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Developing Nigerian Cultures for Global Relevance and Poverty Reduction through NTA International's Projection of Calabar Carnival

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Abstract: The study assessed NTA International's contribution to the development of Nigerian cultures for global participation and poverty reduction through its coverage and broadcast of the Calabar Carnival. The following research questions were raised to guide the study: How is the indigenous culture of Cross River State promoted through the Calabar Carnival? To what extent does NTA International use the Calabar Carnival to develop indigenous culture for global relevance? What economic opportunities come to bear to enhance poverty reduction via NTA International's coverage of the Calabar Carnival? Cultivation theory is the theory upon which the study is based. Survey design was used for the study. It is a qualitative study. The research instrument was the interview and participant's observations. Findings showed that various facets of the rich cultural mores of the people of Cross River State and Nigeria as a whole are displayed throughout the duration of the Carnival. The study also revealed the enormous tourism and business potential that come to bear during the Carnival. These could be harnessed for the youths, to be gainfully employed. The study concluded that Calabar Carnival is an appropriate platform for developing the cultures of Nigeria for global participation and poverty reduction. Based on these findings, the study recommends that NTA International should contribute to the Calabar Carnival through inputs on how to increase local contents, for adequate cultural development and poverty reduction.

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1. Introduction

Nations, tribes, and peoples are proud of their different indigenous cultures. This is based on the fact that a people's culture represents its entire existence. Through its culture, the world can come to know who a people are, where they come from, what they stand for, and where they are going. The culture of a people gives them a sense of identity, dignity, continuity, security, and binds them together. Little wonder then that the agitation for the preservation of indigenous cultures by non-western societies (periphery), persists. These agitations remain due to the threat perceptibly posed by Western cultures (metropolis) to indigenous culture, particularly through globalisation. Critical efforts in terms of research have been made by some communication/culture scholars and governments from the South to proffer a solution to the situation. Communication and the mass media have been identified as agents of culture mediation[1]. As such, in recent times, media organisations in Nigeria have been observed as having collaborated with

local communities, governments and corporate bodies, in seeking ways to showcase Nigerian culture for global participation. They organise cultural festivals and carnivals in various parts of the country annually. One of the foremost of these cultural festivals is the Calabar Carnival organised by the Cross River State Government. The Calabar Carnival is covered by both local and international media organisations. The Nigerian Television Authority International (NTAi) covers and broadcasts the Calabar Carnival since the promotion of indigenous culture to the world is one of its primary objectives [2]. This paper sought to find out how the indigenous culture of Cross River State and Nigeria as a whole is communicated for global participation through NTA International, during the Calabar Carnival. In other words what role has the Calabar Carnival played in mainstreaming aspects of Nigerian culture for global relevance and poverty reduction? Having realized that the harmonisation of various programmes of regional and later state television stations would bring national unity, stability and development, the Federal Military Government in May, 1977 promulgated Decree 24 to establish the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), to serve as a means through which the Government could reach the people. The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) is a broadcasting network (also available online) operating with a national headquarters in Abuja and network centres within the country[3]. These network centres are in Benin, Kaduna, Sokoto, Maiduguri, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Makurdi, Ibadan and Lagos. After twenty-nine years of broadcasting in Nigeria, on November 22, 2006, the management of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) launched a cable-based Nigerian Television Authority International (NTAi) relayed via satellite channels, with the slogan "Africa's window to the world". NTA International has equipment and personnel to transmit programmes via satellite receivable in any part of the world [4]. It was also established with the sole objective of engaging international broadcasts through which Nigeria could be accessed. Some of the cultural programmes on NTAi include "African Pot"(a documentary that explores the food, culture and tourist sites in different parts of Nigeria); "Aiguo Basinmwin"(a drama set in Benin City to highlight the conflict between tradition and Christianity in the colonial era); "Flying High"(a programme that draws attention to the different aspect of the National life, history and culture of Nigeria, in order to engender the feeling of pride in Nigerians anywhere in the world), and documentaries on cultural festivals and carnivals such as the Calabar Carnival, Abuja Carnival and others. Traditional ceremonies, festivals and carnivals celebrated in Nigeria are various platforms in which indigenous culture is presented to the global community [5]. A good number of these are exciting and memorable tourist destinations for people all over the world. From small beginnings in the year 1999, the Calabar Carnival has since become a ceremony with global status that runs for thirty-two days from December 1st to January 1st every year. The first edition of the Carnival started with the display of the rich cultural heritage of the people of Cross River State. These include the famous export commodity cocoa pod, the low land gorilla of the last rain forest in West Africa, the leopard of the Ekpe, Masquerade, the old residency building which once served as the seat of government of the entire Colonial Nigeria, the Mary Slessor Caravan, Monoliths, the kwa Falls, Tinapa Business Resort, the National Park and Obudu Ranch Resort.

Due credit has always been given to a former Governor of the State, Mr. Donald Duke, for the global status assumed by the Carnival. He led a twenty-one-man team from the state to the Port of Spain in Trinidad and Tobago, to play in the Safari Band, in the year 2005. Driven by a vision to transform the state into a foremost tourist destination in Nigeria, through her rich cultural mores, Mr. Donald Duke and his wife Mrs. Onari Duke, introduced costumed character bands and cultural dance troupes as part of the programme in 2004. This was to ensure that the cultural values of the people are preserved. The costumed character bands add much colour and grandeur to the event. There are five of them officially registered with distinctive themes that centre on equality, valour, freedom, emancipation and grace.

As shown in Table 1, the Calabar Carnival Bands each present unique themes and colors that reflect their cultural and creative expressions.

Table 1. Calabar Carnival Bands.

S/N	BAND	COLOUR	THEME
1	The Bayside Band	Blue	Bravery, resilience and talent
2	The Passion 4 Band	Green	"A Feather to Beehive" (a journey to greatness)
3	The Seagull	Red	Culture, Identity, Strength
4	The Freedom Band	Yellow	Once upon a time Africa
5	The Freedom Band	Yellow	The unveiling Jewel Africa

Source: Calabar Carnival Preview (2009)

In collaboration with the state government the organisers of the programme continue to improve on previous editions as time passes. They introduce innovations that make the Calabar Carnival a splendid display of the multi-faceted cultural heritage of the people of Cross River State and other ethnic groups in Nigeria. This spectacular event plays host to people from all over the world. Every year the city of Calabar witnesses a massive turnout of local and international cultural troupes alongside the five Carnival bands, performing traditional dances, Carnival Calabar Beauty Pageant, City Walk Against HIV /AIDS, Boat Regattas, Ekpe Masquerade and many others [6]. These groups display very colourful, elaborate and impressive costumes that bring to bear the "ancestral history coupled with cultural similarities that exist between Cross River State and the Island of Trinidad and Tobago". In 2007, Governor Liyel Imoke of Cross River State introduced the Carnival Parade and Children's Carnival. In 2008, he brought about the idea of a guiding theme that reflects the purpose and spirit behind the carnival. Thus, the theme for 2008 was "Sustaining Earth's Treasures Through our Culture". That of 2009 was "Land of our Birth: our People, our Heritage" [7]. Understandably, he explained the motive behind this enormous event during his welcome address that year thus:

...To bring people together to celebrate our culture and our proud history. One of the beautiful things about our carnival is that it showcases Nigeria beautifully. It showcases our culture. It showcases our history and that is why I am particular about the theme for every Carnival. The detail in which the bands go to interpret this theme speaks volumes for us... it's just a product that markets our country like no other product (Para 6.)

In the same spirit, the wife of the Governor of Cross River State, Mrs. Obioma Liyel Imoke launched the Calabar Carnival Beauty Pageant in 2007 to add 'glitz and glamour' to the Calabar Carnival, as well as serve as the 'face and spokesperson' for one of her initiatives - Mother against Child Abandonment (MACA). Apparently these unique and enviable features have not only enriched the cultural repertoire of the Calabar people but that of Nigeria as a whole. The promotion of indigenous culture through cultural carnivals has come to gain relevance in recent times. This is mainly due to the fact that there has been growing interest in exploring the indigenous culture of ethnic groups in various parts of Nigeria with a view to proudly showcasing same on the global spectrum. As noted by the former Governor of Cross River State during the opening ceremony of the Carnival in 2009, the primary aim of organising the event is "to bring people together to celebrate our culture and our proud history...it is a product that markets our country like no other product"[8]. However, from what is displayed during the Carnival, how much of the indigenous culture of Cross River State and Nigeria as whole is communicated for global participation and poverty reduction is yet to be established. This study sought to find out the extent to which the indigenous culture of Nigeria could be developed, for global participation and poverty reduction.

The research questions that guided the study were as follows:

1. How is the Indigenous culture of Cross River State promoted through the Calabar Carnival?
2. To what extent does NTA International (NTAi) use the Calabar Carnival to develop indigenous culture for global relevance?
3. What economic opportunities come to bear to enhance poverty reduction via NTA International's coverage of the Calabar Carnival?

The culture of a people may be considered as the way of life that identifies the indigenes of a particular society. It includes the pattern of activities and the symbols used by the people of such culture which must have meaning within their immediate environment [9]. These activities and the symbols that accompany them include the methods collectively adopted to organize and run religious, political, economic and social institutions. Language, food, dressing, music and dance, arts, values, customs and traditions practised during marriage, burial, coronation ceremonies and other festivals form part of a people's culture. Of importance is the fact that this way of life sets them apart from other people and it is inherently dynamic. This suggests that inasmuch as culture identifies a group of people, it is subject to change or modification, and within the context of this discourse, the change could be growth or development conditioned by environmental factors [10]. In what follows, the environmental factors that affected the culture of Nigeria in the past, will be discussed.

The concept of metropolis and Periphery are terms applied in cultural discourses to the relationship between the industrialized nations of Europe and North America (metropolis), and their erstwhile colonies of African and Asian nations (periphery). Kivikuyu vividly describes what prevailed for about five hundred years thus: "peripheralisation entails a functional downgrading of a less developed society into an outpost of a more highly developed one". Viewed from an historical perspective, the relationship is traceable to the colonial period when the developed Western nations, came in the guise of religious propagation to exploit the abundant natural and human resources in the periphery nations. Through colonial domination or imperialism, the metropolis subjugated the periphery in a manner that engendered a collective servile mentality in their psyche, resulting in a general poor self-perception even decades after the end of colonial rule. Moemeka points to the grim situation as he observes that some Africans have almost always blindly swallowed whatever is presented to them by the West [11]. Udoudo maintains that "some Africans are yet to see anything good in their countries and continent... that is why they prefer Western dressing, speech, technology, ethos and world view obtained through communication media". The overwhelming effect of the media and cultural imperialism that ensued, resulted in what Ekeanyanwu describes as "preference and dependence...the craze for foreign media/cultural products and the subsequent neglect and rejection of the indigenous ones". This is the threat that the periphery culture faces. This situation has further deepened through the widespread of globalization during the last part of 20th century and now. However, in the mid-20th century, there seemed to be a reverse in the imbalance that characterized the metropolis-periphery cultural relationship for a long time. The campaign and move for change in the existing social structure became palpable as former colonies started clamouring for and gained independence subsequently. The periphery started repositioning and took a stance for self-assertiveness, self-determination, dissociation, cultural self-steering and the development of collective and individual identities [12]. Scholars such as Agba, Ekeayanwu and Udoudo have advocated mediation through the use of communication, the mass media and government investment in technological research for rapid industrialization to forestall further and future cultural erosion. Furthermore, in Nigeria much effort is being put in public-private partnerships or interventions to organise carnivals and cultural shows for global participation annually. One of the outstanding ones is the Calabar Carnival, the focus of this discourse. As a concept when used in relation to humans, development may

refer to an incremental or a gradual improvement in general wellbeing, a state of steady growth in the quality of life that is marked primarily by good living conditions. Usually, development in human society is conditioned by economic, political, environmental, historical and cultural factors. Obafemi draws attention to the relationship between development and culture in the society as he asserts that “the cultural orientation and attributes of a people give content, meaning and direction to their vision of the desirable society... developmental struggles and aspirations...”. This means that what constitutes a people’s culture and their attitude towards it, determines the fervor with which they pursue its preservation and their development as a group. Evident in the history of many societies is the fact that continuous change is a precondition for cultural development. This is inevitable for a living culture due to interaction with other cultures, as well as what Kivikuru calls “the internal innovation game of culture”. Often, the consequence is cultural modification, transformation, innovation, and sometimes unfortunately, extinction. For instance, there has been a lot of innovation and modification in the entertainment and fashion industry in Nigeria due to cultural interaction. Some indigenous musicians mix Nigerian languages with English, while others rap with indigenous languages in their songs. The likes of Fela Ransome-Kuti, Lagbaja (Bisade Ologunde), Shina Peters, Olamide (Olamide Adediji), Falz (Folarin Falana), TuFace Idibia (Innocent Ujah Idibia), P-square (Peter and Paul Okoye), Mish (Misheal Aniekeme Meshach), and Phyno (Azubuike Chibuzo Nelson), are ready examples. Moreover, a good number of these artistes are involved in long and short-term collaborations with foreign musicians, cases in point are United States-based hip-pop star Ric Ross and Nigeria’s P-Square. Drake (Aubrey Drake Graham), another US-based musician collaborated with Nigeria’s Wizkid (Ayodeji Ibrahim Balogun) and from time-to-time Nigerian artistes are invited abroad to perform and vice versa. The outcome of these cultural interactions are a striking blend of Nigerian-Western, musical innovation, which has come to be known as Afropop or Afro hip-pop, aesthetically positioned on the global spectrum. Also in the area of fashion designing, there is Lisa Folawiyo a renowned fashion designer at home and abroad. She uses the highest grade of Ankara fabric and her African prints to produce unique combinations of beautiful English/African designs. Duro Olowu is a major fashion designer who enjoys the patronage of celebrities including the current first lady of United States of America Michelle Obama [13]. Another case in point is Folake Folarin-Coker, founder of Tiffany. This brand is very famous and has been a leader in creation of beautiful designs for women. The brand is not only known in Nigeria but also in many parts of the world. Indeed, what evolves from most of these cultural mixes are more stylish pieces of clothing. To illustrate the aspect of culture extinction, due to interaction, Udoudo cites the case of “mbopo”, a cultural dance practised by the Annang in Akwa Ibom State, South-South Nigeria and Ndiakata, Abia State, South-East Nigeria. This cultural dance was usually performed by a virgin as part of the outing ceremony, after she had been secluded for a period in the fattening room before being escorted to her husband’s house. The “mbopo” dance along with the “mbopo” podium, which served as a ‘monumental artifact for generations’ was destroyed as a result of Christianity. In other words, there are environmental factors that contribute to the development, vitality, robustness or alternatively, the disappearance of certain aspects of a people’s culture. These issues can be political, religious, economic or cultural in nature. Avenues through which the cultural dynamics that are manifest during the Calabar Carnival, could be harnessed to enhance the economic wellbeing of the average Nigerian youth, in addition to being significant in a global village, demands attention. Indeed, these are the key points that constitute the preoccupation of this paper. So far though, not much progress seems to be accomplished in this regard [14]. This is perhaps due to so much emphasis on ethnic and tribal affiliations in Nigeria. As a multi-ethno-cultural society, Nigeria has more than 400 tribal groups, all of them extant with their individual cultural identities. It is obvious that no single culture can suffice as an all-encompassing national culture in Nigeria. What is usually on display

whenever Nigerian culture is mentioned, is the culture of one of, or the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria – Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba. The rest ethnic groups are either subsumed under any of the major ones, seldom mentioned, or much less displayed. Observably, this reality continues to generate an atmosphere of ferment among minority groups who also desire to be brought to the limelight or recognition. Naanen, notes the unfortunate reality existing in Nigerian society where ethnicity continues to serve as the benchmark for determining political and resource control. The result of course has been endless agitation emanating from the so-called minority. The challenge facing the Nigerian government and all stakeholders therefore, is how to manage these ethnic relations so that a better, more beautiful and saleable Nigerian culture could emerge [15]. Udoudo suggests that rather than allow ethnic diversity to continue nurturing a lack of cultural cohesion within the Nigerian state, more platforms such as the Calabar Carnival should be created. Such events bring about a kind of cultural convergence, deemphasizing all forms of cultural idiosyncrasies as each people make determined efforts to project their own culture as far as possible for global relevance. The product of such cultural convergence is usually a more beautiful, appealing and improved version of Nigeria's national identity devoid of any tribal or ethnic colourations.

2. Materials and Methods

The concept of globalisation was popularised by Marshal McLuhan in 1964 when he predicted that the world would turn into a global village due to continued advances in transportation, communication, and trade technologies. It has apparently gained acceptance and it is in the main stream of communication activities. In agreement with the view above, Obotetukudo states that "the concept of globalisation refers to the philosophy of making the entire world culturally, economically, socially and even politically accessible and by inference homogenous" (para.4). This means that globalisation is a process whereby nations of the world come under an umbrella, with socio-political, economic and cultural interaction as their aim. Apparently, this suggests that regardless of any country's location, it engages in a degree of international economic transaction with other nations, through import and export of goods and services. Possibly at this point, different peoples with unique and varying cultural attributes, become integrated onto broader human platforms such as the Calabar Carnival. Thus, globalisation has been perceived to affect the economic, political as well as cultural boundaries of countries. It is perhaps due to these far-reaching effects that makes Asobie maintain that the opinion that the Western and industrialised nations are making another attempt at "global governance" or imperialism. The reverse of cultural imperialism is what the Calabar Carnival has as its major preoccupation, as it attempts to communicate the mainstream indigenous culture of Nigeria for global participation, through NTA International. Poverty is a phenomenon that is usually approached from socio-economic perspective. It is a state of being in want, lacking the basic social amenities in life being food shelter and clothing required to live up to acceptable standard of living. It is usually characterized by general deprivation resulting from low income, lack of access to proper nutrition, healthcare, standard education, poor sanitation and living conditions, and absence of security. Thus, poverty predisposes those affected to serious malnutrition, disease and high mortality rate. Garba submits that:

Poverty is hunger. It is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. It is not being able to go to school, not knowing how to read, and not being able to speak properly. Poverty is not having a job, and is fear for the future, and living one day at a time. It is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. And lastly... it is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom (p. 2).

That poverty is one of the worst socio-economic ills in the society is further highlighted by Naanen as he posits that poverty predisposes people to become voiceless and powerless against natural and man-made challenges. At the international level, poor nations have inaudible voice and no respect among the comity of nations. Official statistics

from Nigerian Bureau of Statistics reveal that from 1985, the average poverty incidence in Nigeria has been on the increase. At the moment, the economic downturn in Nigeria and the effect on the populace is profound. It calls for action by all stake holders because the social vices brought about by the current economic trend are glaring. Oil which was the mainstay of Nigerian economy is no longer a viable product on the global market. Therefore, it is only reasonable to seek out ways to diversify the economy. Nowadays, promotion and marketing of cultural products have become one of the viable economic investments by governments the world over. This is due to the enormous business potentials that accompany it. The promotion of Nigerian culture through the Calabar Carnival is therefore a step in the right direction. The theory upon which this study is based is the cultivation theory. This theory was propounded by George Gerbner and it states that television users develop exaggerated belief in "a mean and scary world". Gerbner states that the violence viewers watch on the screen can cultivate a social paranoia that counters notions of trustworthy people or safe surroundings. Gerbner and Gross state that the power of the television comes from symbolic content of the real-life drama shown hour after hour, week after week. They emphasize that "Television is society's institutional story teller and a society's stories give a coherent picture of what exists, what is important, what is related to what and what is right" (p.350). Griffin states that the television set is a key member of the household with virtually unlimited access to every person in the family. The television, Griffin claims, dominates the environment of symbols, telling most of the stories, most of the time. Gerbner and Gross argue that "people watch television as they might attend church, except that most people watch television more religiously". They ask "What do they see in their daily devotions?" (p.350). The answer they give to the question is violence. Gerbner and Gross survey shows four attitudes of heavy viewers as chances of involvement with violence, fear of walking alone at night, perceived activity of police (police are always out to arrest people) and general mistrust of people also suggests that cultivation is not all evil because of what he calls mainstreaming. According to him, this is the process of "blurring, blending and bending" (p.354). For the concept of blurring, television homogenizes audience so that those with heavy viewing habits share the same orientations, perspectives and meanings with each other. For instance, the mainstream effect shows when people "with different economic political, social status regard themselves as equal. This can be seen in football match viewers where both the rich and the poor discuss which team is better and preferable. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli explain the concept of blending to mean that people with heavy viewing habit would not regard themselves as rich and poor, blacks and whites, Catholic and Protestants, city dwellers and farmers, adding that those traditional differences diminish among the heavy viewers probably owing to the sharp light from the television. For the concept of bending, Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli argue that heavy viewing tends to bend television types towards popular programmes, project ideas or culture. This mix of attitudes and desires labelled as the "new populism" and they see its rise as evidence that those with heavy viewing habits have been sucked into the mainstream, just as there was complete overlap between the "new populism" and policies of Ronald Reagan. This bending earned the former president of the United States the reputation of being the great communicator when he directly went to the people on television. The relevance of this theory to the study is that television messages are capable of changing people's notions, attitudes and beliefs about other people and their culture. For instance, when cultural messages go into the world, definitely, there may be elements of similarities between the culture of the communicator and the recipient's culture and so differences are blurred. Further to that, the similarities also bring about blending where the communicator's message makes the recipients accept the former's ideas, arguments or culture and may want to participate or try what is being advocated through the message. Also, depending on the strategies of the presentation, a well packaged and systematically presented message may involuntarily bend recipients towards the position or ideas advocated by the

message. Television messages can undoubtedly project a nation's culture to the international community. This indeed is the motive of the organizers of the Calabar Carnival and NTA International.

This is an ethnographic study. Therefore, survey design was used and researcher's observation and in-depth interview were the instruments. Four interviewees were purposively selected. One from the Calabar Carnival Commission and three from NTA International. Data were analyzed qualitatively.

3. Results and Discussion

Findings are discussed based on the research questions of the study. The Calabar Carnival from inception is meant to be a platform for the people of Cross River State and other ethnic groups in Nigeria to colourfully showcase their cultural identity to the global community. As noted by the Executive Secretary, Calabar Carnival Commission, "the Calabar Carnival is a global cultural event. All the cultures of the world come into play. However, charity they say begins at home. Each LGA in Cross River State is given an opportunity. Each local government usually has its own day of performance which affords them the opportunity to show all that they have" [16]. The above statement is a testament to how much attention is paid to the indigenous culture of Cross River, with each Local Government Area accorded an entire day to showcase their cultural heritage. This implies a complete reflection of all the ethnic groups proudly performing within their traditional milieu. Participants do so through the traditional costumes, dances, masquerades and other aspects of cultural displays. Understandably, the people of Cross River are usually at the centre stage with the Ekpe, Ekpo, Nnabo, Akabaa and many other masquerades, as well as Ekombi, Abang, Ikpobin, Ekoi, Obam, Emukei, sangroma, Etangala, the boat Regatta and the Atumibi dances. The arts and food exhibitions also give an opportunity to the global community to see the dishes and arts which are indigenous to Cross River State [17]. Additionally, the Carnival being hosted in Calabar annually carries along with it, the cultural mores of the city and its people, which visitors and tourists often explore as they participate in the street walk. Evidently, the Calabar Carnival showcases the indigenous culture of Cross River state to a large extent. But then, it was observed that the names, costumes, songs and dances of the five Carnival bands did not reflect the culture of Cross River State or that of Nigeria as whole. The explanation provided by the head of the Carnival Commission was that the bands and costumes were made to reflect the global nature of the Carnival so as to align the event with what is found in other parts of the world such as Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, with whom the carnival collaborates. However, each local government area in the state has often been given an opportunity to flaunt and exhibit the peculiarities of its own culture through the colourful dances, songs, masquerades, food, arts and other artefacts indigenous to Cross River State. This makes their culture prominent, throughout the duration of the Calabar Carnival. Moreover, responses from the Carnival Commission indicate that thousands of visitors pour in from places such as the USA, UK, other European countries, Asian countries and other African nations as well. This is testament to the global participation of the carnival [18]. It could therefore be said that Calabar Carnival has to a large extent showcased the indigenous culture of the people of Cross River State to the global community.

Based on the interview responses of the Assistant Director of Programmes, NTA International, the station attempts to promote culture daily through coverage of some cultural festivals which it airs. The Calabar Carnival is usually covered and aired throughout its duration by the NTA International. This is one of the major cultural festivals whose clips NTA International uses, all through the year for its various fillers. Besides, feedback has also shown that the Calabar Carnival can be viewed from any part of the world. Nigerians in the Diaspora are reported to express profound joy and the sense of belonging they feel while watching the carnival on NTA International. According to the Assistant Director, "NTA International uses clips of the Calabar Carnival as its fillers all

through the year. Not just that of the Calabar Carnival but also other cultural displays such as the Argungu festival, the Durbar from Kano, the boat regattas from Rivers State and numerous others that we lay our hands on. We show the world our culture. We receive feedback from overseas. Nigerians outside, be it in the UK and USA, tell us that they watch us and it makes them have a sense of belonging. Since we can be reached via satellite, I will strongly say that we have been viewed all over the world". Predominantly what NTAI does is to cover the carnival, air it live, then later produce video tapes of the different aspects of culture on display. This includes the dance performed by various cultural troupes, the masquerades, and the food of the Calabar people, the dressing and dance of the Yoruba and Ibo, and the parades which feature the elegant and colourful costumes of the carnival bands. They make documentaries and short episodes from them, then use same as fillers all through the year to promote culture. Further to that, NTA International is rightly a good channel through which the Calabar Carnival is exported to the global community. Esan notes that: "television was to project the people's culture, giving them a sense of pride and to present knowledge from home and abroad and useful models which would encourage people to make choices that were in the greatest interest of society" (p.42). Likewise, Decree 24 of 1977 which set up the NTA has giving adequate expression to culture as one of its objectives. While answering interview questions regarding the extent to which the television station has been using the Calabar Carnival to promote the culture of Cross River State and that of Nigeria as a whole, the General Manager NTA International, responded that the Calabar Carnival usually showcases the culture of Nigeria since each state of the Federation is usually invited to the carnival. Viewers get to know what people from different parts of the country call their culture. It is evident that foreigners and Nigerians abroad have been attending this carnival over the years [19]. The tourists spread the message, wear Nigerian cultural attires and buy other cultural products back to their countries, take photographs and videos, and post them on Facebook. In his words "It is from these avenues that our culture is promoted and made popular. I have watched NTA International while on holiday in Vienna. NTA International is on DSTV and also on free to air. That means in any country where an individual has free to air satellite, he or she can watch NTA International. This explains why every year more and more people attend the carnival. Our reach is global." Ultimately, it can be concluded that though indigenous culture of Nigeria is being given global viewership via the NTA International. However, observation show that NTAI is usually paid by the organisers of the Carnival to cover the event and they do not have a documentary policy on the Calabar Carnival. But then, it would have been best if NTAI operated with a documented policy that mandates them to air the carnival consistently, constantly and persistently [20]. That they operate with a set of objectives that was carried over from the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), and generate revenue from the sponsors of the Carnival, leaves much to be desired.

Response from the Executive Secretary Calabar Carnival Commission showed that the Carnival being hosted in Calabar annually carries along with it, the cultural mores of the city and its people, which visitors and tourists often explore as they participate in the street walk and visit other tourist attraction sites within the city and its environs. During the tours, the tourists ask questions, and as answers are provided, social and economic relationships develop. A lot of business activities take place in the form of buying and selling of essential goods and services. Various ethnic groups come to the Carnival with their cultural wares which are usually very attractive to the tourists. They buy these cultural goods and in the course of interacting with the locals, many business contacts, linkages and networks are established. These create avenues for exchange of business ideas and concepts with the possibility of generating employment thereby reducing poverty in future. On employment generation, the Executive Secretary Carnival Commission acknowledged that the carnival has created wealth and employment for the youths. She noted that about thirty-five thousand (35,000) costumes worn by participants at the

carnival, along with the accessories are purchased and sewn locally. Moreover, food vendors and hawkers sell their goods throughout the duration of the carnival, from dusk to dawn. Moreover, it is observed that the population of the city increases during the Carnival and increase in population means increase in demand for accommodation, transport, food, telecommunication services and other goods and services [21]. Observation further shows that economic activities in Calabar and its environs improve greatly and almost everybody turns a businessman or woman as a lot of buying and selling takes place, even private homes are converted to guest houses due to the high demand for accommodation. No doubt increase in economic activities is tantamount to poverty reduction. This is, however, in the short term; it is possible that consistent and persistent broadcast of the rich cultural artefacts of the Cross River people and the Nigerian society in general may as a matter of fact, contribute to reduction in poverty when the global community would have come to appreciate the Nigerian cultural products and patronize them.

4. Conclusion

The study has established that the indigenous culture of Nigeria is being developed and projected for global relevance and poverty reduction through NTA International's coverage of the Calabar Carnival. The study has established that NTA International covers and broadcasts the Carnival throughout its duration, thereby giving the Carnival a global reach. The global reach explains why the population of tourists from home and abroad to the Carnival continue to increase yearly. It has also been established that the increase in commercial activities in Calabar and its environs create many opportunities for economic development and poverty reduction. Therefore, the study concludes that the development of Nigerian culture via cultural festivals such as the Calabar Carnival, could result in poverty reduction. The following recommendations are necessary for developing Nigerian cultures for global relevance and poverty reduction through NTA International's projection of the Calabar Carnival. The government of Cross River State should partner with the Federal government, non-governmental organisations and corporate bodies for sponsorship, in order to organize cultural events besides the Calabar Carnival that is exclusively to showcase the indigenous culture of all ethnic groups in Nigeria. This is necessary because the glitz and glamour of the Calabar Carnival seemingly smothers the indigenous cultures on display. The government of Cross River State should through its ministry of labour and productivity, conduct a thorough research on the economic opportunities that are manifest during the Carnival, and how they could be harnessed to create employment to reduce poverty especially for the youths. NTA International should provide a documented policy on its coverage of cultural festivals. This policy should be such that cultural festivals in all parts of the county should be given adequate coverage without a fee. NTA International's coverage of cultural events should not be based on the revenue it generates so that smaller ethnic cultures may not be left out as they may not be able to pay for the coverage. NTA International should contribute to the Calabar Carnival through inputs and suggestions on how to improve and increase local content of the Carnival. As observed, recent editions of the Carnival are gradually being overtaken by imports of foreign cultures, particularly in the area of the carnival band's costume, songs and dance. Other states in Nigeria should duplicate what the Cross River State has done in the exhibition of the Nigerian culture so that more tourists can be attracted to the country. By so doing the rich culture of the country will not only be presented to these tourists, it will also create an opportunity for reduction in poverty.

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