

Comic Effect of Internet Memes Among Nigerian Netizens

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Abstract

Internet memes in recent times are attracting interest amongst scholars. Language scholars and scholars in journalism are beginning to study the use of memes amongst netizens to determine its use, effect and influence on people on the internet. Also, the use of internet memes has been studied from different perspectives by Nigerian scholars from its use as a tool of political and socio-economic commentary on the internet. However, little attention has been placed on its comic effect among Nigerians on the internet. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to analyse the comic effect of memes in trending issues on twitter by randomly selecting sixteen memes, four memes per section which are politics, entertainment, sports and *bomboclaat* trends. The selected memes were analysed in line with common ground theory of presupposition. Delogu (2009). The application of common ground theory of presupposition in humour foreground that the shared knowledge between the participants of a conversation helps in decoding the joke been cracked by the speaker. In addition, the paper found out that memes are shared among tweeps with the use of captions that convey the message of the writer and the common knowledge that exists among users on the internet to achieve comic effect.

Keywords: *Internet memes, twitter, comic effect, netizens, tweeps, bomboclaat, common ground theory of presupposition.*

Introduction

The idea of memes goes back to ancient civilizations since mankind has always transmitted cultural and social aspects. Richard Dawkins in 1976 coined “meme” from the Greek word “mimema” which means “something which is imitated” in his book *The Selfish Gene*. He argued that “meme” acts as a unit for carrying cultural ideas, symbols, or practices that can be transmitted from one mind to another through writing, speech, gestures, rituals, or other imitable phenomena with mimicked theme. Dawkins used memes to explain phenomena such as religion, culture and social acts. He explained that they are products of imitation from one person to another.

Traditionally, memes spread through man-to-man communication. However, with technological advancement such as the Internet, the meaning and use of meme in modern time differs from its traditional meaning. Diaz (2013) defined “Internet meme” as “a unit of information (idea, concept or belief), which replicates by passing on via internet (e-mails, chat, forum, social networks, etc.)”. Through the evolution of meme, internet meme has enhanced our knowledge of memes and given us the ability to manipulate concepts unlike how they were before. Memes can be used to sway people’s opinion on different topics on the internet.

Nigerians are not left behind in the use of memes on the internet. Nigerians on various social media platforms use memes in their day to day post in commenting on topics ranging from sports, entertainment, politics, religion to other trending topics on the social media. The use of memes amongst Nigerians cuts across all major social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. This work look at the comic role of memes on twitter among Nigerians.

Memes are used predominantly on twitter by Nigerians to beautify or colour a tweet with the aim of making people laugh. Although, there are occasions whereby memes are used to describe sad events, it is mostly used to crack jokes. In order to crack jokes with memes, the tweep (used on twitter to refer to the writer) uses a picture and comes up with a funny story line or caption to describe the picture. The storyline or caption at times is satirical, witty and infused with pun. Through this, tweeps use memes to express their opinion on an issue or topics on the social media platform.

Literature Review

As mentioned earlier, memes were originally described by Richard Dawkins (1976). However, memes in modern times have taken a different dimension. It refers to an image or video clip that spreads on the internet.

Yeku (2018), presents internet meme in his paper, *The Hashtag as Archive: Internet Memes and Nigeria's Social Media Election*. He asserts that the use of memes and hashtags by Nigerians on social media as a form of visual representation to comment on political issues in the country during and after 2015 general elections. Yeku says they act as an archive for political commentaries in the country. He divides it into three:

Pre-Election Memes

Most of the memes in this category were satirical critique of the Jonathan administration. The netizens that shared these memes were demanding change of leadership in the country.



Fig 1 Two different memes satirizing President Jonathan's incompetence

Also, other memes targeted the presidential candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), General Muhammadu Buhari by using his past record of human rights abuse against him.



Fig 2: A photo shopped image of President Muhammadu Buhari with a self-indicting message of his record as a military head of state

The #Istandwithjega Meme

Yeku (2018) describe this as the use of hashtag activism by netizens to push back against electoral fraud and corruption. This shows their support for the head of the electoral commission as flawless and incorruptible.

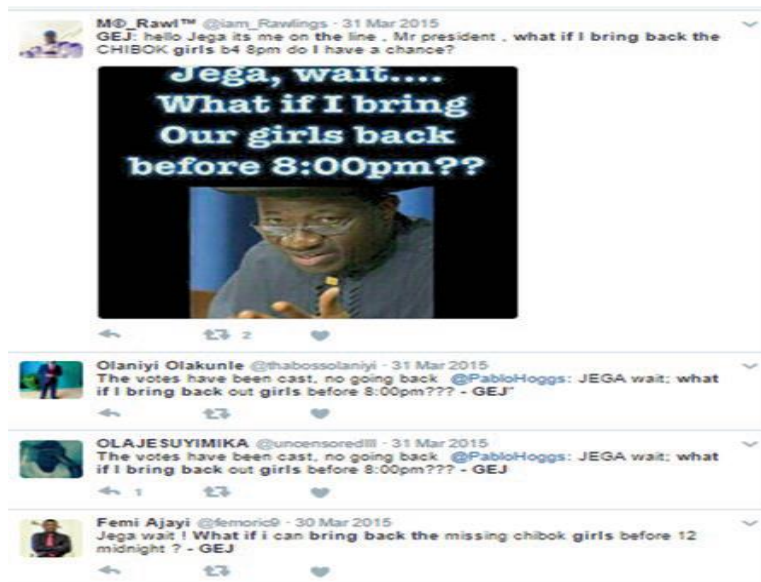


Fig 3: A meme on twitter which mocks President Goodluck Jonathan’s response to the ongoing count of votes which shows his imminent loss of the 2015 presidential election

Post-Election Memes and Hashtags

The memes and hastags that followed the victory of President Muhammadu Buhari were on the events that occurred after the election. Hashtags such as; #MinisterialList and #MissingBudget spread online among netizens to disseminate comments on the Buhari administration. The hashtags and memes serves as important media archive for netizens to comment on issues and topics that shape online discussion on electoral politics and political governance.

Stojchevska and Shalevska (2018) describes memes as entertainment entities that spreads virally through social media and other internet platforms and invite participation and contribution by their audience, are an important part of the modern internet communication. They opine that memes can be divided into different categories according to their contents. These categories are:

- **The pop-culture:** it includes popular movies, artists, celebrities, music, tv shows and others.
- **Profession:** memes made by people from certain field may only be understood by the people in that profession.
- **Memes around the globe:** memes are created around the globe. Therefore, understanding them may be down to common knowledge about the country of origin of the memes.
- **Memes that contain political and religious references:** politics is another source of meme creation; political meetings are followed by lots of memes online.

Furthermore, Stojchevska and Shalevska (2018) assert that most memes are created using English language characterized with puns, abbreviations, intentional and unintentional mistakes and (mis) spelling patterns. In addition, the use of other languages in meme creation are becoming prominent by non-English speakers. Also, the memes generated by non-English speakers at times are not grammatical.

In addition, Alfred (2019) looks at the relationship between verbal and visual resources as markers of social relations in internet memes on the APC-led administration and *change* slogan in Nigeria. Alfred asserts that Nigerian netizens use memes about the *change* slogan to express their displeasure over the socio-economic realities in the country.



Fig 4: A twitter user shares a two frame picture of two men in a barbing salon to depict the state of the economy

Also, these memes are used by netizens to dissuade people from voting for the same party again in the next election.



Fig 5: A meme shared on Facebook shows how Nigerians will react to the ruling party APC during the general election of 2019

Therefore, this study seeks to determine the attempt by Nigerian netizens on twitter to use memes as a comic tool in four different topics, namely; sports, politics, entertainment and *bomboclaat* which is a trend in which tweeps come up with an adequate caption for a caption less picture.

Statement of the problem

Extant works on the internet in Nigeria have been on the fictional and humorous character of Akpos. Yeku (2015) wrote on the character of Akpos as the Nigerian cyberpop trickster. Filani (2017), analysed Akpos jokes and the readers' responses on facebook. The work included the use of memes as a form of response by readers.

Furthermore, Yeku (2018) worked on memes as a tool of shaping online discussion on electoral politics and political governance focusing on the events before and after the 2015 presidential election. Also, Alfred (2019) discussed how Nigerians use memes express their displeasure over the socio-economic state of the country under president Muhammadu Buhari after the 2015 general election.

However, in light of the aforementioned, the use of memes has not been sufficiently studied amongst Nigerians on different social media platforms. Therefore, this work seeks to consider the comic effect of memes amongst Nigerians on Twitter, focusing on sports, entertainment, politics and *bomboclaat*.

Aim and Objectives

This work seeks to discover how Nigerian netizens attempt to use memes for comic purpose on twitter.

The study seeks to achieve the following:

- To describe the role of memes in achieving comic effect on twitter.
- To determine the role of language in the description of images in achieving comic effect.
- To determine how writers jokingly express their ideas through memes.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Common Ground Theory of presupposition in the analysis of this work. According to Delogu (2009: 195), presuppositions “are propositions whose truth is taken for granted during a communicative interaction”. In pragmatics, presuppositions are viewed as background beliefs which make up the common ground between participants in a communication exchange. The use of humour in conversation largely depends on the presuppositions that exist between participants. Joke recipients find a joke amusing only if they are able to identify what the joke teller has taken for granted. In noting the value of presuppositions in humorous exchanges, Holmes & Marra (2002) opine that many instances of humour require shared knowledge for an addressee to understand and appreciate them. Similarly, Galiñanes (2000: 101) notes that “humorous discourse [...] is based on the assumption of presuppositions, moral, social, cultural and even generic”, which are shared by the joke tellers and their recipients. Such presuppositions are manipulated by the joke tellers and are readily available to the recipients (Galiñanes 2000).

The aforementioned drives the use of meme as a comic tool on twitter between the writer and the readers. The writer and the readers have a shared knowledge, in which the readers are aware of what the writer has taken for granted in the meme creation process for the desired comic effect to be realized. The writer attempts to comment or express his/her opinion on a topic using a picture and s/he comes up with a story line that best describes the image in a funny way. This is done while the intended meaning of the writer is communicated through the meme.

Jokes in face-to-face conversation are different from jokes through memes on the internet, this is because jokes online are written and are not carried out in face-to-face discourse. Through presuppositions, we can analyse that writers in computer based communication come up assumptions s/he knows will help the readers in understanding his or her idea.

Twitter memes are influenced by factors such as: the socio-cultural contexts of the participants, the culture of the people and the Nigerian society at large. Therefore, the intended message of the meme is tailored around the language, the style of the caption and the image adopted by the writer. The comic effect of the meme is determined by these factors based on the shared knowledge between the writer and the readers.

Methodology

Sixteen memes were randomly screenshot from nineteen twitter handles by the researcher from June 2019 to November 2019. These memes include sports, entertainment, politics and *bomboclaat* trends. These were chosen at the discretion of the researcher who discovered that most conversations among Nigerians on the platform at the time frame of data collection centred on these aspects.

The list of twitter handles for data collection

S/N	NAME OF PROFILE	USERNAME
1	Bearded Omosanjo	@MisturSanjay
2	B.U.K.A.S.O.N	@EbukaBlaq_
3	Kayode Ogundamisi	@ogundamisi
4	Nwo-Diali PH	@Manlike_ED
5	Olukayode bakre	@Kayodebakre8
6	Village Headman	@samnyakudya
7	God With Me	@SledgeManny
8	Born Sinner	@Shadlin
9	DTemmytorpe	@DTemmytorpe
10	Josh	@ManUnitedMedia
11	Benue Giant	@one_dosh
12	That Nembe girl	@Marycollette_
13	THE TOWEL guy	@Sydney_Talker
14	Big Eye Balls	@RasheedFuggi
15	RSPKT	@DJDELEX1
16	Pogllins	@Pog_llins
17	Valking	@_valkiing
18	J O N A T H A N	@Jay_kay5
19	Jewel	@jewelodega1

Instrument of data collection:

1. Smart phone
2. Twitter App

The work by adopting Common Ground Theory of presupposition will bring to light the shared knowledge of reality between the writer and the readers. This explains how writers on twitter are able to blend captions and pictures together with the mindset of cracking jokes to their followers.

Data Presentation/Analysis

Below are the selected memes on twitter covering politics, entertainment, sports and other selected memes.

Politics

Image 1:



This meme shows the picture of a football fan laughing hysterically

In this example, the tweep (user) makes an attempt to mock the national leader of the All Progressive Congress (A.P.C) after the A.P.C Edo chapter unanimously voted to suspend him from the party in the state.

There is a relationship between the picture shared by the tweep and the caption of the tweep. The picture which shows a man laughing hysterically depicts the state of the tweep. It shows that the *tweep* is laughing at the news of Oshiomole’s suspension by his party in Edo state. Also, the twitter user in the caption starts with the hashtag #APCSuspendsOshiomole in order to join the conversation, the tweep proceeds to ask a sarcastic question; “Are you serious” with a laughter emoji. The tweep continues with “We been knew jare” with another laughter emoji, which implies that the tweep is not surprised by the decision and ends it “We siddon dey look” which suggests that she is enjoying the whole drama between Edo state A.P.C and Oshiomole. In this meme, the picture shared by the tweep and the caption clearly suggests that the tweep does not like the national chairman of the All Progressive Congress and the tweep is enjoying his downfall. This is conveyed in a joking manner with the use of a meme.

Image 2:



The meme shows the picture of Olisa Metuh arriving the court on a stretcher

In this frame, a prominent social commentator and a supporter of the All Progressive Congress makes an attempt at mocking Olisa Metuh, the former publicity secretary of the People's Democratic Party who arrived at the law court for the hearing of his corruption case on a stretcher.

The tweep here tries to blend the image of the politician on a stretcher who he believes to be healthy to the caption: "Not a mortuary, it's a Nigerian court" by subtly implying that the politician is looking for a way to derail his trial by pretending to be sick. In addition, the tweep jokingly passes a message about the Nigerian court as a theatre that corrupt politicians manipulate for their personal interest.

Image 3:



The meme shows Former President Olusegun Obasanjo dancing in front of some people at an event.

This tweet reacts to the fake news that trended on twitter about President Muhammadu Buhari getting married to the minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development Sadiya Umar Farouq. The tweet joins other tweets who saw the viral news as fake news and in turn decides to make fun of the news. The news was tagged as “e-wedding”. He simply tweets: “Ebora Owu storms the venue in style #BUSA19”. *ebora* is a powerful being while *owu* is the name of a town in Ògùn state, Nigeria. The term *ebora owu* is the nickname of the former president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo. The tweet goes on to share the picture of former president Olusegun Obasanjo dancing in front of some people at an event to jokingly present a picture in the mind of the readers of how the former president will dance at the wedding ceremony.

Through this, the tweet tries to make fun of the fake news circulating in the country at the time by using memes to induce humour on the readers.

Image 4:



The meme shows the picture of a boy laughing from a popular South African advertisement in the back seat of a car.

This tweet joins the list of people making fun of the fake news circulating about President Muhammadu Buhari and Sadiya Umar. The tweet presents the picture of a boy laughing in back of a car depicting the state of the writer, as he appears to mock the Buhari administration. He tweets “I heard the colour for #BUSA19 is Recession Black, Corruption Red and a little touch of RUGA Green. Please who is selling aso ebi o?”. Through this, the tweet makes use of the shared knowledge between him or herself and the readers to express his opinion about the failures and controversy in Buhari’s administration. This was achieved by the tweet by using meme and a sarcastic caption to jokingly convey the underlying message of the tweet.

SPORTS

Image 1:



The meme shows the picture of a drunk man getting dragged out by two policemen in a stadium.

The common ground theory of presupposition operates on the shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearers. In the image presented above, the tweep uses the picture of two security personnel as they drag a drunk man away from the tracks in a stadium. The tweep here, tries to use the shared knowledge s/he shares with the readers to present the feelings of Arsenal supporters around the world towards the former head coach of the team after a string of disappointing results.

The user in this meme tweets sarcastically; “Arsenal fans dragging Emery out of Arsenal #EmeryOut”. The tweep uses the caption to explain the image and crack a joke about how frustrated Arsenal supporters are.

Image 2:



This meme depicts Tottenham hotspurs player Heung Son Min crying after his side’s exit from the 2018 FIFA world cup in Russia.

The tweep in this picture tries to blend the action of Tottenham hotspurs forward in the picture to the reality on ground after the appointment of Jose Mourinho as head coach of the club. The tweep utilizes the common ground between him or herself with the readers by suggesting that Heung Son Min who is a forward will burst into tears after he learns of his defensive role under the new coach who is renowned for his defensive approach to games.

The tweep through the picture shared and the caption tries to criticize the newly appointed head coach tactics of defensive set up by subtly suggesting the reaction of the player when he is asked to play as a make shift defender.

Image 3:



The meme shows the picture of English players; Marcus Rashford and Tammy Abraham at their training camp.

This tweet weighs in on the debate amongst Manchester United fans and Chelsea fans about who is better between Marcus Rashford and Tammy Abraham. The tweet shares the picture of the two footballers while on international duty. In the first frame, Abraham is seen to cover his nose and some parts of his eyes while Rashford is seen to smile and tries to touch him. More so, the second frame of the picture shows the same action with Rashford cropped out of the frame. Therefore, the tweet interprets this with the caption: “Omg it’s really you, you’re my idol”, suggesting that Abraham sees Rashford as his idol. Through this, the tweet makes a comic attempt to end the argument among football fans about who is better between the two footballers.

The tweet tries to drive home his point by using the readers understanding of the actions in the picture presented to induce laughter on the readers especially those that share his opinion. The footballer with tinted hair is Abraham while the footballer with a head warmer is Rashford.

Image 4:



The meme shows the picture of a football fan who covered the television with a piece of cloth during a penalty kick and peeps a little to see how the penalty is taken.

This tweep makes fun at Arsenal supporters prior to their football match against Leicester City. The tweep believes that Arsenal would lose against Leicester City later that day because of how badly they were playing at that time. The tweep shares the picture of a covered television with a piece of cloth during a penalty kick while someone tries to peep through to see the action. This describes the anxiety with which the tweep believes Arsenal supporters will watch the game. Through this, the tweep presents a funny scenario by blending the picture and the caption: “This is how Arsenal fans will be watching today’s match” together to joke about the poor footballing form of the team and the anxiety the supporters are passing through. Common ground theory of presupposition comes in as the tweep tries to use the knowledge of how badly Arsenal were playing at that time to express his thoughts in a comic way.

Entertainment

Image 1:



The meme has two frames, showing the picture of a French footballer Brandon Sopyy in action.

Here, a tweep tries to use the name of a footballer, Brandon Sopyy to crack a joke. He shares the picture of the footballer and relates the spelling of his name to the title of a popular song in Nigeria “soapy” by Naira Marley.

The tweep captions the picture thus: “Marlians everywhere...Ladies and gentlemen!! boys and girls.. I present Brandon Sopyy ”. With this caption, the tweep makes an attempt to relate the name of the footballer to the fan base of Nigerian pop star Naira Marley. His fans are called Marlian. Thereby, he relates the similarity in the spelling of the name of the footballer to Naira Marley’s popular song “soapy”.

This is a comic way of joining the “soapy” conversation on twitter by the tweep, as the tweep deploys the shared knowledge between him or herself and the readers about the “Marlian” and “soapy” conversation to attempt to use the name of the footballer to crack a joke.

Image 2:



This meme shows the picture of popular Yoruba actor, Odunlade Adekola as he hurriedly gets up on the bed.

This tweep reacts to the incident between a popular twitter influencer @Pamilerin who was slapped multiple times by Davido Music Worldwide artiste, Peruzzi in a night club. The picture shows popular Yoruba actor, Odunlade Adekola who hurriedly gets up from the bed, while the tweep relates the action with the caption: “Pamilerin when he sees Peruzzi in his dreams”. With the caption given by the tweep, it is clear that the tweep tries to use the incident to mock Pamilerin by suggesting that the incident will give Pamilerin nightmares.

In addition, common ground theory of presupposition shows in analysis of this meme as the tweep relies on the knowledge of the event among the readers for the understanding of the message, which in turn induce humour on the readers.

Image 3:



This meme shows the picture of popular Nollywood actor Osita IHEME, also known as “Paw Paw” crying in a bush.

At the point of this tweet, there was a quarrel between two popular rappers in the country, M.I and Vector. After series of tweets and a couple of songs aimed at ridiculing each other, another rapper Zoro featured both rappers on his song. This prompts the tweep in the image above to tweet that the quarrel between the two rappers is not real but a publicity stunt geared at gaining popularity among music lovers.

He shares the picture of Osita IHEME in an old Nollywood video where he looks to be lost in thought while crying. The tweep captions the picture thus: “omo so zoro carried MI and vector and put them in a song after they were dissing themselves, these people been playing us”. The tweep clearly does not believe that there is a quarrel between the two rappers and makes the knowledge shared by the tweep and the readers on the quarrel to subtly convey this message in a joking manner by implying that s/he is currently crying after realizing that the two rappers who are supposedly quarrelling are on the same song with another rapper.

Image 4:



This meme shows the picture of a lady laughing.

During the last edition of Big Brother Naija, an adult entertainment shows where the winner takes it all. As the show was getting to the grand finale, one of the favourites of the show, Tacha was disqualified after an altercation with a fellow house mate. As a controversial figure in the house, Tacha had a lot of critics among the viewers of the reality show. Thereby, her disqualification was met with a section of the viewers of the reality show on twitter mocking her with different memes.

The tweep who shared the image above joins the people who made fun of her downfall. The tweep use the caption: “only no leave no transfer no reach o..... Even ex housemate see 98 day..... chai... nylon bag #bbnaija”.

The tweep here, makes an attempt to use the caption to mock Tacha by starting with the saying of Tacha in the house before her disqualification, “no leave, no transfer” which means that she would be in the house till the last day. Thereby, the tweep makes fun of the fact that she is unable to get to the last day. The tweep goes on to ridicule her personality by referring to her as nylon bag. Also, as seen in previous data, this tweep uses the common knowledge between him or herself and the readers to convey the message by linking the caption to the image of a lady who laughing to imply that the present state of the tweep.

BOMBOCLAAT

Image 1:



The meme shows the pictures of veteran actor, Jide Kosoko. In the first frame, he looks excited while he looks surprised by something he must have heard or seen in the second frame.

A tweep reacts to the caption less meme shared by another user by giving a comical interpretation to the pictures. *Bomboclaat* is a trend on twitter where a tweep shares a picture and asks other tweeps to give it an adequate caption. The tweep who shares the picture shares it because s/he believes that there is a shared knowledge between him or herself and the readers about the possible message of the picture in the two frames. The first frame suggests excitement while the second frame suggests disappointment.

On this note, the tweep who interprets the image, sarcastically captions it as; “We have jollof rice but meat has finished”. This tweep captioned it on the basis of common happening in ceremonies in the country which is an instance of common ground, as it takes a Nigerian who attends parties to understand such saying. Therefore, the first frame stands for the reaction of a party goer when he or she hears that there is jollof rice, while the second frame stands for the person’s reaction when he or she learns that meat has finished. Through this, the tweep is able to comment on the common happening at events in the country in a comic way.

Image 2:



The meme shows the pictures of a person who gives the look of disbelief in the first frame and a ‘you don’t know what you are talking about’ in the second frame.

As stated in the first example above, the tweep here reacts to the picture shared by a popular influencer on twitter. The picture shared has two frames, the first frame shows disbelief while the second frame shows the actor as he appears to ignore someone. Thus, the tweep relies on the readers’ ability to understand what has been analysed above as the common ground shared, by expecting them to come up with adequate captions that will bring the image to life while using it as a means of inducing comic effect.

The second tweep captions the image as: “Rihanna: I’m a queen. Nickie Minaj: I’m a queen. Tiwa savage: I’m a queen. Queen Elizbeth: ”. By coming up with this caption, the tweep tries to make fun of the female artistes s/he mentioned. These artistes over the years have claimed to be the Queen of their respectively genres and music industry. Thereby, the tweep makes fun of them by suggesting that as self-acclaimed queens, they are inferior to the Queen of England who is the original royalty. In addition, he relates the picture shared by the first tweep as the reaction of the Queen when she hears the female artistes claim that they are a queen to induce laughter on the readers.

Image 3:



The meme has two frames; the first frame is the picture of a woman yelling at someone while the second frame is the picture of a rabbit used to represent a defiant man.

The tweep in this meme interprets meme shared by an influencer. The influencer shares a picture with two frames, the first frame shows a woman who appears to be furious at someone and the second frame shows a rabbit dressed in Yoruba attire and presented as a man. The influencer relates the images in the two frames as a quarrel between the woman and the “man”. This is the common ground that exists between the influencer and the readers.

Thereby, the second tweep captions the image as “You said I am a Wife Material so, who’s Funmi?”. The first part of the caption depicts the question asked by a furious girlfriend who finds out that her partner is seeing another person apart from her. Furthermore, the tweep captions the following as the response of the boyfriend: “She’s a tailor”. This is a sarcastic response that the tweep comes up for comic purpose to describe the meme. Here we see an instance of blending of meme and caption for comic purpose by using the shared knowledge between the tweep and the readers.

Image 4:



The meme shows the picture of an angry woman pointing furiously at rabbit like man.

In the *bomboclaat* trend at the time of data gathering, the image above generated different reactions among tweeps in Nigeria. This meme is captioned by a tweep as: “You said you would never cheat on me” in the first frame of the image to depict what the angry woman is saying, while the second part of the caption represents the response of the husband who jokingly says “But I didn’t cheat on you. I cheated with you”. This response by the husband is a comic attempt by the tweep. s/he suggests through the use of pun that the husband did not cheat on the wife but he rather cheated with the wife because they are already married. Thereby, he cheated with her and not on her.

In this example, it can be seen that as in the examples above that the caption less picture was shared by the tweep based on the shared knowledge between him or her and the readers while the tweep who comes up with the caption, captions the image with pun in order to achieve comic purpose.

Findings

The work discovered that memes on twitter are shared with the tweep using the common knowledge s/he shares with other tweeps and adequate captions to achieve comic effects and convey the opinion of the tweep on certain issues. In addition, the work found out that Nigerians in *bomboclaat* trends reacts to caption less images with captions, sarcasm and pun to describe the realities in the country to achieve comic effect.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper has discussed the concept of meme from its traditional definition by Richard Dawkins in 1976 to the modern meaning of meme through technological innovations such as the internet. Also, the paper has focused on the use of memes on twitter as a comic tool used

in interpreting and cracking jokes amongst Nigerians on twitter. From the examples used in the different sections discussed above, the paper has established that Nigerians use memes through common ground between them and the readers and captions as a comic tool which plays a vital role in expressing one's opinion or intended message on a subject matter in a subtle and joking manner.

From the findings of this study, we discover that a lot need to be done on the internet in Nigeria, this work recommends that scholars should investigate more on language use on the internet in Nigeria. The response of the readers to memes on social media amongst Nigerian netizens should be investigated.

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