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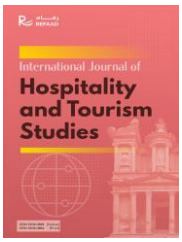

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Abstract: This study examines residents' perception of Carnival Calabar festival and tourism development in Calabar City, Nigeria. It intends to understand whether tourism development of the festival is commonly perceived as positive or negative in the city. A survey research technique was utilized for this study; thus, a total of 200 usable questionnaires were administered to the respondents in Calabar municipality. The findings revealed that, majority of residents have positive attitude about tourism. Findings revealed that pride in heritage, unification of the host community and employment opportunities associated to the event are the primary factors that influence tourism development of the festival. However, regardless of the general positive attitude accorded to tourism development of the festival, there are varying opinions by the residents on tourism influence in Calabar City. These opinions are largely influenced by the perceived benefits from tourism related activities. The results of this study contribute to the data for the management and sustainable development of festivals for tourism in Africa.

Keywords: *Carnival Calabar; Cross River; Host Community's Perception; Tourism Development.*

1. Introduction

Tourism, without a doubt, can contribute significantly to economic growth. It is recognized as one of the driving elements crucial for the economy's continued success in Nigeria. Tourism contributed approximately 6.11 percent to GDP in 2015, and it employed approximately 2.81 percent of the entire labour force (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2016). As a result, the Nigerian tourism industry is expanding and capable of creating additional job opportunities and foreign exchange profits that can compete with the agricultural and petroleum sectors' contributions (Osabuohien et al., 2018). Nigeria's tourist industry is still in its infancy and cannot be considered fully established. Despite its growing importance, tourism has received little attention, as evidenced by the few researches that have been conducted in this area (Matthew et al., 2018). The main problem is to encourage long-term growth in the industry while minimizing negative social consequences. Tourism investment's long-term viability can only be guaranteed if the consequences on the host community's socio-cultural well-being are taken into account (Bien, 2006). Festivals are one example of an event that can aid in tourism-based development (Laing, 2018).

In order to promote cultural tourism in Nigeria, public celebrations and parades featuring circus elements, masks, and a public street party have gained popularity in several states and localities. Visual and performing arts displays, costumes, makeup, dance choreography, props, a carnival float on wheels, special effects, and sound production are frequently included in the extravaganza. This cultural form has been embraced by a number of the federation's states to promote tourism. This project is spearheaded by the states of Cross River, Rivers, and Akwa-Ibom, as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja (Bassey, 2015). The Carnival Calabar festival in Cross River State has garnered greater attention both nationally and globally than those staged in other places in the country, based on organization, publicity, patronage, utilitarian focus, and aesthetic profile (Akpan and Obang, 2012). This is why it was chosen for further investigation in this study. Calabar is a significant carnival destination

in Africa that has gained international attention for its uniqueness. As a result, travelers from all over the world visit this destination during the festival period. The festival has been conducted yearly on the 26th, 27th, and 28th of December since its inception. It was founded in 2005 to enhance Cross River State's tourism development. The former Governor Donald Duke-led administration (1999 - 2007) saw tourism as a strategic economic development asset for the state. Since its creation, it has made significant contributions to the promotion of tourism as well as the enhancement of the state's socioeconomic situation. It has also become the major export industry and earner of foreign currency, offering a valuable source of income for the State (Akpan and Obang, 2012). The festival has prospects for creating revenue for both the public and private sectors through visitors' spending, in addition to its potential in boosting wages and employment opportunities. As a result, it provides an ideal setting for brand visibility as well as consumer and market awareness. In terms of festival, tourism, and hospitality development, Cross River State and Calabar have recently been dubbed Nigeria's prides.

However, despite the global and national recognition that the Carnival Calabar festival had gotten; the local community is usually affected both positively and negatively by the festivities, as with any other tourism-related festival. Although, the carnival presents avenues for employment opportunities, facelift in infrastructure, image rebranding and publicity of the event destination for tourism, it is also attributed with littering of the environment, noise pollution, traffic congestion and restriction of movement for motorist through certain route during the festival. Also, hoodlums seize the opportunity of the period to perpetrate crimes and engage in substances abuse freely. The aforementioned effects, if not properly managed, will have serious consequence on tourism sustainability of the carnival. When organizers go out of their way to please guests and tourists, the influence of tourism must be properly handled to minimize the inevitable negative impact. The needs, attitudes, and perspectives of local residents are not only vital for their well-being, but also for the event's success. However, event planners frequently focus solely on the financial rewards and the satisfaction of all guests, neglecting to consider the social impact on the nearby neighborhood (Delamere et al., 2014). In other words, the socioeconomic benefits of improving the city's or community's image when a fiesta is held must balance the economic and social drawbacks (Mensah, 2012). Residents may lose support for an event if they believe the social costs outweigh the social benefits (Cho, Wang & Fesenmaier, 2002). As a result, the purpose of this research is to examine the host community's perception about Carnival Calabar and tourism growth in Cross River State.

Undisputedly in Africa, Cross Rivers State can be regarded has a key carnival destination through the international recognition that the Carnival Calabar festival has gotten due to its uniqueness. In spite the festival's ability to attract tourists from all over the world; the tourism benefits accruable from it are largely unknown to some of the local people at the host destination. A lot of previous studies have focused on the role of festival in nation building and its social-economic values among other things. Not many have paid attention to the opinion of the host community about the socio-cultural implications of tourism development of the Carnival Calabar festival in Calabar City. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the attitude of the host community towards tourism development of Carnival Calabar festival. The understanding of the host community's stance on festival-related tourism initiatives will help to strengthen efforts toward sustainable tourism management and practices.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Role of Festivals in the Society

Festivals serve as a symbolic foundation for communal cohesion. As a result, specific times or days in humans' cultural history are kept over time to celebrate and ritually commemorate events and seasons that bring people together (Ezenagu & Olatunji, 2014). Festivals and cultural events, according to Janos Csapo (2012), play a vital role in the creation and growth of today's tourism business through cultural tourism. Most festivals are associated with entertainment which draws tourists to a region for the first time or on repeat visits. Festivals are commemorated with a variety of themes that are related to their origins, such as music festivals, religious festivals, and film festivals, among others which are often marked with entertainment that eventually attracts tourists to the event destination for a first visit or repeated time.

Festivals are an important development tool in both urban and rural regions. They are appealing to the local population since they contribute to the development of local pride and identification, particularly among Nigerians (Folorunso & Bashir, 2016). Festivals and other forms of celebration, logically, bring people together in a community, a town, a region, or a state, among other places. On the occasion of festivals in the past, relatives would get together frequently. People enjoy trying on new outfits, eating new foods, and, above all, meeting new people. Festivals provide opportunities to socialize and associate with individuals from other parts of the world. As a consequence, the social circle is broadened by offering additional opportunity for people to learn about the culture and people hosting the event. Hence, festivals have become an integral part of our lives, as they teach us about culture, promote social integration, and encourage togetherness (Folorunso & Bashir 2016). Festivals are often considered as a viable medium for enhancing the economic, socio-cultural, and physical environmental well-being of the host community (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003). Increased tourist volumes have the potential to improve local income and employment prospects. Festivals also act as a vehicle for displaying local cultural

traditions and customs to visitors, preserving and promoting the heritage. It has a prospect of influencing physical expansion, by facilitating land preparation and new tourism infrastructure development (roads, hotels, and shopping malls, among other things) (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003).

2.2. The Impacts of Festival to the Host Community

Festivals provide opportunities for cultural interaction, renew local traditions, improve the quality of life, and improve the community's image (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003). Festivals can serve as a tourism product that provides public benefits in form of positive externalities. Recreational activities within and among families, as well as promotional possibilities and numerous personal benefits such as education, are among the other advantages. They can also offer social services to local populations, such as job opportunities, educational opportunities, and infrastructure development. Health care, rural electrification, and portable water, among other things, are all potential advantages (Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993). According to Gursoy, Kim and Uysal (2004) festivals are regarded as community activities that promote community cohesion and provide social incentives for residents. Also, the success of festivals or special events is primarily reliant on community support. Tourism events such as festivals have prominently grown to be a global, social and economic force, but little is known about their influence on local communities. Measuring people's perception of the effects of tourism events is still a vague and difficult task. Researchers are currently using non-standard measuring instruments, making comparable studies difficult (Viviers & Slabbert, 2012). Six criteria of "inconvenience," "personal irritation," "entertainment and socialization opportunities," "community growth and development," and "behavioral consequences" were proposed by Small (2007) as a suitable framework for studying community festival social implications. The shortcoming of these components is that they have not been assigned a positive or negative connotation in their application. Kim and Uysal (2003) opine that both negative and positive effects are frequently expressed by residents in the same context. The primary influence of festivals and events, according to their study on festival organizers, is community cohesion, economic advantages, social costs, and social incentives. Yolal and associates (2016) stated that community benefits are a significant predictor of residents' subjective well-being. According to their report, quality of life's concerns such as vandalism, traffic congestion, and noise, which are caused by festival participant and attendees, can have significant negative effects on residents' sense of well-being.

2.3. Festivals for Tourism Development

Festivals and ceremonies mark the passage of time by bringing people together and providing a common ground and reference point to life. It is part of the foundation of ethnicity in the form of myths, recollections, values, and symbols associated with a particular community (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2013). Festivals are valuable assets in preserving or revitalizing traditional cultural practices of a destination (Moscardo, 2007). Festival events can influence the creation of programs and projects that attract visitors and, by extension, enrich the lives of locals (Stankova & Vassenska, 2015). More importantly, festival cultural consumption can help local residents through both visitor and public spending. As a consequence, it encourages rejuvenation of the economy of the host destination. It should be recognized that by integrating festivals into a larger economic agenda through increased economic activity, public support becomes conditional (Felsenstein & Fleischer 2003). As a result, both tourism as a development phenomenon and festivals as a socio-cultural capital can be packaged for tourism and sold as a cultural commodity both locally and internationally to encourage economic growth. The tourism potentials of festivals can thus enhance the global reputation of a country. The two most generally acknowledged aspects in the positive contributions of festivals and events to regional development are community involvement and network building (Moscardo, 2007).

Festivals can help to enhance the arts by increasing demand for the arts, improving venue infrastructure, stimulating local ingenuity, and energizing local participation (Quinn, 2006). As a result of hosting a festival, a destination can gain attractiveness for tourism development. Festival uniqueness plays a critical role in the growth of festival tourism. Authentic experiences gained, as well as the welcoming attitude of the host community strengthens festival identity, boosting attendees' emotions and increasing their identification with the event (Lee, Fu & Chang, 2015).

2.4. Host community's perceptions towards tourism development

Various research on perceptions and attitudes of the host community about tourism have been conducted (McGehee and Andereck, 2004; Mensah, 2012; Ribeiro, Valle & Silva, 2013). The host community has been acknowledged as having a significant impact on the tourism industry's long-term viability (Allen, Long, Perdue & Kieselbach, 1988; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Fredline, & Faulkner, 2000; Pérez & Nadal, 2005; Deery, Jago & Fredline, 2012). This is founded on the idea that tourism relies on the host community's hospitality to thrive (Alegre & Cladera, 2009). As a result, the management of the tourism industry's connection with the host community is critical. According to Hinch and Butler (2007), the host community's perception of tourism is crucial to the success of community-based tourism efforts. Educating community members on the relevance of tourism resources in their areas is a sensible first step in ensuring that they benefit from and participate in all tourism-related decisions in their area (Amalu & Ajake, 2012b). Doxey (1975) appears to be of the opinion that resident

acceptance of the tourism business is critical before any form of success can be accounted for. Residents' sentiments toward tourism are more favorable in the early stages of growth (euphoria and apathy stages), according to Doxey (1975), and turn negative in the later stages (irritation and antagonism stages). The influence of tourism on the host community might be seen as positive if it outweighs the environmental and social consequences of its development (Harrill, 2004; Sharpley, 2014; Jaafar, Ismail, & Mostafa Rasoolimanesh, 2015).

Tourism development has both negative and positive socio-cultural, economic, and economic implications on the host destination. The ability of tourism to offer employment opportunities and enhance host destination revenue owing to increasing tourist visits remains a major driver of support for tourism development (Ritchie, & Inkari, 2006; Hritz & Ross, 2010). A favorable public relations effort to remind locals of these benefits is suggested in persuading residents to support tourism development in a destination (Perdue et al. 1990).

2.5. Destination and Sustainable tourism management

Sustainable tourism, according to Bien (2006), aspires to have minimal negative impacts, limit harm, and preserve the long-term viability of resources through strategic conservation. Problems and concerns pertaining to sustainable tourism management, according to Nizic and Drpic (2013), can be successfully eliminated by agreement of all interested stakeholders in a location (i.e. private and public undertakings, local inhabitants, and local administration among others). There must be communal cooperation among stakeholders in order to adopt measures for guaranteeing sustainable development and responsible management directed toward protecting landscape biodiversity, cultural specificities, economic viability, and local community lifestyle.

The following are the measures for sustainable tourism development according to Nizic and Drpic (2013):

- Strengthen empathy between the local community and tourists.
- Raising awareness on environmental care.
- Allowing residents to be educated by educational institutions "from childhood".
- Increasing the perception of a destination as environmentally conscious and responsible.
- Fostering a sense of community and increasing motivation.
- Assisting the acquisition of financial resources for environmentally friendly initiatives in a destination.

The primary goal of responsible destination management should be to keep the product in a state of euphoria and apathy among local residents for as long as possible, as well as to ensure a constant and sustainable tourist ratio in the market. Thus, insufficient consideration of the socio-cultural, economic and environmental implications of festivals on the host community is a primary impediment to sustainable development of festivals. Against the literature on the perceptions of host community on festival/tourism development; a reliable conclusion on the managerial approach to sustainable tourism development of festivals is to continually educate both the host community and tourists about the benefits of responsible practices to ensure support for tourism development. Many previous studies focused on the contribution of festivals with emphasis on its tourism social-economic value, not many have paid attention to the opinion of the host community about tourism development of festivals in Africa. Therefore, Carnival Calabar festival in Cross Rivers State is purposively selected for this study because of its global and domestic recognition. This study seeks to examine the attitudes of the host community towards tourism development of the festival to strengthen the efforts toward sustainable tourism practices at the study area.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Study Area

Calabar Carnival festival is a unique celebration of African culture, with floats, costumes, and make-up reflecting the festival's theme of music, dancing, drama, and visual inventiveness. Calabar, the capital of Cross Rivers State, hosts this annual celebration. It has a population of 328,877 people, with a density of 980 people per square kilometer, according to the national population census of 2006. (Ogaboh et al., 2010). Originally, the festival was held as part of the yearly Christmas festival in Cross River State, Nigeria. Since its establishment in 2004, the festival has always started on December 1st and ended on December 31st. Mr. Donald Duke, the state's governor at the time, started the event with the goal of making Cross Rivers the tourism and hospitality capital of Nigeria and Africa. The festival has contributed significantly to the enhancement of Nigerians' cultural mosaic while entertaining millions of spectators both inside and beyond the country, as well as supporting industry by providing a suitable brand visibility platform for consumer and market awareness (Amalu & Ajake, 2012a). The festival's goal is to integrate more components of local heritage and culture while also strengthening locals' ability to participate in a financially beneficial way. The Bayside, Passion 4, Seagull, Masta Blasta, and the Freedom Band are usually among the five competing bands at the Carnival Calabar festival. Every year, a theme for the celebration is chosen. The theme for the 2017 edition is 'migration'. The carnival's king and queen both wear beautiful costumes that depict the event's annual theme and set the tone for other ensembles. The culturally inspired themes of each band, on the other hand, range from freedom, emancipation, equality, heroism, and so on. The committee in charge of tourism and cultural events drafts the event's program each year. The carnival Calabar

festival Cup, a football competition between five competing bands, an essay competition on the festival's theme involving students from secondary and tertiary institutions, and the carnival Calabar queen pageantry are all part of the event which includes music performances by both local and international artists (Jacob, 2013).

3.2. Data Collection

The study adopted a mix method approach with the aid of a survey and ethnographic research design. The data gathered for this study included both quantitative and qualitative data. Data were collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Convenience sampling method was employed to select 205 households in Calabar metropolis due to the difficulty of establishing a sample frame at the study area. The head of each household were purposively selected and were administered a questionnaire each. Out of the 205 questionnaires administered to the respondents five were considered as invalid and 200 were returned as valid. The questionnaire is divided into three sections with questions on such categorization as: Demographic Characteristics, Attitude of the Host Communities towards Carnival Calabar, and perception on tourism development of Calabar Carnival. A four-point Likert scale was employed in the order of very much, moderately, fairly, not at all (for views on the attitude of the host communities towards Carnival Calabar festival); to a large extent, to some extent, moderately, not at all (for perception on tourism development of Calabar Carnival festival). A total of 18 items were carefully designed for the questionnaire employed in gathering data for this study. Accidental sampling was used to select five festival attendees who are residents of Calabar City based on their willing to grant audience to an interview. In-depth interviews were conducted for each of the selected respondents. The duration of the interviews was between 15 to 25 minutes each; this time frame is based on the respondents' willingness to continue to respond to more questions. The qualitative data was used to complement the quantitative data. The valid quantitative data was computed and analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was content analyzed and observations made were discussed comprehensively in consonance with the results of the findings.

4. Results

4.1. Profile of Respondents

The result of the surveyed carried out according to Table 1 below shows that majority of the respondents are between the ages 21 – 30 years with 75.5 percent which represents a massive 151 respondents; 12.5 percent are between ages 31 – 40 while respondents between ages 41 -50 are just 8.5 Percent; although a mere 4.5percent fall between ages 41 -50, a very insignificant 0.5 percent is 61 years and above. This indicates that there is a high distribution of youthful population in Calabar city which could be as a result of the various opportunities (employment, closeness to facilities/ infrastructure, city life/ urban life, and multicultural experience etc.) that the state capital offers young people who are often energetic and ready to explore new things. 49 percent of the respondents are males, and 51 percent are females. Equally, 40 percent of the respondents are self-employed while 22.5 percent are public servants and 37.5 percent are unemployed. Also, 50 percent of the respondents are university graduates, whereas 17.5 percent were Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (SSCE) holders and 25 percent possess a post graduate degree and 2.5% attended a technical school while 1 percent does not have any formal education. This shows that majority of the respondents are literates.

Table (1): The Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Status	Frequency	Percent
Age	21 – 30	151	75.5%
	31 – 40	22	11%
	41 - 50	17	8.5%
	51 - 60	9	4.5%
	61 and above	1	0.5%
	Total	**200**	**100%**
Gender	Male	98	49%
	Female	102	51%
	Total	**200**	**100%**
Occupation	Self-employed	80	40%
	Public/Civil servant	45	22.5%
	Unemployed	75	37.5%
	Total	**200**	**100%**
Education	No Formal Education	2	1%

Primary (FSLC)	8	4%
High School	35	17.5%
First Degree	100	50%
Postgraduate	50	25%
Technical School	5	2.5%
Total	**200**	**100%**

4.2. Attitude of the Host Communities towards Carnival Calabar

Table 2 below reveals that almost all the respondent feels that the people in Calabar community are friendly towards visitors who come for the carnival in Calabar. Findings revealed that 86 percent of the respondents feel that the host community contributes to the success of the carnival especially through their participation (in festival band, parade and competitions). Although 44.5 percent fairly identify with the festival as their true means of identity, 29.5 percent identified with other cultural affinities other than Carnival Calabar festival. This was accentuated by the fact that 57 percent of the respondents are very much in support of other communities when it comes to festival. Findings show that 89 percent of the respondents feel proud to be the host and are excited about the carnival.

Table (2): Respondents view on the Attitude of the host communities towards Carnival Calabar

S/N	Research Statements	Frequency				Total
	Responses	Very Much	Moderately	Fairly	Not at all	
1.	The local people are friendly towards tourists and visitors during Carnival Calabar	157	38	5		200
	Percentage	78.5%	19%	2.5%		100%
2.	The host communities contribute to the success of Carnival Calabar through their participation	172	24	3	1	200
	Percentage	86%	12%	1.5%	0.5%	100%
3.	Carnival Calabar is a true representation of the community's identity	34	18	89	59	200
	Percentage	17%	9%	44.5%	29.5%	100%
4.	The host communities are supportive of one another in the preparation and during Carnival Calabar	114	60	24	2	200
	Percentage	57%	30%	12%	1%	100%
5.	The host communities are development conscious when it comes to Carnival Calabar	130	68	1	1	200
	Percentage	65%	34%	0.5%	0.5%	100%
6.	The host communities have positive mind set about Carnival Calabar	141	33	14	12	200
	Percentage	70.5%	16.5%	7%	6%	100%
7.	The local communities are proud to host, and are excited about Carnival Calabar	178	15	7		200
	Percentage	89%	7.5%	3.5%		100%

In an interview with one of the respondents who mentioned that the festival has been of help to the youths by bringing out the talents in them, evident in the various performances during the festival period, in her words she said:

> *I have never stopped and will never stop participating in the festival, it brings out the best in me and it helps me establish rapport with some of the tourists. The captivating Carnival Bikers Parade and motor race, Miss Africa Beauty Pageant, the main carnival float, and the old people's beauty contest are so fascinating serving as entertainment to festival attendees (Asuquo, pers.comm.2017).*

Another respondent added that the people of Calabar are caring, hospitable and helpful, and that she is interested in visiting the community again (Chidinma, pers.comm.2017). Apparently, the host communities are development conscious when it comes to Carnival Calabar festival and they have a positive mind-set about the carnival. The host community members are proud to be the host and are excited about the carnival. This supported one of the respondents who reported that the street party of the festival is one of the best in Nigeria and she is proud to be associated with it. She further stated that it gives her the opportunity to meet with different celebrities that come for the celebration but noted that security should be improved on during and after the festival. In her recommendation, she stated that the government should continually create avenue to educate

youths on the ethics, decency and social conduct. She finalizes by saying "she is positive that the Carnival Calabar festival will be the biggest worldwide in the next twenty years" (Orok, pers.comm.2017).

4.3. Perception on tourism development of Calabar Carnival

Table 3 below indicates that 47 percent of the respondents agree with the position to a large extent that developing carnival calabar for tourism can foster intercommunity relationship among different groups (the Efik, the Ejagham, and the Bekwarra) in cross river state. Also, 67 percent of respondents agreed that tourism activities during Carnival Calabar allows for participation of different age group in the festival. However, 45.5 percent agree that tourism initiatives do not provide opportunity for the local people to participate in decision making that affects the carnival. Findings show that 45.5 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that the carnival does not provide the opportunity for the local people to participate in decision making that affects the festival. Majority of the respondent believe that the carnival moderately ensures peaceful coexistence of the host community during and after the festival and 19.5 percent insist that the festival does not contribute in any way to the peaceful coexistence among people of different ethnic backgrounds. Significantly 82 percent asserts that Carnival Calabar contributes to social vices among youths in the state, negatively impacting on immorality, drug addiction, increase in crime and occasionally vandalism.

Table (3): Respondents perception on tourism development of Calabar Carnival festival

S/N	Research Statements	Frequency				Total
	Responses					
1.	Tourism development of the festival helps fostering intercommunity relationship among different groups in Cross River State	94	75	31		200
	Percentage	47%	37.5%	15.5%		100%
2.	Tourism development of the festival contributes to social integration of multi-ethnic set up of Cross River State	92	70	38		200
	Percentage	46%	35%	19%		100%
3.	Tourism activities during the festival allows for participation of different age group in the festival	134	62	4		200
	Percentage	67%	31%	2%		100%
4.	Tourism initiatives provides opportunities for the local communities to participate in decision making that affects the festival	30	40	39	91	200
	Percentage	15%	20%	19.5%	45.5%	100%
5.	The festival contributes to peaceful co-existence of the host communities during and after the festival	23	15	123	39	200
	Percentage	11.5%	7.5%	61.5%	19.5%	100%
6.	Development of the festival for tourism contributes to social vices among the youth in the State	79	85	33	3	200
	Percentage	2%	10.5%	10.8%	76.7%	100%
7.	Tourism development of the festival can reduce many immoralities, drug addiction among others, among the local youth in the city.			17	183	200
	Percentage			8.5%	91.5%	100%

In another interview with one of the respondents who resides in Calabar, she stated the following:

> *I see the youths from different communities in Cross River state coming together to perform at the carnival, though the government have not provided opportunities for the people from the host community to participate in decision making that involves the management and planning of the events, and sufficient awareness are not created to attract some of the local people in the interior villages to participate in the activities of the festival (Okon, pers.comm.2017).*

Thus, the carnival brings about unity and integration among the host communities. People of the community have been denied the right to participate in decision making with regards to the events. Also, that a lot of people in the local villages in cross river state does not have the opportunity to participate in the events because enough awareness has not been created and because they are limited to some factors surrounding them. The Carnival Calabar festival contributes to social vices among youths which negatively impacts of morality. In an interview with another respondent, the following was stated by him:

The festival has exposed a lot of youths, adults and children to immoral act, immoral dressing. The attire used during the carnival is an adoption of the Caribbean culture which encourage revealing the sensitive parts of the body. The youths easily adopt this mode of dressing by parading half naked during the celebration, immoral dances; misbehaviours like sexual harassment and substance abuse are the major negative influence of the festival. Crime rate is also on the increase due to the vulnerability of the environment during the festival (Etim, pers.comm.2017).

Although the festival has brought about peace and unity among the communities, there are some negative implications on the community such as indecent dressing, drug addiction and sexual harassment. The festival has also transformed the state and the community positively through fostering cooperation among the different local communities Cross River state.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The introduction of Calabar Carnival in 2004 as part of the activities to mark the Christmas celebrations by former Governor of Cross River State Donald Etim Duke had greatly influenced the quality of the celebration in the state. The Carnival has become an international event participated in by a lot of countries. The findings of this research revealed that the carnival enhances the image of Calabar as a major tourism destination to reckon with in Nigeria due to its attractive features. Activities during the carnival such as the Calabar Carnival Bikers Parade, and motor race, which features exotic cars; Miss Africa Beauty Pageant; the main carnival float and the international carnival; as well as old people's beauty contest all contribute as part of the pull factors that attract tourists to the carnival.

Findings revealed that the host community members are hospitable and accommodative of visitors. In affirmation of the submission of Folorunso & Bashir (2016) the carnival fosters intercommunity relationship among groups (the Efik, the Ejagham, and the Bekwarra) in Cross River State; it ensures peaceful co-existence and pride in the cultural identity. The carnival, being an element of cultural tourism has a way of improving the economic life of the local people. The drawback of this is the infusion of Caribbean carnival style into the Calabar festival, adulterating the true identity of the festival and the morality of the culture of the local people. The carnival brings about indecent exposure of sensitive parts of the body and this only increases promiscuity. Due to recent international recognition of the carnival as the largest street carnival in Africa (Folorunso, 2017), the Carnival attracts various people from diverse cultural background from different part of the world. This has resulted in the importation of foreign ideals and practices which have impacted the nature of the carnival from inception; for instance, the style of the carnival processions has almost totally changed to that of the Caribbean style.

However, it is germane that community involvement in the various decisions that affect the carnival should be encouraged, unfortunately reverse is the case with the planning of Carnival Calabar. This has been the bane of development on the part of the host community. Tourism planning requires sustainability because its growth usually brings increasing pressure on the natural, cultural and socio-economic environment of the destination (Tunde, 2012). It should be noted that sustainability has an economic dimension besides its social and environmental dimensions. Sustainable tourism development as defined by WTO (2002) means meeting the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. Therefore, Carnival Calabar needs to be revitalized to its old tradition which emphasized the culture and identity of the local people. Cross River State is one of the major destinations that started promoting carnival in Nigeria; therefore, it should by now be sufficiently blessed with local experts that are well versed with planning, organizing and execution of the carnival.

During the carnival, there were instances where security officials manhandle carnival attendees thereby injuring some of them in the effort to enforcing crowd control measures; this is against the principle of sustainable tourism practice. Therefore, a lot needs to be done about adequate planning of the festival. Government should make policies to plan for the increasing number of visitors that participate in the carnival to prevent issues of over-tourism when the carrying capacity of the facilities available is not sufficient to cater for the need of the prospective tourists. Effort should be made on taxation policies to make sure that tourists who could contribute to the economic growth of the state are attracted. Taxation policies could also be a means for crowd control; thereby quality tourists are attracted. Also, the regulatory component of the event needs to be improved and government has to know that as money is spent to build the brand, they should also spend money to build the ancillary or augmenting products of tourism. For instance, make the sites and attractions around Calabar to be visitor-ready through putting measures in place for continual maintenance and renovation of public infrastructures (good road network, constant electricity, decent accommodation and quality public transport etc.).

As stated earlier, sustainable tourism has three interconnected aspects: environmental, socio-cultural, and economic. Sustainability implies permanence, optimum use of resources, including biological diversity; minimization of ecological, cultural and social impacts; and maximization of benefits for conservation and local

communities. It also refers to the management structures that are needed to achieve this (Bien, 2006). Hence, in a bid to further develop and promote Carnival Calabar to serve the interests of the local communities who are the primary custodians of the culture that berth the carnival, the right approach is essential. This will help to attract tourists and rebrand the positive image of the festival. In turn, the carnival will contribute to the socio-cultural development of the immediate host society and significantly reduce if not eliminate immorality among youths.

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that most of residents perceive tourism development of Carnival Calabar as a positive initiative because of the opportunities and benefits that is attached to the promotion of the event. Therefore, carnival benefits for residents are good methods to attract the cooperation of the host community. Furthermore, the community leaders and festival planners need to be aware of the demand and social dimension of the festival. Understanding and evaluation of the carnival associated problems is a major requirement in planning in advance to avoid them or manage likely negative effect. Event planners, for instance, can gain the locals' support by involving them in the decision-making process. This will instill a sense of devotion to tourism initiatives; the involvement of community representatives in festival planning will improve projections to counter catastrophic consequences from a tourism project. Additionally, this effort will encourage residents to accept and accommodate some of the consequences of tourism growth (noise pollution, environmental littering, movement restrictions, traffic congestion, and struggle for access to public services/amenities due to sudden increases in demand, among other things) that may disrupt non-attending residents' normal routines. It is vital to focus efforts on boosting the carnival's benefits and exploring people' willingness to engage in the event's development. The findings suggest that, despite the negative consequences of tourism, the host community is eager to support tourism projects. This is due to the benefits of tourism development; festival tourism promotion provides a platform for the host community to be proud of its cultural heritage. The festival also helps to develop cooperation among the various groups in Cross River State by providing opportunities for socialization. As a result, these benefits promote collaboration within the host community, assisting the state administration in meeting its objectives. The Carnival Calabar celebration has influenced Cross River State's development as a significant tourism destination to be reckoned with, and one of Africa's finest. The festival has evolved into one of the most well-known fiestas on the continent. Because of its international reputation and recognition, it has the potential to continue to improve socio-economic prospects for the host town, the state, and the country as a whole, this is subject to effective management of the festival by all concerned stakeholders (the government, the host community, the tourists and corporate organizations).

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