

EXAMINING MC EDO PIKIN'S ART AND SOCIAL MEDIA THEATRE PERSONA AS PROTOTYPE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING THROUGH CREATIVEPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

The growing indices of poverty in Africa are alarming, thus necessitating an increased quest for creative means to change the tide. Adopting the Creative Imitation Theory (CIT), the study uses historicocritical, content analysis, key person interview (KPI) and direct observation methods to investigate the potential of harnessing creativepreneurship among youths in job or wealth creation and self-empowerment. The researchers use a Nigerian comedian and social media celebrity, MC Edo Pikin as a case study. The article analyses how social media could be leveraged by a creative artist for self-realization, social impact and economic emancipation. It unpacks how MC Edo Pikin through the instrumentality of his art as a skit-maker cum comedian, satirizes emerging socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural issues in Nigeria, yet maximizes motifs, creative branding, and innovation for entertainment and economic empowerment. The study argues that by embracing creativepreneurship by Nigerian and African youths, a route to exiting excruciating poverty would have been found and sustained outside waiting for a 'government job' remit. However, the study identifies possible limitations to the actualization of creativepreneurship, including a wrong application of creativity, non-commitment to personal skills development, inconsistency of vision, and lack of or/non-implementation of clear policy directions for the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in Nigeria. Given this, the study suggests that a well-articulated interface between social media and creativepreneurship offers a realistic alternative to human capital development, revenue generation, sustainable living, and poverty eradication.

Keywords:

CCIs, CIT, Creativepreneurship, MC Edo Pikin, social media, sustainable living.

Introduction

Nigeria is a country with diverse cultures, languages, and beliefs. It is the most populous black nation on earth, with over 200 million people (Omoera and Bardi 2020: 223). It is home to over 270 accredited universities in addition to polytechnics and colleges of education. Many thousands of graduates from these universities are leaving with nothing to do with their lives across the country. Apart from growing insecurity (Omoera and Aiwuyo 2017: 244), the most important issue facing Nigeria is most likely a shortage of jobs (Omoera 2013: 39-40). It is a challenge for many individuals, regardless of age, to obtain gainful employment. The absence of sufficient and profitable work has left the country with multifaceted difficulties (Ominiya 2016: 80). With a majority of Nigeria's young between the ages of 18 and 35 being less productive or not engaged in profitable jobs, unemployment has become endemic in the country's economic structure (Ayinla and Ogunmeru 2018: 22). Kakwagh and Ikwuba (2010) claim that a wide range of socio-economic categories in Nigeria have been impacted by unemployment among young people. Both highly and lowly educated people are affected, but those with less education and from low-income families are more affected. Young Nigerians are forced to turn to unconventional means of subsistence due to a lack of job possibilities and uncertainty about the future. Some even choose to work in extremely irregular informal jobs (232), thus, impacting the quest for attainment of sustainable living in the country negatively. It is within this context that this article examines MC Edo Pikin's art and social media theatre persona as a prototype for sustainable living through creativepreneurship.

1. Emerging Concept of Creativepreneurship

An individual capable of working or desires to work, and depends on employment for their survival but cannot find a job is said to be unemployed (Omoniya 2016: 82). This situation could be traced to several factors. The growing population is one important factor. Nigeria's population has been growing at a rapid pace. The number of young people has increased dramatically due to population growth. Consequently, the supply of available jobs cannot match the growing number of job seekers. The lack of employable skills brought about by unsuitable school curricula is another factor. According to analysts, job seekers' abilities typically do not align with businesses' requirements and demands in Nigeria and Africa (Kakwagh and Ikwuba 2010: 232). State governments in Nigeria face challenges when it comes to hiring youths in the already overcrowded civil service because the system is unable to handle the Federation Accounts allotment committee's progressively decreasing monthly allocation.

Employment is steadily disappearing despite a thriving economy where employment is created with greater government investment (Akinboyo 2020:19). The situation may be attributed to wrong government policy formulation and implementation that culminates in the mismanagement of resources. This is evident in the fact that the majority's level of living is appalling because political officeholders have mismanaged the oil wealth, despite the discovery of crude oil and the enormous revenue from its sales (Ayinla and Ogunmeru 2018: 23). The most unsettling aspect is that youth

unemployment in Nigeria is characteristically perceived as a social issue rather than an economic one. As a result, policies in Nigeria incorporate young people into the adult population. Many policymakers hold that youth do not have unique social and economic requirements based on age. The growing issue of street youth across the nation is a result of these social and economic demands going unmet (Kakwagh and Ikwuba 2010: 234). This is blanketing the obvious that most adult population tend to depend on their young ones whom they have invested in to care for them. Thus, a larger population of Nigerians has been thrown into a dire situation of living below the poverty line.

Given the precarious situation, the call for entrepreneurship as the way out has heightened relatively recently (Ordu 2024:12). He conceptualizes his idea of entrepreneurship in the context of the new entrebusiness education solution as a critical means of confronting un(der)employment in Nigeria (Ordu 2024: 41). Several efforts have been made by both private individuals and the government to ensure that the youth population of Nigeria is gainfully engaged in sustainable living. The Nigerian government has launched numerous initiatives over the past 30 years to increase job creation and reduce social vices linked to unemployment. The National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), the Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN) programme, the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), and the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), among others, are a few of these initiatives. Additionally, the Nigerian federal government established new credit organizations and lending programmes like the Bank of Industry (BOI), the National Economic Reconstruction Fund, and the Small and Medium Enterprise Equity Investment Scheme to aid in the development and promotion of entrepreneurship in the nation (Akinboyo 2020: 5).

Mbhele (2012) conceptualizes entrepreneurship as identifying, assessing, and seizing opportunities to launch new products and services that were not previously available (94). Okoli and Okoli (2013) assert that entrepreneurship is the process by which a person creates a novel strategy for an established firm or idea, or a distinctive method of introducing a good or service to the market by innovatively utilizing resources while taking risks. It also involves a demonstration of how human intelligence may be effectively manipulated, as seen in artistic performances (148). In other words, entrepreneurship is the process of developing, creating, and constructing something valuable out of almost nothing, or producing and distributing something of value that benefits people, organizations, communities, and society. The purpose of entrepreneurship is to expose people to openings/pursuits that may lead to self-reliance, which in turn motivates them to make money and become independent. They get enough experience from entrepreneurial endeavours to be imaginative and inventive when spotting new business prospects (Okoli and Okoli 2013: 148). These submissions indicate that there is hardly any form of entrepreneurship without creativity. Consequently, it becomes imperative to assess the concept of creativity.

Mazeh (2020) writes that the process of creation that encompasses several stages of growth is called creativity, and life itself depends on it. It is the combination of various mental, environmental, social, and personal aspects, and it generates novel solutions for hypothetical or real-world problems in every area of life (1). It might also refer to a degree of originality in behaviour, creativi-

ty, statistical rarity, or uniqueness in solutions to a particular problem (2). This school of thought is buttressed by Dacey and Madaus' (1969) study on creativity which points out that four requirements must be met by a creative product: uniqueness, appropriateness, transformation, and condensation (56). Creativity also includes the willingness to transform stale concepts and methods into new, creative ones (Mazeh 2020: 2). This aligns with Joe's (2022) position that production does not need to be entirely original for creativity to be seen in it. Rather, there should be freedom to make creative decisions that can lead to an effort that exhibits some level of novelty or inventive outcome in appearance and underlying ideas.

It is important to note that an outcome that exhibits originality must also fit the particular production context (Joe 2022: 51). Entrepreneurship has been divided into various groups, namely, prospects with strong growth, technology-supported, and venture capital backing (Diandra and Azmy 2022: 238). Attempting a meaning for entrepreneurship in the creative sector, Bruin (2005) states that it is the process of giving creative inputs or creativity more value. Adding value could comprise an "entrepreneurial value chain" in addition to fusing creative and mundane inputs (145). Therefore, creativepreneurship is the ability and willingness of individuals to identify, assess, and seize opportunities through artistic activities while leveraging their skills and talents to create and construct something valuable out of almost nothing, or produce and distribute something valuable from stale concepts that benefit people and communities and, in turn, earn financial independence and self-reliance.

1.1 Methodology

This study adopts an eclectic qualitative approach that encompasses historicocritical, content analysis, key person interviewing (KPI), and direct observation methods to investigate youth creativepreneurship in the development of jobs or wealth and self-empowerment. The historicocritical method stems from a historical but critical survey of a situation. In the case of this study, we are interested in historicizing how creativepreneurship can be used to spawn sustainable living among the youth in Nigeria where there is an employment crisis. Secondly, we deploy content analysis because it is a research method for drawing reliable and accurate conclusions from texts—or other significant material—about the settings in which they are used. As a method, content analysis calls for certain steps. It can be learned and separated from researchers' authority. As a method of research, content analysis offers fresh perspectives, deepens one's comprehension of a certain phenomenon, or guides actionable decisions (Krippendorff 2004: 18). Thirdly, we deployed key person interview (KPI) by way of interviewing the subject of the study: MC Edo Pikin to highlight some of his visions and motivations concerning the issue of creativepreneurship.

The selection of MC Edo Pikin for the study is premised on three distinguishing parameters. First, his training in the art, his reasonable years of experience as a comedian and then, his rating in Nigeria's fast-growing and competitive stand-up comedy industry. Unlike many practising comedians in Nigeria, MC Edo Pikin is a graduate of Theatre and Media Arts from Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma,

Nigeria. This training is evident in his approach to stand-up comedy. He does not engage in mere farcical performances, a common trait among other stand-up comedians who may lack professional training and understanding of the essence of art and creativity. Rather, speaking to cogent social issues and in some cases, truth to power, is a trademark that makes his art unique. MC Edo Pikin is highly rated among contemporaries and fans within and beyond the comedy industry. Between 2020 and 2024, he was bequeathed several awards for his exploits in the industry. Postgraduate students at the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria gave him an award for his contributions to mankind and society. In addition to this is the Glamour Awards' most fashionable comic of the year and the I-Glide concept's comedian of the year. Benson Idahosa University's Faculty of Art and Education named him Edo State's Best Comedian, among many other awards (Agbana 2019).

In terms of years of experience, the study set out to investigate the idea of creativepreneurship regarding the number of years a creative has invested in a given art, how well such creative has weathered the economic intricacies of his given art trade and to what extent such creative has gone to earn a living from the art while creating opportunities for others to earn a living through creativity. Though other comedians may comfortably fit into this particular selection criteria, MC Edo Pikin's experience of more than 10 years in active comedy coupled with the factors earlier stated makes him a good fit for the study. The interview questions are generated from the aim and are designed to proffer answers to the problem of the study. In conducting the interview, the researchers considered all indices of the term 'creativepreneurship' as reflected within the context of the study's argument.

Lastly, the phrase 'observation method' ostensibly refers to observing and characterizing a subject's behaviour that starts with seeing the phenomenon until an intuition or understanding is obtained. One of the keenest qualities of researchers is observation. It is through observation that researchers gather information about the world around them. The human eye has long been a fundamental instrument for observation. Researchers use various technologies, including cameras, video cameras, tape recorders, and more. But in this study, we called it 'direct observation.' It indicates that we did not rely on assistants to do the job. Rather, we conducted the process ourselves (Kumar 2022: 1). These methods are combined in the study to achieve the objective which is to ascertain the possibility of attaining sustainable living through creativepreneurship as well as determining its feasibility as a sustainable alternative to dependence on government-paid jobs, using the art and acts of MC Edo Pikin as a template of analysis and discussion. It is imperative to note that extrapolations in the study's analysis reflect the responses of MC Edo Pikin, who granted the researchers express permission to apply the same for knowledge generation and dissemination.

1.2 Theoretical Infrastructure

Several theories will inevitably be used as a foundation to explain the characteristics, workings, expressions, and variables of entrepreneurship. This study adopts the Creative Imitation Theory (CIT) as its theoretical anchor. The 'concentric circles' of economic boom and depression, create

the 'social climate,' which shapes public attitudes toward incentives for corporate undertakings. The CIT promoted by scholars emphasized the significance of change and how it influences individuals' pursuit, reaction, and utilization of chances within a specific society during a given period. The theory's proponents' argument centres on what scholars tagged as the 'movement from poverty to wealth.' In this vein, entrepreneurship is seen as common among those who experience marginalization, prejudice, victimization from their environment, and political turmoil (Muogbo and John-Akamelu 2018: 6). More empirical studies, however, have been conducted recently that emphasized the benefits of Creative Imitation (CI). For instance, it was found that in China's high-tech businesses, CI outperforms pure imitation in terms of financial success, even though both lead to market performance when supported by marketing capabilities. This is true even though new features of CI products or services take longer to gain the favour of customers in the short term. Eventually, though, these new features result in an improvement in financial performance (Nguyen 2019: 13). This leads to the conclusion that rather than creating a demand, 'creative imitation' fulfils an existing one: The market has already been determined since demand has already been generated by the time creative imitators start working (Corporate Learning Network 2021). The implication for a study in creativepreneurship is that the artist here is examined from the business lens that posits his art trade as a profitable venture. However, the creative artist is not under pressure to create demand as the creative industry has established that, but has the responsibility of developing concepts through creativity that addresses consumer (audience) needs through improving on already existing cultural/theatrical/entertainment forms that would in turn result in market viability and financial success. When attained, this becomes a platform for economic sustainability for the creativepreneur, his/her art and invariably, other players in the cultural and creative industries' (CCIs) matrix.

2. The Convergence of Social Media and Cultural and Creative Industries

For several individuals, social media serves as a convenient way to stay connected to the outside world, since they depend on it for quick access to information and conversation both inside and outside of their immediate surroundings. Scholars, however, have different opinions about social media. Some define social media as websites that allow users to build profiles and see each other's relationships. Others think of social media as web-based applications with features that facilitate sharing, relationships, groups, chats, and profiles (Ehiemua and Omoera 2015:186). Another argument is that social media are websites that facilitate networking and engagement or a conglomeration of information technologies (Wolf, Sims, and Yung 2018: 3). To strengthen their case, Taprial and Kanwar (2012) clarify that, contrary to popular assumption, social media includes all platforms that facilitate the production, sharing, and exchange of user-generated information. These consist of many networking platforms and websites such as Facebook and X. Examples include social book-marking sites, blogs, microblogs, networking sites, forums, and groups on the internet (6). Social media platforms facilitate the interactive web by promoting user participation.

People engage in, contribute to, and create content in a range of formats as a means of communication with their social network, other users, and the wider public. Thus, the resources, exchanges, and services that facilitate interactions between individuals with similar interests might be seen as social media (Mardiana 2016: 2; Omoera and Guanah 2023:8-10). Despite these differences of opinion, the production and exchange of knowledge is a noteworthy and consistent element in their submissions. Nein (2017) concedes that many Facebook executives prefer the word 'sharing.' The rationale is that sharing and exchanging knowledge connects individuals with like interests (192). Thus, indicating that no matter the angle one views the idea of social media, it must incorporate these two functions.

On the other hand, a report by Culture Action Europe explains that the term cultural and creative industries (CCIs) refer to a group of businesses that derive their start from an individual's creativity, skill, and aptitude and have the potential to generate money and jobs through the development and use of intellectual property (1). Referring to CCIs in a slightly different way, Damian, Cedillo and Sanchezl posit that the term "creative-cultural industry" and its connection to the knowledge-based economy refer to sectors of the economy that integrate the development, manufacturing, and promotion of cultural and intangible creative content (2023:100). It is pertinent to note that jobs, economic growth, social justice, and sustainable development are all propelled by the cultural and creative sectors and industries, collectively known as the cultural and creative industries ecosystem (European Commission 2022: 1). Skogland and Jonsson (2012) observe that the combination that takes advantage of the blurring lines between the following categories gave rise to the CCIs: state-owned and commercial, public and private, creative arts and cultural industries, freedom and comfort, citizen and consumer, political and personal (183). Scholars argue that we have entered a 'new economy' in recent decades when competition is based less on cost and conformity and more on qualitative, symbolic, and cultural factors.

The CCIs are one of the numerous branches of this new economy, encompassing industries like neo-artisanal manufacturing, cultural goods and services, high-tech, and finance. The CCIs are described conceptually as being structured in wide networks of enterprises and flexible and competitive labour marketplaces, in addition to symbol, quality, and culture. It has been demonstrated that the networking component influences the significance of particular locations and geographic clusters where creativity and invention are abundant (Skogland and Jonsson 2012: 182). Hence, the networking component is the convergent point of social media and CCIs. Flew (2018) submits that the relationship between digital and social media and the cultural and creative industries has been close in practice, even though discussions about digital technologies and CCIs have often taken parallel paths. It is now crucial to think of the CCIs as being part of a larger digital economy, but one where creativity is still valued highly and where the academic disciplines that critically evaluate developments in the CCIs—such as the arts, media, and design—retain a crucial role in how we conceptualize social media phenomena like algorithmic culture and the "sharing economy" (13).

As earlier stated, production, sharing, and exchange of user-generated content are the fundamental functions of social media. This implies that for CCIs to thrive, they must leverage the flexibility and capacity of social media to connect individuals with interest in their products. It is on this basis that creative artists (creativepreneurs) who are engaged in content creation have made it an active part of their trade to generate and sustain relevance on social media. Thus, high social media relevance has become a yardstick for measuring the level of an artist's social impact and relatively, income generation. Olanrewaju (2024) contends that Nigeria's performing arts industry has untapped potential and room to develop, but it also confronts several obstacles. It is a subset of the creative industries that include spoken word art, dance, theatre, stand-up comedy, acrobatics, and other genres. It is a significant industry with enormous potential to create jobs, support cultural tourism, strengthen national values, and produce income. One of the main characteristics that distinguish it from other industries is that it is centred on live performances. In terms of innovation, intellectual property, symbolic goods or symbolic meaning, use value, and manufacturing techniques, it is also a sector that exemplifies the many characteristics of the creative industries (2). In fact, in the precise productive nature and other areas, CCIs can provide work for others and self-employment. Using ICTs at the corporate level has significantly increased this productive sector in recent years. Components of the dynamic development are CCIs (Damian, Cedillo and Sanchez 2023:100).

Recently, many Nigerian creative artists have leveraged social media to grow their careers, market their skills, and as well attract deals that would not have come their way if the opposite was to be the case. There is currently a rapid emergence of self-made artists on social media, who may not have made it through the rigours, turns, and intricacies of the entertainment industry to the big stage. At the top of the list of beneficiaries of the convergence of social media and CCIs are comedians, skit makers, musicians, and other creative artists who through the use of intellectual property and the development of their creativity, skill, and aptitude generate money and jobs.

Highlighting the significance of the convergence of social media and youth-propelled creative industries, Guanah and Okowa-Nwaebi (2022) note that, acquiring knowledge and skills alone is insufficient; to be hired, you must market your services to the world. This is why visibility is essential. The main and most affordable way to do this is through social media. Social media makes it simple and inexpensive to promote whatever interests one may have, when such advertisements are run in print media, online, and real-world establishments. These methods allow for the quick and efficient contact of potential clients and customers. The fact that Nigeria has 43 million social network members as of 2021 and that number is expected to rise to 103 million users presents an opportunity for youths (69). They further claim that social media platforms have consistently shown to be efficient means of facilitating communication between buyers (consumers) and sellers (service providers, clients) using Don Jazzy as an example. Don Jazzy, the creator of the Mavin Record Company, reveals how his label discovered Ayra Starr and Rema, two well-known singers whose songs are widely recognized and trending. He claims to have found them on Instagram.

As a result, Don Jazzy advises upcoming musicians to use social media to advertise themselves, as record label executives are too busy to see live performances as they were in the past (Guanah and Okowa-Nwaebi 2022: 69). Hence, Wawrowski and Otola opine that entrepreneurs can benefit from highly developed technology and intellectual lifestyles thanks to the creative economy. An increasingly vibrant and lucrative segment of the domestic economy is creative organizations. Their main objective is to reach their full creative potential, which entails integrating institutional capital, culture, society, and human resources. Compared to its traditional counterpart, the creative industry is less vulnerable to financial and economic disasters. Such business endeavours require social media marketing to ensure steady growth. They can modify their products to meet the demands of the receivers because of their connection with the public and customers. There will be both tangible and intangible advantages to the heightened emphasis on creative fields (2020:11)

3. Brief Profile of MC Edo Pikin

Jonathan Agbonjor Gbadamosi popularly known as MC Edo Pikin is from Ihievbe in Owan East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. He is a graduate of Theatre and Media Arts from Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. He has blossomed to become a stand-up comedian who performs in the theatre business and the Nigerian entertainment industry generally. He started his comedic career in 2014, and one of the biggest influences on him was his direct elder brother, Bernard Koboko Gbadamosi. His credits include performances at *Voltage of Hype*, *Bovi's Naughty by Nature*, *Supernova Live Concert*, and *Gbadamosi Agbonjor Jonathan Undiluted*, his well-liked stand-up comedy show. The humorous comedian is a gifted, imaginative, and accomplished Nigerian skit-maker with an impressive career trajectory. MC Edo Pikin is well-known on social media as 'Ogakpatakpata,' a nickname he earned for his inventive, hilarious, and educational comic performances. With an estimated net worth of more than USD 500,000, MC Edo Pikin is considered one of the richest and most prominent comedians in Nigeria ("Who is Writer").

3.1 MC Edo Pikin and Creativepreneurship for Sustainable Living

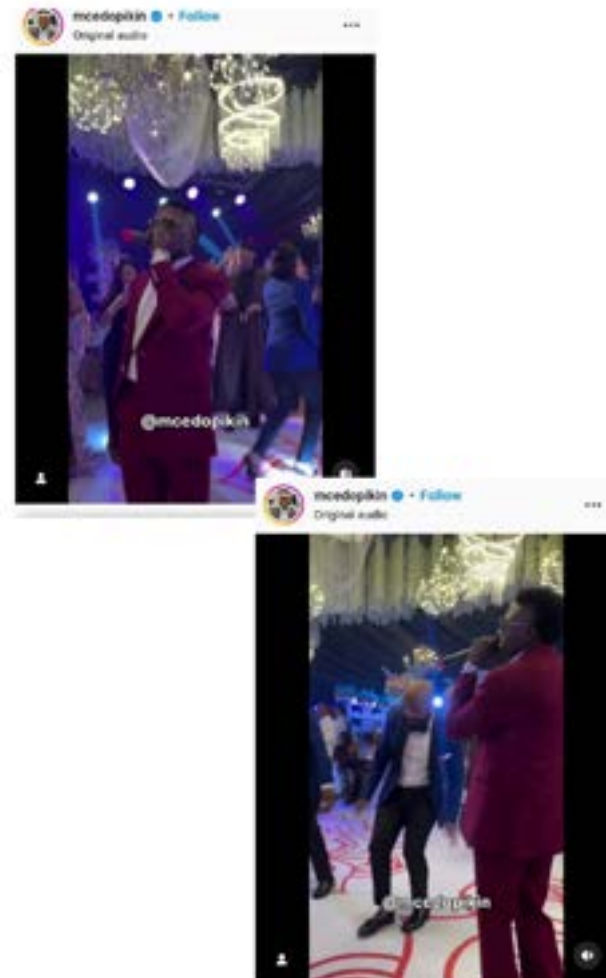
A close observation of the trajectory of MC Edo Pikin's art suggests that apart from mere entertainment as a comedian, he has charted a career path for himself as a content creator, musician, compere and social commentator/analyst whose works address issues that crisscross political, educational, socio-economic, health, and other vital aspects of human existence.

Diagram 1: Screenshot of MC Edo Pikin's Music Video on TikTok



According to Gbadamosi Jonathan (MC Edo Pikin), in an interview with the researchers in 2024, the art of comedy comes naturally as he was first recognized and addressed as a comedian during school days when he stood out during a school “Social Friday” in 2004. This shot him into the limelight among his peers and informed his decision to make a living out of the art. MC Edo Pikin clarified that getting admitted to study Theatre and Media Arts at Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, made comedy a lucrative business for him as he rode on the efficacy of his art to cater for his educational needs from the second year to the point of graduation. Thus, marking the beginning of his creativepreneurial life.

Diagram 2: Screenshot of MC Edo Pikin as an Event Compere



Beyond that, as a creativepreneur or creative producer, he has offered opportunities to other creative minds to leverage his platform for both local and international exposure. This intentional drive of his serves as the motivation for his venture into skit-making and social media content creation. MC Edo Pikin noted the need to stay in touch with current trends, and changing modes of comedy and remain marketable (MC Edo Pikin in an interview with the researchers in 2024). At a point, it became difficult for comedians and performers who had little social media presence to attract jobs. Hence, his resolution to leverage his training as a theatre and media artist to salvage his career from being atrophied. As a creativepreneur whose means of sustainable livelihood depend on art, diversification became very necessary. So, he delved into skits and social media content making as well as events compère work. Thus, trebling his streams of income aligns with Phay's submission that income diversification is one of the most common aspects of risk management and coping strategies for people in developing countries (3). Adding a unique dimension that sets him apart from his contemporaries in skit making, he ensures that growing creativepreneurs are given room to optimise their potential by constant features in their productions circulated on his social media platforms. They can actualize

their dreams and in the long run, end up becoming financially independent cum self-reliant. The image below is a testament to this.

Diagram 3: Screenshot of MC Edo Pikin's Content Streamed on BBC News Pidgin



The image above is from content created with Mc lamda Saint which was streamed on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News Pidgin verified Facebook handle on March 29, 2021. This also attests to the fact that MC Edo Pikin maximizes the wide distribution ability of social media for relevance and promotion of self and others. The content is a creation that seeks to admonish the youth population against putting themselves through unnecessary pressure as a result of unwarranted comparison with peers, which could lead to an undesirable end. He ends the piece by saying that every family has its problems. Therefore, none should envy another as you may not know where the person is coming from. Here, one sees how MC Edo Pikin leverages the growth of his creativepreneural proteges to remain relevant and expand the scope of his audience. Technically, this ensures that his industry rating remains high. And, of course, it has a direct impact on his earnings/income from the art. MC Edo Pikin, in an interview with the researchers in 2024, contended that remaining relevant in a highly competitive creative industry like that of Nigeria requires a lot of creativity and hard work. In his words, "To get to stardom is not the problem but to remain in stardom. If you go to stardom, you will fall but when you grow to stardom, you remain a star." This implies that real and sustainable stardom comes with a commitment to professional growth and this, in turn, reflects in the level of success that a creativepreneur enjoys both socially and economically.

MC Edo Pikin's concerted effort towards social conscientization and re-orientation, targeted at moving his audience from the point of inertia to an active end for emancipation from the poverty caused by a dependant mindset, to job creation and self-reliance results in his creation of a skit with the following dialogue;

Man: Ah ha, e don die?

Edo Pikin: E don die o

Man: Wetin kill am?

Edo Pikin: Self entitlement. E dey always de get one uncle

We e get, we no gree help am or one friend we e

get we no fit give am. And e no dey ever get and

e no dey ever give. If you manage to send am money,

e go say, "thanks, seen".

Man: All these things, na im kill am?

Edo Pikin: Na im kill am o

(Moments later)

Man: You see laziness, self-entitlement, and ungrateful people...

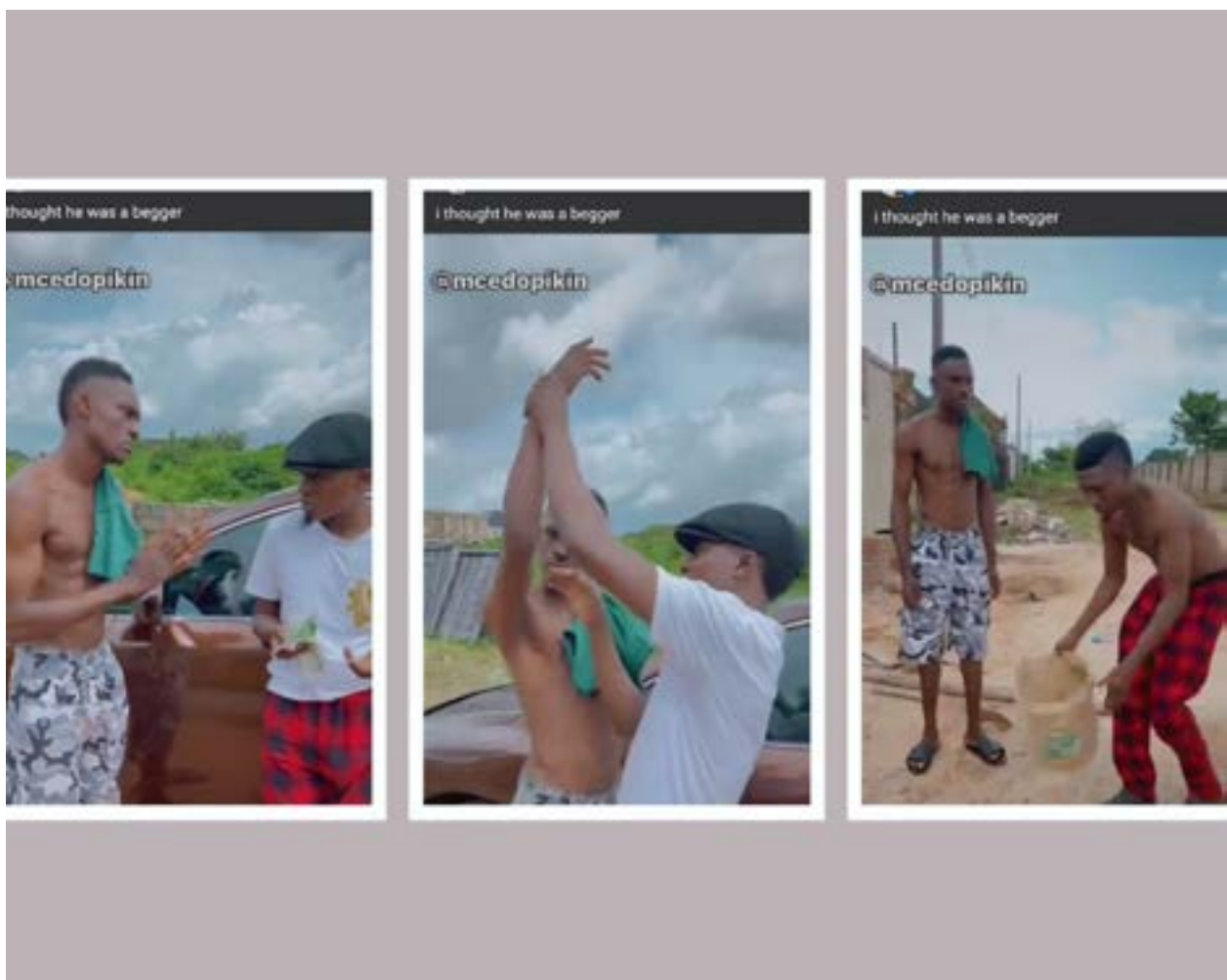
Birds of the same feather.

A close look at the above would reveal that the intention is to portray that nothing pays one better than earnings from one's hard-earned labour as a redundant lifestyle that is reliant on others for survival would end up being frustrated. So, to avoid such a scenario, MC Edo Pikin encourages his audiences, which are mainly youth, to put themselves to task in whatever endeavour of life they are engaged in to have a self-sustainable living. Despite acclaimed success as a creativepreneur, MC Edo Pikin submitted that the most difficult aspect of his art/trade is the "creative block." He explained a circumstance wherein a creative goes blank. That is, find it impossible to generate and develop ideas for production and dissemination to the ever-waiting audience (MC Edo Pikin in an interview with the researchers in 2024). Furthermore, according to him, the "catch of stardom" that distracts and ends up reducing creativity could deal a great blow to an artist's viability and relevance. Thus, reflecting

negatively in the traffic of fans and clients the creativepreneur attracts and in turn, affects their ability to earn and sustain a living through their art. Another difficulty MC Edo Pikin mentioned is that of limited resources that rob many creatives of the opportunity to turn ideas into lucrative art businesses (MC Edo Pikin in an interview with the researchers in 2024). Hence, the need for increased and sustained government and private investment in the cultural and entertainment sector which would in the long run boost the sector's already existing capacity for job and wealth creation and distribution.

The content creation advocacy approach of attaining sustainable living by the vibrant youth population triggers the next skit by MC Edo Pikin. Herein, he is seen counting some currency notes and then, he is approached by an able-bodied young man soliciting for alms. This leads him to examine the assumed beggar and discover that he is physically fit. As a result of this knowledge, he takes the young man to a building site where he joins the labourers to work while encouraging the young man to follow suit.

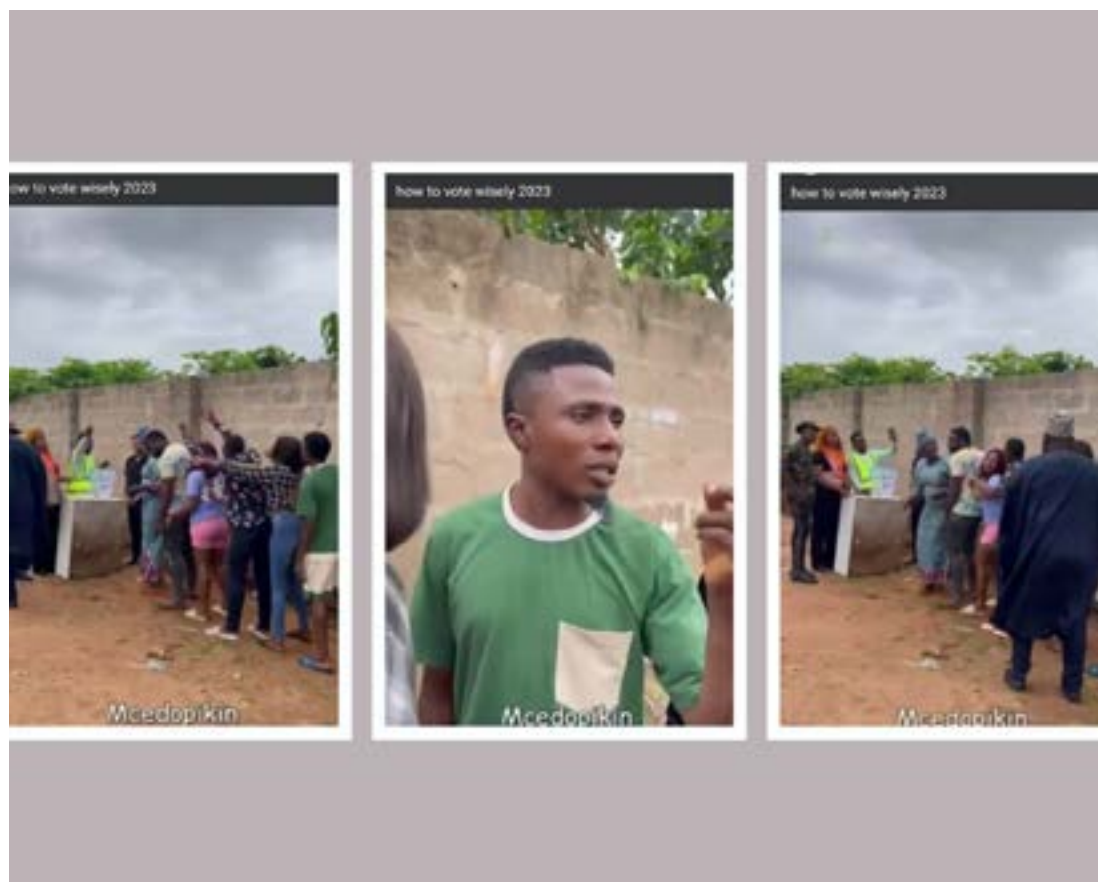
Diagram 4: Screenshot of Edo Pikin's Skit Titled I Thought He Was a Beggar



The creator - MC Edo Pikin ends the skit by narrating that many youths are lazy because they want to leverage the hard work of others. He adds that if all ants join an ant that discovers a particular point where sugar lays to lick it, there would be no more sugar. Conversely, if each of them goes out to find their sugar, there will be enough sugar for everyone's use and satisfaction. Hence, the scarcity of resources for sustainable living is a product of dependence on a few or a single person/source. But when everyone is involved in the creation of wealth, sustainable living will be achieved with enough to spread to everyone. MC Edo Pikin emphasizes that "comedy and skit making is a multi-billion-naira industry today in Nigeria." "I earn a living from creating content. I have about fifty (50) people who work for me and they get paid too. I also employ more hands in my productions and they are paid at the end of the day." Invariably, the money circulates in society as earners apply the same to sustain their living and that of their dependents.

Politically, MC Edo Pikin has been creatively vocal in addressing pertinent issues emanating from Nigeria's polity. In the build-up of activities to the 2023 general elections, he came up with content shared on his verified Facebook handle *@mcedopikin*.

Diagram 5: Screen of Skit Titled How to Vote Wisely in 2023



Here, he urges Nigerians to avoid acts of violence and vote wisely. The skit emphasized that their choices or decisions in the now which are tantamount to the presence or absence of sustainable living for the common man for the next four years. Not left out of issues addressed in the creation is the electoral umpire - the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), security agencies and their agents as well as political actors. He succinctly transmits a message that all should eschew corruption and manipulation of the process for the betterment of the country. Beyond this, MC Edo Pikin has been able to grow and sustain his comedy shows which are money-spinning events through creative adverts and reels and attracting sponsorship deals and ambassadorial roles for products and brands. Today, he has become a household name and an enigma that requires studying as a template for sustainable living through creativepreneurship or creative pursuit.

4. Limitations and Conclusion

There are certain limitations to the analyses that are offered in this paper. This study is conducted on creativepreneurship in Nigeria with a spotlight on the comedy industry which is a subset of the entertainment industry. To determine if social media is imperative for sustainable living by creatives, it could be worthwhile to beam searchlight on other creative enterprises that constitute the cultural and creative industries. In the event of a need to further this study, our objective would be to show how social media use relates to the worth and financial performance of creative ideas and businesses in other subsets of the cultural and creative industries.

Cultural and creative industries (CCIs) have started receiving global attention as critical to the future of the world economy. With the decline in crude oil reserves and revenues accrued to it and other natural resources, coupled with its attendant effect on the global poverty index, the need to diversify has become imperative for both government and individuals. The place to look toward now is CCIs. We examined the art and social media theatre persona of MC Edo Pikin. And discovered that although it could be painstaking and highly intellectual, therein lays an untapped goldmine for talented individuals who seek to chart a career path for themselves outside the public service and in the long run groom themselves to become self-employed, socially relevant and financially buoyant. Talent identification and development processes or mechanisms must be put in place in Nigerian educational curricula to unearth the hidden potential of teeming youths and provide leadership that would avert abortion and the misapplication of such.

This, therefore, points to the need for strong policy development and effective implementation strategy in Nigeria. The China example could be learned from and where possible, adopted and adapted in this regard. China adopted the CCI policy rhetoric most unexpectedly. The hybrid concept of cultural creative industries was widely adopted in China with the policy goals of generating new industries in local and regional economies, lowering China's cultural trade imbalance with the West, and reducing the reliance of media and cultural institutions on the government. As concentrated areas of cultural production and consumption, creative clusters like Shanghai's Tianzifang and Beijing's 798 Art Zone emerged (Flew 2018:5). Consequently, the already thriving creativepreneurial endeavours of

Nigerians could be harnessed by facilitating frameworks for creative clusters in the six geopolitical zones and foster wealth generation through seed funding for outstanding creatives.

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