breakdown, men-mental stress, men-menopause, men-menstrual pain, men even gynaecology men still dey inside the issues”. The comic concept portrays godliness as a part of everyday living, an important dimension in the quality of our lives.

Gordon’s symptomatology is a *rational-emotive behaviour*. A form of cognitive-behavioural therapy in which people are encouraged to carryout self-examination, change irrational thought patterns and beliefs in order to reduce dysfunctional behaviour.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIAL PERFORMATIVITY OF SATIRE IN NIGERIAN STAND-UP COMEDY

Stand-up comedy is a humorous expression, an inspirational motivation, a poetic thought and a satiric expression that is conducted while standing before a live audience. It appears in a form of comic acts which serves as a satiric performativity against the socio-political and eco-cultural upheavals in the society. It is a new form of comedy that x-rays, and likewise exploits the sociological factors that hamper humanity from getting the desired pleasures for its healthy living. The desired joys of comedy are derived from the oral satire which serves as an alleviation against unwanted sociological situations. It is visually conducted in both indoor and outdoor gatherings to create amusement and cause laughter among its audience. Its jocular satire is a psychological repair of characterological traits and societal catastrophic cynicism of the individuals in the society. Its audience is always at standing ovations in response to the repertoire of poetic rendition and oral witticism of the comedians. The amusing power of Stand-up Comedy creates a stress-free relief to its audience under the paranormal reality show and expressions of its actors - comedians. The eco-cultural convergence and divergence of Stand-up Comedy are always woven round environmental reality of individuals and communal experiences. Stand-up comedy performances are sometimes filmed for future show via television, DVD and the internet. Its performer has several personal names that s/he bears. These stage names include comic, stand-up comic, Stand-up comedian and stand-up.

The ideation behind Stand-up Comedy goes beyond physical acting on the stage. It takes a lot of wit and creative intelligence, and this is enhanced by persuasive communicative style that gives birth to a hilariously breath-taking act on stage. The comedian must be courageous enough to face the assuming terrifying faces of the strangers before him. This comedian's psychological stimulation gives an opened confidence in performing an effective satiric performativity through persuasive nature of his voice. Ostendorf sees this satiric performativity as a coherent play world which provides cognitive and emotive alternative to oppressive social arena, both therapy for incipient pathology and emancipation of the sense (Bell, 1987:12). The Comedy Nerds also asserts that he really thinks comedians are the ultimate conceptual artists, because

they need to have lots of ideas. He also finds a lot of fun stuff to work with. A lot of creative people have emotional angst. Their reaction is to do something creative. And there is crying behind the laughter, and that sort of thing (2009:1).

In actual sense, the language of Stand-up comedy is always verbal and it derives a lot from the use of puns (Oyewo, 2006:161). As Cinithio (1543:124) puts it “in comedy, the dialogue of the characters should be so like familiar conversation that it seems exactly like the speech of friends and relatives” while Trissino believes in the use of maxims which are sententious, moralistic, conclusive and quickly understood (1549). The language of a comedian must be friendly and closely related to socio-cultural background of his/her audience. On this notion, Gassner affirms satiric performativity of comedy as a life regarded in such a manner that becomes comparatively light and playful which includes smiles, if not laughter. It asks of an audience detached observation instead of emotional involvement (Gassner 1941:49).

This comedic medium, apart from its satiric function, helps to improve the psychological soundness, physiological fitness and emotional stability of its audience against any form of psychological traumas and emotional depressions. It creates a visual reconciliation between reality and illusion to create a healthy sensibility in approaching a life situation. Its medical outreach has actually revealed the healing power of comedy in several ways. Stand-up comedic curative influence supplies energetic and healthy approaches to life's issues. These simple approaches picture the conceivability of healing nature of Stand-up comedy against the complexities of life that have incapacitated people in everyday affairs of life.

This comedic satire serves as a defence mechanism in opposition to psycho-physical threats of contemporaneous existence in the face of gloominess, disenchantment, disparity, disillusionment and despair. This has assisted to demythologize and demystify all social factors that are militating against mankind. Winkel observes that people cope with difficulties and afflictions in different ways. When addiction strikes, some people will toughen up and fight back, others will try to give up, and still, others will ignore it and hope it goes away. We all are individuals and react differently to situations. This is why personalized addiction treatment is so important. That's also why much research has been done to determine new ways to help people overcome

addiction. There are certain groups now that are promoting a new way to reach people and help them deal with substance abuse: comedy (2009:1).

Here, comedy is used as a satiric performativity for addiction and to largely create public awareness about addiction. He goes further that the response for the play has been very positive overall. It is all about helping people take a closer look at their lives, and helping to heal some of the hurt and pain that addiction causes. The play might not be for everyone, but for those that are able to step back and see that others are making it through the same things while still keeping their sense of humour. It can be of great value (2009:1).

Comedy Nerds (2009) submits that 100 percent of comedians like being on stage and making people laugh. 100 percent of comedians are in or need therapy. This reflected in the words of a comedian who was smart enough to combine the two, that is, you can get your therapy in comedy show and like get comedy show in therapy.

The conceptualisation of audience into a likeable wish through satiric mode has given rise to laughable atmosphere. The comedian has a special and magical way of construing his audience into laughable satire under a conducive atmosphere of joys that eases out all forms of bottled emotions. This is what Henri Bergson (1900) calls “AUTOMATISM-purely mechanical movement”. This is a theoretical framework which makes clear that the comic character acts like a machine. He stresses further that attitudes, gestures and movements of the human body are comic in exactly the same proportion as the body makes us think of a simple machine (1900:19).

Based on this philosophical assumption, Oyewo believes that the motivation of a comic character is derived in such a way that, although he himself is aware of the absurdity and stupidity of his action, he still insists on doing it. For example, a comic character who leaves his seat would normally not look back to make sure that the seat is still there before sitting down, which culminates in what Bergson calls “systematic absentmindedness”(2006:160). This is why Oyewo does an analytical appraisal of comic and absentmindedness of Bergson’s speculation that the more this is merged, the higher the comedy. According to him, “these and absolute watchfulness for other human incongruities and contradictions are crucial to the comic spirit” (p.161).

The creative power of the comic character also displays the reversal of roles in which a person or group does the job of another person all in the name of creating a fun. For instance, a man is backing a baby and likewise pounding yam while his wife looks.

Analysis of Satiric Performativity of Stand-up Comedy

The impressionistic approaches of the comedic gladiator in the theatrical performances serve as satiric performativity against any form of unwanted cosmic upheavals that prevents people from living a healthy life in day-to-day affairs. The comedic gladiator takes its audience away out of psychosocial world of fears and pains through a satiric flight into the ideal world of realities and expectations. He restores a form of ever-present hope which places individual decisions within social, economic, psychological and political systems. Comedy numeracy benefits cannot be overemphasised in solving personal and societal challenges. This is why comedy is highly descriptive in nature rather than being prescriptive in nature. The linguistic texture applied by the comedians here is a stimulating blend of English language, Yoruba language and colloquialism.

Due to the socioeconomic hardship that has paraded the society, a lot of emotional disability and psychological disorder has largely inflicted severe untold inhumane life-situations on the global society, especially the Nigerian community. On this ever-increasing critical hardship, I Go Dye, a comedian says:

Performer:

Oh I look fine! He no easy, I dey tell people say watin you dey see before in *Nite of Thousand Laughs* the face that was sign of poverty. When God do something you go see am for body. People say I Go Dye feel fine like this. Forget, your time go come na small small. I first be like you, but now the thing don change na my neck remain...I little time I don they talk about poverty, you know why I don see am. It makes you less than a human-being, you cannot talk, you just quiet, you talk no go dey make sense to people. You won bath no soap. You go dey use soap all your head go dey red. You don be like Tony Tetuila, money is too good, when I taste some money na yin I know the value of money, it connects you with people. It dey make girls dey respect you, woman no dey jealous who you dey friend for. You give this one hundred, two hundred, three hundred. Then dey smile eh! His our boy friend oooh!

Response: Hoooo!(laughter from the audience)

Here, the performer, I Go Dye, makes caricature of himself on the stage through his appearance and mannerism that are more noticeable than he really is. He makes silly show of himself to project how the economic situation of the nation, Nigeria, has worsened the lives of her citizenry. This is why he says “oh I look fine! He no easy, I dey tell people say watin you dey see before in *Nite of Thousand Laughs*, the face, that was sign of poverty. When God do something you go see am for body”. In order to create a mutual intelligibility and likewise draw the attention of his audience to socio-economic realities, he creates a sarcastic comic relief that provokes laughter “People say I Go Dye feel fine like this. Forget, your time go come na small small. I first be like you, but now the thing don change na my neck remain...”. He publicly makes a grotesque caricature of himself by saying “na my neck remain” and to involve his audience he says “I first be like you”. On this premise, Winkel observes that the response for the play has been very positive overall. It is all about helping people take a closer look at their lives, and helping to heal some of the hurt and pain that addiction causes. The play might not be for everyone, but for those that are able to step back and see that others are making it through the same things while still keeping their sense of humor, it can be of great value (2009:1).

Riches do bring fame and honour to the possessors in our society in Nigeria and Africa as a whole. It is a sign of comfortable circumstances and prosperity. It draws the attention of people to one especially the attention of womenfolk as I Go Dye puts it “money is too good, when I taste some money na yin I know the value of money, it connects you with people. It dey make girls dey respect you, woman no dey jealous who you dey friend for”. If you are rich you be respected in the society. Everyone in the society wants to be a friend of success and an enemy to failure. People always want to associate with a rich man. Here, I Go Dye makes fun of women who only want to take a path of pleasures and totally want to avoid a path of pains at all costs. The process of pains avoidance by the women or impatient people is called *behavioural therapy*. These are the pains prompted by a number of physiological as well as environmental factors. Behavioural therapy is a therapeutic device in which the application of the scientific principles in the assessment, treatment and evaluation of an individual’s problems in a one-to-one therapist-client relationship (Akinboye 1984). It is an empirical method of therapeutic strategies often used to predict control or manage

broad-spectrum behaviour patterns. This is a technical device that is used in the management of everyday human behaviours.

This form of comic satire has the ambitious aim of enabling people (audience) to make informed economic decision with which they will be faced through their lives. These economic concepts are related to the fundamental tension between the scarcity of resources and the needs of people in society. I Go Dye uses his comic orature to satirise the societal challenges that can lead to various mental disorders or psychotic features, if is not hastily addressed. These symptomatic syndromes and impaired characterological formation of the depressed people are manifested through psychological and physiological disorders that sometimes lead to neurotic reflections of abnormal anxieties and pathological depressions (Jacobson 1986). The symptomatic diagnoses of these challenges are brought to the consciousness of the individuals who act these features without knowing it by the comedians who serve as satirists. The neurotic fears of individual personalities in the society and global village about the economic hardships are empirically displayed. The comedian here brings a beatific smile and the expressions that bring great joy and happiness to the people. By this, the senses of identification of the people who appear to be normal but lack true emotional genuine life are revealed. An overt display of hostility in individuals is also made known.

In this act, comedy has drastically promoted a new way of reaching people and helped them deal with their psycho-physical problems of societal challenges. It is all about helping people to take a closer look at their lives and heal some of their hurts and pains through the oratorical satire of the comedians. By this, heterogeneous classes of the depressed people are helpfully delivered from obsessively anxiety neurosis and regularity of actions which can make them unproductive in life. This can as well lead to psychological retardation and passivity which sometimes prompt to hectic sexual life and professional disability if is not cured (Jacobson 1986). This is why the comedian, I Go Dye, as a satirist, helps to develop a device or mechanism in a liveable atmosphere of optimism, affectionate outlook and admiring attitudes towards life through his comic renditions. This is what the psychologists called *humanistic psychotherapy*. It is the highlight of people's prospective for growth and self-fulfilment instead of concentrating on their unconscious struggles and self-defeating behaviour, just like humanistic therapist helps the patients in his clinical work to develop personal

consciousness, self-awareness and pragmatic appreciation of his own worth so does comic do to his public audience in his live performance (Akinboye 1984).

The satiric power of manipulative skill of I Go Dye has been largely used to expose all forms of socioeconomic hardships that have relegated people to the level of animals. On this notion, I Go Dye stated that lack of money makes one less than human being and, likewise, makes one to lose human dignity and respect in the society. He goes further to encourage and assure his audience that there will be a positive turn around in the poverty-stricken situation. He claims that, he has passed through this abject poverty experience before, but now he is a story of success and wealth. He uses this oral comedy as a consolatory message and arousal of hope for glorious future for those that have been emotionally wounded in heart. He proffers solutions to the irresistible disillusionment that has subtly crept into the consciousness of the emotionally depressed people. He employs this practical approach to transform the characterological aspect of individuals in the society into good and loveable personality. This in some way helps to eradicate psychotic fantasies, phantasms, hallucinations, abnormal moods, and excessive anxiety (Jacobson 1986). All these features are what usually lead to hypochondriacal illness, that is, unnecessary obsession of persistent beliefs in a nonexistent illness. These are symptomatic manifestations of abnormal behaviour and unnecessary anxiety about one's health.

Performer:

Et get one day I go club, I don dey drunk, I no know,
I com mistakenly carry one "Asewo"(prostitute).
Sorry it dey happen sometimes. You dey drunk you
no go know, you just carry am. I no know say the
Asewo tell me five thousand naira, me no know. The
day don break, I com give the Asewo three thousand
naira. I no do anything ooh! I just sleep with my
mind. Day don break, I com give the Asewo three
thousand. Come see shout! Meanwhile, why I get
these my younger brothers, there are four them.
Them grasp these guys four of them, for you to
know how dem grasp if them snore self, you know
say people dey the house, aaaaah! (Making
gesticulatory snoring sound of his brothers). For
night the girl first asked me, do you train lions in
this house? I say no, no, no. The day don break, I
give the girl three thousand naira, com see shout, "I
Go Dye today you will kill me. I com tell you five

thousand naira and you are given three thousand naira eh! God punish that oh!” Before I talk, the girl don put shirt away, before I know, pull trousers. “I no dey shame oh! I be Asewo, na you no get name abi! Na you no get name. By the time everybody don gather, dem go know say na Asewo you carried last night. Your don hear me?” As she dey talk one of my brothers just wake up from sleep, the one wey grasp two of this guy. In fact, the guy be like this speaker, that one just waka like this, he no dey talk, he look the Asewo, the Asewo throw face . The first thing wey it comote for him mouth be say “watin”(in a deep terrified tone) na yin the Asewo say eeh! “na wa oh! Na so person take dey dye oh! wey my clothes now, oooh! vensilation(sic) no good oooh! Oh God! If to say I know I for don take the three thousand naira. This one say I don give am how I go take collect am back? Before I look again, the other one don dey waka dey come (the Asewo is afraid of the scary look) eeeh! (the guy speaks) ‘who they make noise there ?’ (the Asewo is panicked again) eeeh! (responds) which kind wahala be this now!.

Response: Haaaa! (Laughter)

In the above performative art, the comedian ridicules himself and the Asewo, the prostitute, to create amusement that satirises the act of prostitution among Nigerian youths and in the nation at large. “Asewo” is termed to be somebody that does have sex with someone for money. This act of immorality and sexual lawlessness came into being due to socio-economic hardship that has thrown young ladies and womenfolk in general into act of prostitution. The satiric performativity decries this ill-behaviour that has turned future wives (unmarried young ladies) and household wives to prostitutes. The scene of moral sensibility behind this satiric art is meant to create an awareness of ethical values rooted in African culture against such anomalies. The exchange of money (N3000) for prostitution termed to be the exchange of moral quality or virtue. Virtue is one of the most respectable qualities in women in Africa. Virginity is highly respected and prostitution is an aberration. The picturesque account of this performance shows that many ladies, these days, are not ashamed of this prostitutional act. “Asewo” in this satiric scene boldly says “I no dey shame oh! I be Asewo, na you no get name abi! Na you no get name. By the time everybody don gather, dem go know say na Asewo you carried last night. Your don hear me?”. The act of this sexual immorality has

become a general lifestyle among young ladies. The lady is not ashamed to call the attention of the people around her to view her scene of sexual immorality. This means that the lady has lost her sense of dignity and honour.

This comic performance also sarcastically lampoons and likewise shows how the constant appearance of paranoid fears comes into play in individuals. These are the pathological fears of death and hatred that people are obsessed with. They are indifferent about the sociological happenings. In the comic orature above, the paranoid act is very obvious. The said girl, Asewo (prostitute) was apprehended by fear of the terrified faces of I Go Dye's brothers. She sees these guys as a threat to her existence in the house where she committed her whoredom. In order to get rid of the apprehended fear, she quickly gets her clothes and get out of the room. Here, Asewo is a good example of so many Nigerians out there that are passing through these psychological traumas. They are set of people that often suspicious of everything that goes around. These basic facts have made them lose contact with external reality. The fear of the socio-political and eco-cultural hardships is a significant disorder in the sense of reality. This is why Jones (quoted by Zetzel, 1945) argues that some individual personalities have a relative inability to tolerate frustration and anxiety. The general populace believes that her life is not secure in the hands of the individuals who divert the national wealth to their own purses. By this, people take alternative way of revolting against super or social structures that oppose their social welfare. Some take to arms as a defence mechanism while others take to drugs as an anaesthetic therapy against the socio-economic anathema.

On this salient note, Winkel (2009) reveals that people cope with difficulties and afflictions in different ways, when addiction strikes. Some people will toughen up and fight back, others will try to give up, and still, others will ignore it and hope it goes away. All are individuals, reacting differently to situations. That is also why many a research has been carried out to determine new ways to help people overcome their addictions. He claimed further that, there are certain groups now that are promoting a new way to reach people and help them to deal with substance abuse through comedy. The response got from the comic play has been giving positive effect on the audience. It is a way of helping people to take a closer look at their lives, and helping them to heal some of the hurt and pains that addiction causes. The play might not be for everyone, but for those that are able to step back and reflect on the reality shows of the

comedians while still keeping their sense of humour. This comic act is of a great value to the audience because of therapeutic and counselling modes. The comedian's satiric power of emotional healing here, replaces the role of drug in-taking with amusing power of comedy as anaesthetic satire against the socioeconomic anathema.

The comedian, I Go Dye here, stylishly uses this technique to satirise the psychophobia poses by sociological financial threat. In his satiric analytic treatment of his first comedic performance above, he made this clear that, that poverty makes one less than human-being. He also responds to the financial threat by giving words of consolation that things will change for better within a space of time, if only people can endure. This is what the psychologists call "behavioural therapy". It has a propensity to concentrate on the assessment, treatment and evaluation of existing behaviour rather than research into the historical origins of such behaviours. This mode of operation is known as *behavioural modification*. It is a systematic management of behaviours in a way that individuals and groups are more effective (Akinboye 1984). This is why the comedians, as satirists, serve as today's behavioural therapists who study meditative constructs such as thinking, feelings, creativity, motivation, depression, anxiety and even problem-solving. The principle of stimulus-response mechanism, that is, the principles of respondent conditioning and stimulus control in the management of human behaviours.

On this broad concept, comedians are seen as satiric thrillers who excite their audience through a unique, marvellous and action-packed device. They combine extraordinary strengths, skills and courage as satirists who make the world a safer place for people to live. They choose the part of laughter rather than pains in order to help people to face inevitable challenges with heroism, wisdom and courage. These comedians are highly interested in satirising human behaviours. The comedians' artistic creation of oral performance employs variant, viable and vibrant dramatic techniques that make their audience to undergo physiological and psychological transformations in order to gain access to their sociological problems.

Basket Mouth, another comedian in this series of *Nite of Thousand Laughs*, reveals social foibles in marriage institution through his satiric performance. He uses his comic platform as a medium of enlightenment to create a mutual understanding, trust, patience and other social sensibilities that make a marriage an ideal institution.

Performer:

Women, women make na try, try if even you no trust your friends or husbands, it no means say you go dey search for the thing way go make you they cry. You no trust am, you no trust am, the guy him putsyou for house, you dey the house, him loves you be that, the painful part be say you come go through the phone see the texts way another girls sent come, come provoke meet am, na go fight, go come cry, you come still stay. No be say when you catch am, you go vex go, you go seat down, 'why did you do that to me' Shurrup! My babe go misbehaviour, I come dey lock my phone. Now she don dey pick my calls. I am telling you! Phone just rings pooo! She will just pick am, who is this? She looks the caller, who is this? Now she no even dey look the callers again. Call just calls me for night, who is this? Who is this? Last week my phone just ring (sound 'pua-pua'), she don picked am, who is this? Who is this? Before she come looks at caller, who is this? Who is this? Who is low battery? Who is low battery? You and low battery, you people are dating now abi! I say eh! You are a fool.

Response: Haaaa!(laughter)

In this transitional analytic observation, the comedian as a satirist helps his audience to analyse their relationships in the family and social institutions, as Basket Mouth has practically done above. He urges couples to trust and have mutual respect for each other. Basket Mouth sees his wife as someone who does not have patience with everything he does to the extent of checking his phone's callers at any point in time. He outright sees this odd behaviour as an untidily life-style for couples in matrimonial affairs. This device can systematically operate through building a new behavioural pattern. Unfaithfulness is a common practice among couples nowadays. It scatters family and relationship. Basket Mouth's wife is an impatient woman who always wants to have her ways. She is always suspicious of her husband in everything he does. In order to mock this inordinate mannerism, he pragmatically uses his wife as a case-study to lampoon this social ill that characterises the lives of some household wives. This is to prove how some women are impatient, bothersome and restless when it comes to some sensitive issues in marital relationships. The use of Basket Mouth's wife and "low battery" is to show act of insincerity and doubt amidst couples. Although it is a comic performance, elements of truth are sincerely portrayed. He uses his wife and "battery low" as agents of ridicule and comic laughter. "Low battery" is

a sign of loss of power supply as a sign of power failure in a handset. As used here, “low battery” goes beyond laughter, it signifies a common social vice that can be seen in marriage institutions in Nigeria and Africa at large.

Apart from this, the reciprocal delivery of positive reinforcers among spouses has been found useful in enhancing marital relationship in all the elements of marriage relationship that are useful to marriage relationship, such as communicating, sharing, listening, problem-solving, negotiating and others. Reciprocal delivery of positive reinforcers will improve marriage understanding and cooperative behaviour more than when positive reinforcement is absent (Akinboye 1984). This is exactly what Basket Mouth has done as a satirist who brings out the elements of marital conflicts in order to create mutual understanding in marriage institutions.

In order to develop a good outlook to life and create act of good human relationships, Carl Gustav Jung uses the terms *introvert* and *extrovert* to class people (Tyson 1999). The introverts depend primarily on themselves to satisfy their desires. While the extroverts need the company of other individual for personal fulfilment. Jung urges the therapists to assist the patients to balance two personality traits in themselves. This is exactly what the comedian has done in the analysis above in order to create harmony, oneness, healthy living and mutual rapport in the society. This can be likened to scientific term called *correlation coefficient* between comedian-audience and audience-audience relationships. By this, vacillatingly attitudes towards life in people are absolutely eliminated.

On this note, the artistic power of comedy sarcastically works on human’s psyche to create a sound creative essence that works on human’s psycho-physical properties as an expression of bottled emotions which may cause psycho-physical disorders if not expressed. These issues of intelligibility are valuable because people are allowed to understand the divergence of opinions, to clarify their own values and attitudes, to justify their positions, and to understand the implications of their views and in some cases actually to change their behaviour. Not only this, this comic satire is not only a matter of imparting information about appropriate behavioural life-styles and promoting physical fitness but also place within and likewise build on the understanding of the social contexts and individual value systems which may encourage or inhibit the healthy development both of the individual and the

community. It has immensely assisted to structure and influence the available choices and life-styles to enable individuals and groups to develop and sustain their society and, of course, it plays significant role in providing the audience with the information, understanding and skills relevant to meet social challenges in human relationships. It gives room for mutuality, co-operation with others, shared responsibility and learning on how to manage common goals and purposes. Basket Mouth has used his comic to impart factual information linked to a general morality governing behaviour through mutuality and cooperation with others, in order to promote healthy living and practically discourage unhealthy behaviour. We learn by doing and by thinking about our past experiences. It is here that active participation makes a vital contribution. The deep understanding leads to both behavioural change and an internalisation of concepts and values taking place within the comic atmosphere. Comedy's supportive environments are conducive to the promotion of healthy living.

Comedian helps to centre on a life-style focusing on behaviours known to cause societal upheavals and thus produce improvements in society by stimulating behavioural change. Basket Mouth aims at helping people live healthier lives and at reducing some of the major risk factors for crises such as high blood pressure that arises in individuals when matrimonial conflicts arise. This is one of the therapeutic natures of stand-up comedy. This device is known as *clinical health-orientated comedy*. This is why comedy helps in playing a significant role in shaping our social behaviour. It improves the quality of life, a sense of well-being and feelings of good life. Comedy's physiological functions, positive values, attitudes and self-esteem account for cardio-pulmonary efficiency. Its emotional management is highly effective on its audience.

Comedy also works on human weaknesses, such as lies, as a way of satirising human nature. Some members of a community turn themselves to pathological liars in order get above their troubles and sociological challenges which are absolutely inimical to their lives. This behavioural nature of unreasonable lies has in some ways; threatened humanity through fraudulent life-styles that ruin the socio-political and eco-cultural systems of human's institutions. Some take this nature so far by robbing people of their belongings through arms or fraudulent means, such as cyber-crime, political avenue, pen robbery and other social vices. These are unhealthy practices that have made the global home a place of pessimisms. In order to create sanity, Basket Mouth uses his

comedic power to lampoon and at the same time reveal these human's idiosyncrasies.

Thus:

Performer:

And girls can lie especially those Queen's College girls, those girls them be lions, lion Zuba na they all be. I dey one day they just gathered themselves after summer holiday. They just gave themselves gists ,oh boy! Hear gists, na him one of them just come start phonee, you know all those girls they travel well-well. The girls don they blow lies, na him me and my guy don dey listen. Na him the girl don start "do you know what happened during the holiday, I myself, my younger sister, my brother went to London with my parents, you know! My daddy actually used British Airways, we filled First class, can you beat that? You know, I happily seated there with my sister, my parents are in front and my brother was behind and those guys were so nice giving us champagne, berlins and stuff and all going all sorts in our names and I just sat down. We want to take up and I have to fasten my seatbelt and after awhile I have to wind up the window.

Response: Hoooo! (Laughter)

The above optimum illuminant medium of revelations of these human quirks has a direct positive impact on the audience based upon spectral characteristics of illuminative levels for investigations that are oriented to environment-and-behaviour considerations. This comedic show is endowed with sarcastic skills. It is one of satiric ways which at inception had the potential ability to expand the strategies of touching and reaching the unreached nooks and crannies of the global society to those who have this natural affection of these pathological lies. Though, pathological lies were orchestrated in a funny and exciting way, but the act of creations is meant to give moral sensibility. Basket Mouth reveals the lying nature of every individual in the society through his comic characters, the Queen's College girls, in the performance above. The girls take lies as a pleasurable activity that gives excitement and exaggerated views to their narratives or expressions. This lying symptomatic syndrome is particularly revealed in one of the Queen's College girls who narrated her travelling experience with her family to London for her colleagues. In order to make her narrative looks attractive or interesting, she employs an exaggerated lying device that gives account of her travelling experience. She expressed that during the course of

their taking up at airport in British Airways, she had to fasten her seatbelt and after a while wound up the window. Everybody knows that is impossible to wind up the windows in an airplane because of the atmospheric condition which it operates or plies. Basket Mouth intentionally uses this to publicly lampoon the lying nature that is almost a generic weakness in day-to-day activities of human endeavours. People tell lies for different reasons as the said lady does. Valuable information and excellent points you get here are transformational quivered methods that give insight to human weaknesses. The comedians are initiators of positive ideas of movements that can improve our society. Their inspirations for change are driven forces that champion the positive cause of achieving global unity and sincerity among people.

From Nigeria point of view, holding to the profession of truth or speaking truth to one another in this nation without any element of lies, will drive the nation to her promised land. This iota of truth promotes unity, brotherliness and peace in the nation. This is exactly what this study is trying to promote within Nigerian society and the global world in general. Lying to one another in order to make a point known subverts the truth. This subversion of truth can lead to different layers of corrupt practices which can lead the nation to a state of doom or ungovernable circumstance. This is why Basket Mouth frowns at lying in order to promote a moral value through his comic performance. The first two lines of our national pledge portray every citizen's solemn promises to the nation by be faithful, loyal, and honest. These outstanding virtues are pointing to one singular fact known as loyalty. Loyalty can be likened to faithfulness because faithfulness is an unparalleled quality of a loyal person. Somebody is seen as a faithful person, if he is steadfast, upright, and persistent in his allegiance and love to people and his country at large. This study reveals the need to develop people toward the important virtue of loyalty to the nation and global community in general. The pledge of loyalty to a nation means one can be depended upon and trusted to act in the interest of the entire nation. In this case, loyalty connotes reliability, that is, the quality of being reliable, trusted, and faithfully believed in one's nation's goals. It means one is completely faithful in one's allegiance to his country and likewise thorough in the service of one's duties. The pragmatic nature of lying can divide a family and the unity of a nation. When loyal people are told to do something meaningful for national growth and development, they will not only do it, but also make sure that it is done

according to the prescribed orders. They perform the jobs to the best of their knowledge and make sure that the outcomes are of a great success.

Besides this, one of the major factors that have contributed to acts of corruption in this nation and in several other organisations is lack of understanding of the virtues and the principles of loyalty. Rendering services to a nation without any element of unreasonable lies improves society in her social responsibilities. It helps the society to fulfil her dreams of excellent greatness.

Comedy habits of high creativity embody many of the fundamental principles of human relationships. These habits are the internalization of correct principles upon which enduring happiness and success are based. These foundational principles will help humanity to understand her habits better. Having a positive mental attitude will get individual and the society at large into the right place of global unity.

For this reason, the fact that this work can also be creative is often overlooked. But in order to discover oneness and totality, this study has to create the new overall structures of ideas, which are needed to express the harmony and beauty that can be found in comedy. Likewise, it has to create the sensitive modes of approach, which aids perception and thus makes possible both the testing of new ideas for their truth or falsity, and the revelation of new and unexpected varieties of facts. By this, the comedians have seen the fundamental need to discover and create something new that is wholly humorous to create an atmosphere of laughter. It is what very large numbers of people in all walks of life are seeking, when they attempt to escape the daily humdrum routine, by engaging in every kind of entertainment, excitement, and good emotional stimulations that give a positive healthy life-style. In this frame of mind, one does something to move the bodily pains that endanger humanity in her day-to-day affairs. It has helped to show difference between what actually happens currently and what is inferred from previous knowledge. From this difference, one is led to a new idea that accounts for the difference. And this process can go on indefinitely without beginning or ending in any field whatsoever.

Apart from stand-up comedy being a medium of satirising or soothing emotional feelings of the depressed people, it is also a way of releasing bottled emotional tensions which are injurious to the psycho-social temperaments of people. This

comedic strategy helps us to understand human behaviour better. It is a theoretical framework that consciously assists every individual in the society to resolve psycho-social problems that embattle humanity in every day realities. This is why the study lampoons the patterns of behaviour or societal follies that are destructive to humanity in some ways. They are patterns of behaviour because individual repetition of destructive behaviour reveals the existence of some important psycho-social challenges that had probably crept into individual lives for years without knowing. These are the problems or dysfunctions that have so much control over us. Human-beings are driven by desires, fears and conflicts which, often time, they are unconscious of. These are painful experiences and emotional depressions of unresolved conflicts, fears, despair, wounds and other sociological upheavals that have characterised human lives. The method of releasing these bottled emotions from psychoanalytic lens is called *projection* (Tyson1999). It is a device of ascribing fears, guilty desires and problems to someone believing to be the cause of these pains or actions. It is a relief way of getting out of psychological traumas. To collaborate this view, Basket Mouth speaks:

Performer:

Naija eh! Na him be the best country in Africa whether we like it or not, seriously no joke, seriously check am out.Go Yankee, natural disasters every now and then. Natural disasters tornadoes, hurricane this one, hurricane that one, earthquake, all types of things, snow go come full streets. Cars no fit drive well, accidents. Come on Naija nothing, only natural disaster we get na bad government and potholes. USA there, don do new city, you know where those Dubai dem level. New city you know how much it cost people wey give as dollars to build as contract as budget 22billion dollars to build New City. Now, no be to build them half way, now to build am all the way. Now we use 16 billion dollars use do NEPA,na him come even worst pass. NEPA no come even dey bring the light at all. Iam telling you, terrible. Don turn Lagos, the whole of Nigeria to nightclub. Youna dey get light for here now, for Lagos, light no dey dey. Our own no be say because of sins,na training wey them they do for their office,na him make we no dey get light sometimes.

Response: Haaaaaa! (Laughter)

Comedy draws its oral analysis from the full range of human experiences which approaches may be used to consider sociological challenges, such as corruption, poverty, family problems, and other forms of natural disasters that informed human behaviours. To Basket Mouth, the most popular challenges facing Nigerians are bad government and potholes. The Nigerian system of government is characterised by corruption and bad leadership. Nearly every sector of government and private organisations is corrupt. The public funds meant for national development via provision of social amenities and infrastructures are directed to personal purse of some groups of people in the country. This has largely led to loss of lives and property in the nation due to bad construction of roads and poor standard of living. Electric power failure is topical issue in the nation.

Apart from this, unqualified people are the ones managing our national resources and unable to put them into optimal use. Basket Mouth said this that “now we use 16 billion dollars use do NEPA, na him come even worst pass. NEPA no com even dey bring the light at all. I am telling you, terrible. Our own no be say because of sins, na training wey them they do for their office, na him make we no dey get light sometimes”. The sociological tensions are unconsciously acted out by the comedian through volcanic eruption of bottled emotional feelings that can lead to schizophrenic and hypochondriacal depressions if not expressed. Basket Mouth mockingly reveals societal malpractices that occur within our system of government in Nigeria. Ironic use of natural disasters, such as “tornado” “hurricane”, “earthquakes”, “tsunamis”, etc, to compare with Nigerian situations is a form of satire that portrays ever-present decadence that has rotten the systems. This means that Nigerian situations are worse than these natural disasters. This is why comedy has the ability to foster together disparate facets of human behaviours as an effective catalyst for the integration of satiric values that are often compartmentalised knowledge in solving human problems. The eclectic nature of comedy as portrayed above by Basket Mouth, allows viewing the challenges of many other areas of human endeavours. Many nations of the world nowadays are seriously groaning and threatening with the series of war, violence, and disasters, such as tornadoes, tsunamis, earthquakes, etc. but Nigeria case is a different ball game.

Based on these facts, comedy recognises that indiscriminate human activity has aggravated the devastating effects of the disasters that occur. Many human-beings have played into the gallery of destructions by fully supporting a system that exacerbates disasters. As the comedian states above, many disasters occur as a result of human careless activities. In many parts of the world, the effects of natural disasters have been drastically intensified by the underhanded dealings of unscrupulous individuals who feel that they are larger than the whole society. People have been forced to live in hazardous areas as a result of the socio-economic inequalities of contemporaneous existence. Some sets of people are selfish through their greedy exploitations that always put people in difficulties. These typhonic greedy exploitations have wreaked havoc on the lives of millions of Nigerians as revealed by Basket Mouth. According to him, the only natural disaster Nigeria gets is “bad government and potholes”. Mismanagement of natural and human resources is the order of the day in Nigeria. Mismanagement of national wealth in the area of financial expenditures by top government functionaries has put the whole nation into a mess. These are misnomers that have paraded Nigerian society.

In view of the increase in both the frequency and the destructiveness of these inflicting pains and imposed disasters, this study allows us to research the detail of human circumstances, so that people can get rid of the heartache problems that can totally paralyse human activities that might fully be taken into account in real life. It is very obvious that this contextual information will greatly affect the way in which the people (Nigerians) react to life’s issues. The course of events of comic actions will be further influenced by the personalities of the individuals involved in the comic-audience participations. When this detailed comic satiric effect has been achieved; people will independently allow making personal decisions within a realistic representation of human endeavours. This useful work cannot be properly done without using comic approaches, simply because comedy is one of the most powerful tools that allow people/audience to experience the feeling aspects of human condition, to achieve empathy. The singular fact about this matter is that, these sociological challenges at the disposal of the audience will inform the comic orchestration and by this, the audience will gain from seeing these factual understandings in human’s circumstances. The understanding of the background issues that condition behaviour and decisions is revealed. This is the way comedy enables people to begin to feel and understand states

of human actions. Comedy therefore provides a powerful learning experience in human endeavours. Its power is rooted in the aesthetic satire offered by the comedians. The proficient use of dramatic form necessitates the command of a symbolic language which represents real world.

Another motivated aspect of this comic rendition is the way it aesthetically portrays the physical appreciation of human in a satiric way. Some humans do not see their physical fitness as a natural endowment, rather than see it as a misnomer. Everyone in life is an embodiment of an outstanding natural beauty. The combination of physical qualities that makes individual pleasing and impressive to look at. It is a vision of beauty seen in everyone. This is why this study sees comic rendition as *a pleasing personal appearance or personal physical attractiveness*. This is another beauty of stand-up comic rendition. This is why the comic actor is seen here as a ‘beautician’ who consciously and artistically designs a good outlook to natural beauty in the eyes of individuals in the society. On this note, Gordons reveals that:

Performer:

Now have you noticed we have different kinds of banks in this country and all these banks stand for different kinds of woman. For instance, if you have a very tall woman, you call that kind woman ‘Skye Bank’ or ‘Zenith Bank’. But if you have brief one that minute ones all those ones wey Bible writes ‘Lo I am with you always’ if you have that kind babe, you call am ‘Microfinance Bank’ then if you have the bodatious one, that one wey they occupy space, matter if get that kind babe you call am ‘Oceanic Bank’. Alleluya! Then if you know she faithful, you call am ‘Fidelity Bank’. If you can trust am, you call am ‘Guarantee Trust Bank’. If na the one wey dey flex, she goes from A-B-C-D, you call am Intercontinental Bank... Ladies and gentlemen see! You don’t need to be slim in order to feel beautiful, whether RMD is wonderfully made or Obasanjo is fearfully made, it does not matter. We were all made. You have to respect your area. Hello! (Response) ‘Hi’ you don’t really need to be slim in order to feel very beautiful. What you need to do if you know say you are ‘Oceanic Bank’ that is you are bodatious, I beg do watin young people dey do...

Response: Haa! Haaa! (Laughter).

These reflective discussions, explanations and adaptation of actions above, are symbolic representations that exist in real life. When we are engaged with them, we constantly attempt to invest them with meanings, to make them intelligible in relation to our own biography. When this happens, elements of this internalised sensibility of our physiological endowments are vividly registered into our consciousness. This is the main reason in which comic creates paradigms of life in which variable can be examined for human development for healthy living. Comedy always gives a good healthy living in all circumstances.

Gordons satirically makes fun of women through their physiques to create a comic relief. Different women with different physiques are used as representations of different kinds of banks in this country. All these banks stand for different kinds of women. For instance, very tall women represent “Skye Bank” or “Zenith Bank”, minute ones “Microfinance”, fat women “Ocean Bank”, faithful women “Infidelity Bank”, trustworthy ones “Guarantee Trust Bank” and those unfaithful ones that go about committing whoredom or adultery are seen as “Intercontinental Bank”.

The comedian caricatures these women to create a humorous atmosphere of laughter but there are elements of realities in the truth sense of performance. The use of “Infidelity Bank” and “Guarantee Trust Bank” is meant to create a moral sensibility that gives a sense of social sanity to womenfolk in their day-to-day activities, especially in their matrimonial homes. Women are enjoined to be faithful, trustworthy, and honest to their husbands. In addition to this, Gordons sardonically mocks women who go about committing adultery. This is why he uses “Intercontinental Bank” as a portrayal of women who engage in extra marital affairs. This is a sexual behaviour considered to be immoral. Bringing into play, the use of “Skye Bank” and “Zenith Bank” against “Microfinance Bank” is to show the act of God’s beautification and creation on womenfolk. This means that every female should accept the way she is created by God. This is the reason the comedian says “Ladies and gentlemen see! You don’t need to be slim in order to feel beautiful, whether RMD is wonderfully made or Obasanjo is fearfully made, it does not matter. We were all made”. “Obasanjo”, the Ex-President of Nigeria and “RMD”, a notable figure in Nollywood in this country, are used by the comedian to drive home his points. The comedian proves that one’s physical appearance or carriage does not determine one’s destiny or future. These two

characters are assumedly not handsome but their physiques do not deprive them of their positions of greatness in life.

The stylisation of stand-up comedy above uses symbols which represent realities that convey meanings. The notions of naturalistic and stylised form are nurtured in a certain way that gives an emotional appeasement and at the same time distillation of spirit from human's excesses and flaws. Verisimilitudinous nature of comedy represents a slice of life to the audience as an appearance of reality and truth desire in life. It allows the audience to explore or communicate the essence of a situation in a satiric manner.

This study shows that Stand-up comedy has various strategies aimed at maintaining society of the present day and future. It has practically explained how depressions crop up more regularly in people with significant anger, despair and fear in their daily affairs. It reveals the importance of comedians' contact with their audience and how the importance of satiric performativity is artistically articulated. It talks about human weaknesses, attitudes, and taking charge of one's life through stand-up comedy. An entertaining and instructive way of inspiring participation of an audience in her own treatment is an essential fact. Creativity and humour are essential treatments in satirising societal follies.

In conclusion, this study of stand-up comedy examines the satiric and performative devices deployed by selected stand-up comedians in Nigeria with a view to determining the role of stand-up comedy as a veritable source of socio-political consciousness and a medium of social criticism. Its satiric performativity centres on how people laugh themselves out of follies. It is also an individual method of satiric therapy on how the individual takes charge of his/her own situations through comic laughter. Not only this, keeping up people's spirits with humour is indeed a salient aspect of the satire. This process is a device of tapping into one's body power to heal oneself.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study examines the satiric and performative devices deployed by selected stand-up comedians in Nigeria with a view to determining the role of stand-up comedy as a veritable source of socio-political consciousness and a medium of social criticism. It provides a shift from an emphasis on the individual understanding, self-knowledge and personal responsibility to an emphasis on the wider structures of the promotion of the society's well-being. A life-style model, focusing on behaviours is known to cause social upheavals and thus produce improvements in society by stimulating behaviour change.

This dissertation particularly advocates for national unity, love, peaceful atmosphere, good socioeconomic conditions and religio-political transparency. It also appeals to federal and local authorities, such as, Nigerian politicians, senior civil servants, religious leaders and other top government functionaries to improve the social welfare of Nigerian citizens by looking at the broader determinants of social well-being, like poverty, deprivation, poor housing, and environment. These leaders should work to improve people's welfare by ensuring that the physical, social and financial conditions in which people live are satisfactory. They are responsible for the care and well-being of the people. Here, comedians as satirists have helped individuals make informed choices, to establish a social conscious life-style and to build a system of values through comic contents of theatrical exhibitions.

In all these performances, serious national issues are presented through the use of symbolism, caricature, subtle irony and humour. The performances are generally characterised by vocal dexterity, mimesis, blazer costume, zig-zag movement, subject-constrained facial and bodily gestures, audience-dependent improvisation and interactivity.

The stand-up comedies of Basket Mouth, I Go Dye and Gordons, which are a veritable mode of socio-political criticism in Nigeria, rely on nuanced deployment of both performative and linguistic devices which provoke laughter and aesthetic pleasure. Thus, these versions of comic performance function both as a cathartic device through

which psychological and physical strains are eased out, and as a medium of critiquing social problems.

Comedy here gives an insight to man's problems and likewise proffers lasting solutions through stand-up comedy. During its rendition, the paralinguistic features and its theatrical orchestrations are satiric tools used to give insight to human follies in order to create a healthy positive life-style. This is why Afolabi (2000) says that research has shown that the artists engaged in these arts usually have radiant health, very sharp reflexes and long life, as a result of the perpetual state of mental and physical alertness that their art imposes on them.

Its intellectual stimulation gives rational sensibility, sense value and cognitive soundness. By this, stand-up comedy actual performance eradicates any form of depressions that may affect man's physiological physiognomy and psychological soundness. Its satiric power or therapy works on human's nature to give radiate outlook and emotional steadiness. It has drastically helped to heal our world in various ways as clearly stated in the previous chapters. It goes beyond intellectual discourse. It gives hope and sound mind from psychological traumas and psychological depressions. It satirizes any form of abnormalities in the society and gives practical life experience in reaction to situations in a healthy manner.

However, the study of this research work is aimed at giving individual the opportunities to learn the general way in which comedy leads to physical, mental, social, and emotional growth. In this regard, comedy aims at developing the individuals in Nigerian society, Africa in extension, and the world at large greatly. It provides people the avenue to grow and develop physically, psychologically, socially and emotionally through its well-structured performances and programmes selected to develop humanity in every ramification for healthy living. It has drastically enhanced the notion of understanding why people behave in society. The research work also reveals much about how comedy through theatrical shows has improved personal development by promoting and producing healthy society. The comedians have full knowledge of how to assist the individuals to change bad behaviours, live peacefully in society and how to have good physical outlook to life's situations. On this note, the entire society will be highly productive in life in all ramifications of human existence for healthy positive life-style.

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