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Online Twerking and Nudity as a Digital Platform for Commercial Sex Advertisement in Taraba State: A Reveiew

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Abstract

The rise of digital platforms has transformed social interactions and economic activities, facilitating new forms of self-expression and commercial engagement. In Taraba State, Nigeria, online twerking and nudity have emerged as tools for commercial sex advertisement, reflecting broader socio-cultural and economic dynamics. This study examines the drivers of this phenomenon, including high unemployment, economic hardships, and the commodification of sexualized content on social media platforms. Young women, in particular, leverage online visibility for financial gain, blurring the lines between personal expression and economic survival. While these digital avenues offer some level of agency and financial independence, they also expose individuals to exploitation, stigmatization, and legal uncertainties. The implications extend beyond individual participants to broader societal concerns, including the reinforcement of gender stereotypes, moral debates, and public health risks such as sexually transmitted infections. The study further explores the role of digital anonymity in enabling these practices despite the existence of legal prohibitions against commercial sex work in Nigeria. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, including strengthening legal frameworks, promoting economic alternatives for young women, and enhancing online content moderation. Public awareness campaigns and the involvement of traditional and religious leaders are also crucial in reshaping societal attitudes toward the commercialization of sexual content. This study contributes to ongoing discussions on digital sex work, gender dynamics, and socio-economic challenges, offering policy recommendations for mitigating the risks associated with this emerging trend in Taraba State.

Keywords: Online Twerking, Nudity, Commercial Sex Work, Social Media, Taraba State.

Introduction

The digital age has fundamentally transformed the landscape of human interaction, content sharing, and commercial activities. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat have emerged as dominant forces in this transformation, serving as vital tools for self-expression, entertainment, and entrepreneurship (Bernier et al., 2021). These platforms facilitate a unique form of engagement that allows users to curate their identities and connect with broader audiences, thereby fostering a culture of visibility and interaction that was previously unattainable. The role of social media in promoting exploratory and exploitative innovations has been documented, highlighting how these platforms can enhance organizational agility and customer engagement through collaborative efforts (Zhang et al., 2023; , Goel & Donaldson, 2021). This dynamic environment has not only empowered individuals but has also led to the commercialization of personal content, often blurring the lines between personal expression and economic activity.

However, the rise of social media has also introduced new challenges, particularly in the realm of sexual content. The commercialization of sexual expression on these platforms raises significant ethical and legal concerns, as it often intersects with issues of exploitation and commodification (Gaenssle, 2023).

In Taraba State, Nigeria, the phenomenon of online twerking and nudity as a form of commercial sex advertisement has gained prominence, particularly among young women seeking to attract clients for commercial sex work. This practice, characterized by the use of sexually suggestive dance moves and explicit nudity, reflects a broader trend where social media serves as a marketplace for sexual services, complicating the socio-cultural fabric of the region. The implications of this trend are profound, as they challenge traditional norms and raise questions about the agency of individuals engaged in such practices.

The socio-cultural, economic, and legal ramifications of this phenomenon are multifaceted. On one hand, the use of social media for advertising commercial sex work can enhance safety and communication between sex workers and clients, allowing for better risk management and health practices (Bernier et al., 2021). For instance, research indicates that internet-based advertising significantly improves risk management, enabling sex workers to communicate essential details about their services and health practices to clients (Kennedy, 2022). On the other hand, it raises concerns about the potential for exploitation and the reinforcement of harmful stereotypes regarding gender and sexuality. The visibility afforded by social media can lead to increased scrutiny and stigmatization of individuals involved in such activities, further complicating their social standing and legal protections (Galimullin, 2023). This visibility is not merely a byproduct of social media; it is a structural feature that can render

individuals vulnerable to exploitation, as the dynamics of visibility and exploitation are deeply intertwined within social networks (Galimullin, 2023).

Moreover, the impact of social media on consumer sentiment and behavior cannot be overlooked. The pervasive nature of social media has created an environment where information overload can influence users' perceptions and actions, including those related to sexual content (Sun, 2024). This phenomenon is particularly relevant in the context of commercial sex work, where the interplay between self-presentation and consumer engagement can shape the dynamics of demand and supply in the market (Lu, 2024). The commercialization of sexual content also intersects with broader societal issues, such as the representation of women in media and the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, which can further complicate the socio-cultural landscape (Essafa, 2024).This paper provides a comprehensive review of the growing trend of online twerking and nudity as a means of commercial sex advertisement in Taraba State. It also examines the socio-economic and cultural factors driving this trend, its implications for society, and concludes with recommendations for addressing this issue.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Online Twerking

Twerking is a dance move characterized by rhythmic, sexually suggestive movements of the hips and buttocks. When performed online, it becomes a tool for self-expression, entertainment, or, in some cases, commercial exploitation (Adeyemi, 2022). Twerking is a dance move characterized by rhythmic, sexually suggestive movements of the hips and buttocks. It transcends mere dance; it becomes a multifaceted tool for self-expression, entertainment, and, in some instances, commercial exploitation. The digital platform enables performers to reach a wider audience, allowing them to showcase their skills and personalities while simultaneously engaging in economic activities (Kennedy, 2022).In Taraba State, Nigeria, online twerking has increasingly emerged as a form of advertisement for commercial sex work. Performers utilize social media platforms to attract potential clients, leveraging the visibility and reach of these platforms to enhance their economic prospects. This phenomenon reflects broader trends in digital entrepreneurship, where traditional boundaries of work and leisure are blurred, and personal expression is commodified (Goel & Donaldson, 2021).

Nudity

Nudity refers to the state of being unclothed, often used in artistic, cultural, or commercial contexts. In the digital age, nudity has become a common feature of online content, particularly in the adult entertainment industry (Seidu et al., 2021). Nudity defined as the state of being unclothed, has historically been utilized in various artistic, cultural, and commercial contexts. In the digital age, nudity has become a prevalent feature of online content, especially within the adult entertainment industry. The proliferation of social media has facilitated the normalization of nudity as a marketing tool, particularly in regions like Taraba State, where individuals increasingly post explicit images and videos to solicit clients for commercial sex work (Zhang et al., 2023).

Commercial Sex Advertisement

Commercial sex advertisement involves the promotion of sexual services in exchange for money or other forms of compensation. With the advent of social media, this form of advertisement has transitioned online, often camouflaged as entertainment or lifestyle content (McCluskey, 2023). In Taraba State, the intertwining of commercial sex advertisement with online twerking and nudity has created a new and controversial form of digital entrepreneurship. This blurring of lines between personal expression and commercial activity raises ethical questions regarding the exploitation of individuals, particularly women, who may feel pressured to engage in such practices to achieve financial independence. The digital landscape allows for a unique form of agency, yet it simultaneously exposes individuals to potential risks and stigmatization associated with their choices.With the rise of social media, this form of advertisement has moved online, where it is often disguised as entertainment or lifestyle content (Zhang, 2024).

OVERVIEW OF ONLINE TWERKING AND NUDITY AS COMMERCIAL SEX ADVERTISEMENT IN NIGERIA

The Rise of Digital Platforms

The advent of smartphones and affordable internet access has significantly transformed social interactions among the youth in Taraba State. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat have become popular venues for self-expression and creativity. However, these platforms also facilitate exploitative practices, including the use of twerking and nudity for commercial sex advertisements. The digital landscape allows individuals to showcase their bodies and talents, often blurring the lines between art and exploitation (Adejumo, 2024). The anonymity and reach of these platforms provide a unique environment where traditional norms can be circumvented, leading to a rise in commercial sex work that is both visible and pervasive (Olamide et al., 2021).

Socio-Economic Factors

The socio-economic landscape in Taraba State plays a crucial role in the rise of online twerking and nudity as commercial sex advertisements. High poverty rates, unemployment, and gender inequality create a pressing need for financial independence among young women. Many perceive online sex work as a viable means of income generation, particularly when conventional job opportunities are scarce (Seidu et al., 2021). The lack of access to quality education further exacerbates this situation, limiting the alternatives available to these women and pushing them towards exploitative avenues (Snow et al., 2021). This economic desperation is compounded by cultural expectations that often leave women with limited agency in their financial decisions (U., 2024).

Cultural and Legal Context

Culturally, Taraba State is steeped in traditional values that stigmatize sex work. However, the digital anonymity afforded by online platforms allows individuals to engage in commercial sex advertisements without immediate societal repercussions. Despite existing laws against indecent exposure and prostitution, enforcement is often lax, allowing these practices to

proliferate (Ajayi, 2024). This cultural dissonance creates a paradox where individuals can exploit digital platforms for financial gain while simultaneously navigating the stigma associated with their actions (Awoleye et al., 2022).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Economic Impacts

The commercialization of online twerking and nudity has created a new form of digital entrepreneurship in Taraba State. While some individuals earn significant income from this practice, it often comes at the cost of their dignity and long-term economic prospects. The lack of regulation and oversight also exposes performers to exploitation and financial instability (Gaenssle, 2023).

Social Impacts

The rise of online twerking and nudity as commercial sex advertisement has profound social implications. It contributes to the normalization of sexual exploitation and undermines efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The stigma associated with this practice further isolates individuals and families, leading to social exclusion and marginalization (Bernier et al., 2021).

Legal and Ethical Concerns

The use of online platforms for commercial sex advertisement raises significant legal and ethical concerns. While Nigerian law prohibits indecent exposure and prostitution, the digital nature of this practice makes it difficult to regulate and enforce. Additionally, the lack of clear guidelines on online content moderation has created a gray area that allows this trend to thrive (Dauda Adegoke et al., 2024).

Mental Health Issues

The psychological toll of such engagement can also be severe, with many performers experiencing anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem due to societal stigma and exploitation. The practice of commercial sex work, whether online or offline, exposes individuals to significant health risks, including sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies (Essafa & Fatima, 2024). The lack of access to healthcare and preventive measures further exacerbates these risks, particularly for young women in Taraba State. The psychological impact of engaging in online twerking and nudity for commercial purposes can be severe. Many performers experience anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem due to the stigma and exploitation associated with this practice. The pressure to maintain a certain image and attract clients can also lead to chronic stress and mental health issues (Gaenssle, 2023).

Health Risks

From a health perspective, engaging in online sex work poses significant risks, including exposure to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies (Trivedi & Teichert, 2021). The limited access to healthcare and preventive measures exacerbates these risks, particularly for young women in Taraba State.

GENDER DYNAMICS AND POWER RELATIONS

Exploitation of Women

The rise of online twerking and nudity as commercial sex advertisement starkly highlights the exploitation of women in a patriarchal society. Many young women are drawn into this practice through promises of quick financial gain, only to find themselves ensnared in cycles of exploitation and abuse (Sun, 2024). The digital nature of this practice creates new power dynamics, where clients often exert significant control over performers, demanding increasingly explicit content under the guise of anonymity. This exploitation underscores the urgent need for a critical examination of gender dynamics and power relations within the context of digital sex work (Zhang, 2024).

Power Imbalances

The digital nature of this practice creates new power imbalances, with clients often holding significant control over performers. The anonymity provided by online platforms allows clients to demand increasingly explicit content, further exploiting performers and undermining their autonomy (Awoleye et al., 2022).

MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

Strengthening Legal Frameworks

To address the rise of online twerking and nudity as commercial sex advertisement, there is a need to strengthen legal frameworks and improve enforcement mechanisms. This includes updating existing laws to address digital forms of exploitation and providing training and resources to law enforcement agencies (Galimullin & Pedersen, 2023).

Promoting Economic Empowerment

Addressing the socio-economic factors driving this trend requires a focus on promoting economic empowerment and creating job opportunities for young women. This includes investing in education, vocational training, and entrepreneurship programs, as well as providing access to credit and other resources for small-scale businesses (McCluskey, 2023).

Raising Awareness and Changing Cultural Norms

Efforts to combat this phenomenon must also include raising awareness about the dangers and consequences of engaging in online twerking and nudity for commercial purposes. This can be achieved through public education campaigns, community outreach programs, and the involvement of traditional and religious leaders in promoting positive cultural norms and values (Kennedy, 2022).

Strengthening Online Content Moderation

Social media platforms must take greater responsibility for moderating content and preventing the exploitation of users. This includes implementing stricter guidelines on sexually explicit content and using artificial intelligence to detect and remove inappropriate material (Trivedi & Teichert, 2021).

Providing Psychological and Health Support

Efforts to address this issue must also include providing psychological and health support to individuals engaged in online twerking and nudity for commercial purposes. This includes offering counseling services, access to healthcare, and preventive measures to reduce the risks associated with this practice (Zhang, 2024).

CONCLUSION

The rise of online twerking and nudity as commercial sex advertisement in Taraba State is a complex and multifaceted issue with significant socio-economic, cultural, and legal implications. Addressing this challenge requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that includes strengthening legal frameworks, promoting economic empowerment, raising awareness, and improving online content moderation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

i. There is need to strengthen legal frameworks by updating existing laws to address digital forms of exploitation and improve enforcement mechanisms.
ii. There is need to promote economic empowerment and invest in education, vocational training, and entrepreneurship programs for young women.
iii. Conduct public education campaigns and community outreach programs to raise awareness about the dangers of this practice.
iv. Engage traditional and religious leaders in promoting positive cultural norms and values.
v. Encourage social media platforms to implement stricter guidelines on sexually explicit content.
vi. Offer counseling services, access to healthcare, and preventive measures to individuals engaged in this practice.

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