

COMMODIFICATION OF LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITION FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY IN NIGERIA: Empirical evidence of Tiv and Idoma cultures in Benue State

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The government of Nigeria realizing the potential inherent in cultures and traditions of the people has invested huge resources in its development and promotion. In spite of the great fortune associated with this phenomenon, conscious efforts by successive government of Benue State to commodify its local culture and traditions for tourism development and sustainability have proved abortive, hence the need for this study. The researchers exploited the rich cultural heritage of the Tiv and Idoma people of Benue state through questionnaire and personal interview and the data generated was analyzed using percentages and Multiple Regression tool through SPSS software. The findings revealed employment generation, community development and international exposure as the hallmark of local culture and tradition commodification. It was then recommended that festivals, music and dance be rebranded and giving international exposure.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is not just an aggregate of mere commercial activities; it is also an ideological framing of history, nature and tradition; a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs (MacCannell, 1976). Rural culture may well be a viable asset and provide a competitive advantage for some rural communities when considering tourism as a strategy for revitalization and sustainability (Earley, 2002). This paper uses the broader literature to inform a more specific study revealing state intervention in a process now enveloping suburban centers in global cities. Newtown in Sydney, Australia finds itself being reshaped through a convergence of the market forces of gentrification and the entrepreneurial

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initiatives of government and in the process is seen to be losing some of the authenticity which was part of the appeal in the first place. Nigeria is often described as a country of unity in diversity. This description probably stems from the fact that the country is made up of over 400 linguistic groups, three principal religions, a multiple of socio-political opinions and organizations and varying weather and climatic conditions between the North and the South. Nigeria boasts of a plethora of customs and traditions, cultures and festivals that would appeal to the tastes of the average tourist. (In the Northern States of the country, the customs, cultures and traditions of the people who are mainly Hausa/Fulani, Nupe, Kanuri, Igala-land Tiv are governed by the Muslim religious traditions). Culture in its many guises can transform the urban environment through city marketing campaigns, cultural led urban developments, festivals, and tourist promotion to encourage economic development. These attributes form a commodity that can be promoted, marketed and celebrated to help distinguish one place from another. It is the cultural life of rural people represented through distinct and different living patterns and way of life, and expressed through various symbolic traditions, texts, artifacts and other forms, that provide, for many, a contrast to the mundane and stresses of urban life and environments. Thus, through tourism, the rural regions can offer a variety of new sites of consumption for travelling tourists who are ever seeking new leisure experiences (Gbenda, 2010). These processes of commodification are well known to cultural theorists and practitioners (Shepherd, 2002). This paper explores the transmutation of places of cultural significance for tourism consumption. The aim is to provide a critical understanding of how such places are transformed into places of consumption by investigating the relationship and conflict between culture as a resource for social meaning and a touchstone for economic growth. These places, assuming the mantle of cultural districts, represent an unavoidable element in the evolution of the contemporary tourist-historic city (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990).

How profoundly abstract, rural culture, a social construct, becomes materialized into a saleable product for tourism and a subject for enquiry. The absence of research has made local communities fragile and rural communities are increasingly pressured and persuaded that tourism development is a viable option for sustainability and development. There is *N +-insufficient number of marketing cooperation between cultural and tourism organizations, there is lack of intensive exchange and communication activity between culture and tourism, there is inadequate development of the international nearby markets, the tourism products are not prepared in a customer-friendly manner, there is a weak culture media

landscape and profile as a culture and culture tourism destination is still too low.

As such, the study is focused on the commodification of local culture and tradition for tourism development and sustainability in Nigeria: a study of Tiv and Idoma cultures in Benue State. Despite the hype associated with culture and tourism, there is a scarcity of literature devoted to the commodification of local culture and tradition for tourism development and sustainability in Nigeria. This paper will immensely contribute as learning and teaching material to students, researchers and other businesses and policy makers. Understanding the local culture of the Benue People, will go a long way in improving their tourism potentials and the study will try to alert organizations of the benefits of the long-run operationalization of tourism so as to derive maximum satisfaction through enhanced reputation and goodwill to visitors/tourists that come to experience the culture of the people in the area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Culture

Culture refers to the realm of ideas. Cultural studies, a recent field to academia, defines culture as a network of embedded practices and representations (texts, images, talk, codes of behaviour, and narrative structures organizing these) that shapes every aspect of social life (Earley, Ang & Tan, 2006). "Culture can be thought of as an onion, whereby the outer layers represent explicit products of the culture, the middle layer; the norms and values, and the core; the assumptions about existence" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997:30). Developing an understanding of another culture is gained from experiences in that culture; this, it is thought, will eventually lead to a deeper understanding of a culture's norms during long-term foreign stays generally longer than a year (McNulty & Tharenou, 2004; Puccino, 2007). A person can gain a fairly complex cultural understanding, via multiple cues provided by observing others and their reactions (Earley & Peterson, 2004).

Culture, deeply embedded in the history and development of community, is considered the bloodline of any rural community. However, much of this culture is not visible; much is deeply hidden beneath the surface and has remained sacred to the community for centuries (Wood, 1997). Schein (1985) likens this phenomenon to an iceberg. Thus, many of the impacts of various forces, such as tourism, on local culture and the rural community are not clearly evident; neither are they easily measurable nor explainable (Wood, 1997: 50). While culture is implicit in tourism, the sparse research and literature which does exist generally focus on heritage

and cultural tourism development within a larger global context (Boniface, 1998; Featherstone, 1995; Jafari, 1996; McIntosh, Hinch, & Ingram, 2002; Meethan, 2001; Ashworth, 1994). Culture in its many guises can transform the urban environment through city marketing campaigns, cultural led urban developments, festivals, and tourist promotion to encourage economic development (Wirth and Freestone, 2011). Urban places can be re-imagined and invested with new cultural meanings to encourage greater consumption, visual and physical, as 'landscapes of pleasure' (Hannigan, 1998: 25).

The argument is that, while tourism may promote a renewed interest in traditional arts and social practices among local craftsmen and others, tourist purchases are fueled by a desire to possess a mark, rather than any genuine interest in local cultural traditions or beliefs (Smith, 1996). Distinct cultural precincts have emerged as key elements of many broader place-based strategies for economic development. Cultural districts refer to sites of both cultural production and consumption. These can be places where cultural industries cluster to share infrastructure and a creative milieu, or more contrived entertainment zones self-consciously catering for the 'tourist gaze' (Brooks and Kushner, 2001: 6 and Scott, 2000). Cultural districts are not a new phenomenon, and while not coterminous with the geography of creativity, they are an increasingly popular spatial if not functional mechanism for organizing public or private sector-led investment (Gibson and Freestone, 2002). Proponents of cultural involution have argued that cultural tourism can stimulate a revival of local interest in traditional cultural forms, thus both strengthening cultural bonds and providing local actors access to material benefits (McKean, 1989). Crucially, however, this position assumes that local actors can easily distinguish between what is 'sacred' (and not open to tourism) from what is 'profane' and hence open to commodification (Picard, 1996: 197).

Commodification

Commodification is the transformation of goods, ideas, or other entities that may not normally be regarded as goods into a commodity (Polanyi, 2004). Left largely unspoken in these discussions about tourism's role in the commodification of culture is the process of commodification itself (Shepherd, 2002). Indeed, a generalized yet largely unarticulated notion of 'commodification' operates at such a fundamental level in regard to tourism's relationship with culture that a discussion of precisely what this might mean, particularly in relation to authenticity, seems unnecessary (Shepherd, 2002).

While, capitalism has been built on commodification of labour and

goods, it is globalisation and the new economy which has transformed culture into a commodity as well (Earley, *et al.* 2006). In many areas, tourism has hastened the commodification of traditional and unique cultures. As Mowforth and Munt (1998:64) suggest, “with the spread and intervention of capitalism into the Third World societies, tourism has also had the effect of turning Third World places, landscapes and people into commodities”. The lack of representation of indigenous communities in the commodification process of local cultural resources for tourism raises serious questions, particularly with regard to the authenticity of cultural tourism products and ownership of the tourism resources (Earley, *et al.* 2006).

Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is arguably the oldest of the new tourism phenomena, and some argue that all travel, indeed, involves a cultural element (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). These are, generally, understood as type of special interest tourism where heritage or cultural objects, for example, museums, ancient buildings, sites and artifacts, are commodified as items for economic exchange and consumption (Earley and Ang, 2003). Culture is a main 'pull factor' which influences visitors' initial decision to travel to destinations in different parts of the world (Smith, 1996: 12). At the global level, cultural attractions are usually perceived as being icons of important streams of global culture (Wood, 1997). This global conception of culture has led to the designation of World Heritage sites which attracts millions of tourists yearly. Whereas, at the national and/or local level, culture is seen as playing an important role in establishing and reinforcing people's unique identities and a sense of belonging to a particular locale.

Cultural tourism has to be explained within the broader context of culture. In this regard, culture can be viewed in two inter-related perspectives: the psychological perspective what people think (i.e., attitudes, beliefs, ideas and values), and what people do (i.e., ways of life, artworks, artifacts and cultural products). From the psychological perspective, therefore, culture is seen as the organized systems of knowledge and beliefs in which people structure their experiences and perceptions, formulate acts and make choices between different alternatives (The America Heritage, 2009). Thus, it can be argued that culture is both a psychological and physical phenomenon. Culture is a product of human psychology which has manifestation in the physical world, usually created as a purposeful technology which enhances living, including beautification of technological objects or art.

Local Festivals Practiced in Benue State

Benue State possesses immense tourism potentials which are yet to be exploited. Since some of the tourist attractions are best selected by the tourist, Benue State in her bid to develop tourism embarked on infrastructural development necessary for the overall wellbeing of the tourist (Gbede, 2010).

The TIV culture is extremely rich, and exceptionally unique, the way they wed, what they do to earn a living, the way they worship their God, the way they dress, the way they sing and dance to music, the way they sent forth their loved ones to the world eternal, the way they entertain their guests. All these they do in unique ways worthy of mention (Kur and Iwokwagh, 2011). Some important festivals in Benue State are: Kwaghir theatrical display, Ingongh Dance, Ejaalekwu Festival, Numerous fishing festivals (Boniface, 1998).

Idoma/ IgedeAgba New Yam Festival

According to the online portal, Justus Healthy Nigeria Diets (2011:7): "The New yam Festival consists of prayers and thanks for the years past. Yam is the main agricultural crop of the Igbos, Idomas, and Tivs. It is the "staple" food of the Benue people. The New yam festival, known as Orureshi in Owukpa in Idoma west and Ima-ji, Iri-ji or Iwa-ji in Igbo land is a celebration depicting the prominence of yam in the social and cultural life. The festival is very prominent among all the major tribes in Benue state."

Kwa-Ghir Festival

A festival of the Tiv people in Benue state of Nigeria, it is a display of traditional masquerades, Puppet Theater, some forms of acrobatics, dancing, music and sartorial display. A colourful festival indeed, it attracts many people and is accentuated by the friendliness and warm welcome of the Tiv people of Nigeria (Kur and Iwokwagh, 2011).

Alekwu Ancestral Festival

The socio-religious festivals of the people often marked with colourful dances, dresses and songs that are of tourist value. The Alekwu ancestral festival of the Idoma people, for instance, is an occasion when the local people believed their ancestors re-established contact with the living in the form of masquerades (Gbede, 2010).

Music and Dance

Basically, the Tiv society cannot exist without music and dance (Kur and Iwokwagh, 2011). Basically, music and dance in Tiv society serve as the entertainment function but beyond that they also serve as information, education, socialization, mobilization and social cohesion functions. Hagher (1987:6) has noted the functions of music and dance in Tiv society in the following words: “Music and dance do not only serve the purpose of social interaction as well as a school for intellectual stimulation, they also control normative behavior. Sometimes, they serve as a medium for social protest and even sanction deviant behavior.”

The state possesses a rich and diverse cultural heritage which finds expression in colourful cloths, exotic masquerades, sophisticated music and dances. Traditional dances from Benue have won acclaim at national and international cultural festivals. These dances include Ingyough, Ange, Anchanakupa and Swange among the Tiv and Anuwowowo and Obadaru among the Idoma. The Tiv Kwagh-hir theatre provides memorable entertainment in its dramatization of Tiv folklore and social commentary (Boniface, 1998: 748). The development of cultural tourism in Africa should take into consideration the two perspectives of culture (Wood, 1997). This is due to the fact that when we talk of African culture as it relates to tourism, we are talking about a 'living culture' of the African people which is usually based on art performances and dance, and the contemporary ways of life of indigenous African communities.

Natural Attractions

According to Kur and Iwokwagh (2011) natural attractions in Benue State include hills and ranges such as Kyogen, Abande, Ngokur, Mkar, Ushongo and Haaga. There is a heavily wooded natural trench at TseMker which is believed to be inhabited by dangerous creatures including Pythons. Gungul is a waterfall on River Katsina-Ala near Gbeleve. The border stretch adjoining the Obudu-Cameroun ranges features not only quasi temperate climate but also beautiful scenery of forests, dissected hills, dykes, dozens of fast flowing streams and incised valleys. In the dry season, the water level in both the Benue and Katsina-Ala rivers falls, giving rise to beautiful sandy river beaches and clean shallow waters. The waters are excellent for recreational boating and swimming. At Orokarn in Okpokwu LGA, occurs the Enumabia Warm Spring.

At Utonkon, is a thick forest with tall giant trees, the centre of which used to serve as a slave trade market, but is now the site of numerous shrines and a 10day periodic market. Swern is a shrine site at the foot of the Cameroun range in Kwande LGA from where the Tiv were said to have

originated (Hagher, 1986).

Historical Monuments

Historical monuments in the state include the Royal Niger Company Trading Stores at Makurdi and Gbeleve near Katsina-Ala; the tombs of the first Dutch missionaries at Haaga and Sai in Katsina-Ala ' LGA; the tombs of the legendary politician, Mr. J. S. Tarka and past three Tor Tiv in Gboko town; and the trench fortifications in Turan district of Kwande LGA which were dug by the Tiv toward off Chamba invasions in the 19th century (Gbenda, 2011: 7).

Works of Art

The Tiv people with segmentary lineage systems usually constituted by the descendants of a single ancestor have *Imborivungu*. It is an object to which has been added molding and decoration to represent a human figure of the ancestor. Individuals own most of these works of art but they are considered to be holding them in trust for the whole patri-lineage, however, the holder is an elder or otherwise honoured member of the lineage who considers that its possession brings him prosperity and this is in terms of his crops and children, as well as, ensuring the well being of the whole of his patri-lineage (Gbenda, 2010).

Theoretical/ Empirical Framework

Marx theorized that in what he called 'primitive communities' property was held in common and the concept of non-social (private) property did not exist; in such communities, commodity producers were not alienated from their labor because the objects they produced with this labor were held and used in common rather than exchanged as individual forms of private property; any exchange that did occur only took place at the boundaries of a community's space, at the point of contact with other social groups, but Marx speculated that a 'constant repetition of exchange made it a normal social act', leading to a situation in which the 'need for foreign objects of utility gradually established itself' (Marx, 1996).

One of the most-cited examples of Marx's commodity analysis in regard to tourism has been Davydd Greenwood's essay on the commodification of a local festival in the Basque region of Spain; echoing Marx (1996), Greenwood (1989), argued that anything sold assumes a commodity form, including culture; however, because culture does not belong to anyone, the marketing and selling of cultural productions to tourists is a form of community-wide expropriation and when this happens,

local culture is 'altered and often destroyed' and 'made meaningless' to its people.

Meethan (2001) has argued that once heritage is transformed into a tourist product, its 'cultural value' is also transformed into a 'commercial value', a process which stimulates the reinvention of the past, leading to Umberto Eco's hyper-reality. That is to say, rather than being a reclamation of the past, heritage and tourism function as a new form of cultural production (a value-added industry) that takes the past as its theme (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Marx actually framed use-value as concrete and exchange-value as abstract (Baudrillard, 1988). Capital (according to Marx) replaces an object's (natural) use-value with a (false) exchange-value. A resulting degradation of local cultural practices and social relationships has led, in this view, to a host of social ills (Shepherd, 2002). In other words, the Development cure (increased tourism as a means of spurring economic change while strengthening local culture) is claimed to inevitably lead to new diseases, such as drug addiction, crime, pollution, prostitution, and a decline in social stability, as well as to the growth of 'capitalist values' and a 'consumer culture' (McLaren, 1998: 28). Indeed, researchers talk about measuring the touristic 'impact' on a local culture, language that brings to mind not just destruction (a bomb impacts on a target) but also passivity (the other is always impacted upon). In short, local cultures are presumed to be transformed (for the worse) by contact with a secular West, a presumption which implies the existence of pristine pre-tourist cultures which can serve as baseline tools for measuring the impact of this touristic degradation (Hitchcock, King & Micheal, 1993: 15 and Wood, 1993).

Classical economists such as Smith and David Ricardo downplayed the role of an object's use-value, seeing this as insignificant in the determination of value (Keen, 1993). Marx, on the other hand, drew a sharp distinction between use-value and exchange-value, arguing that these are two (inseparable) parts of a whole, what he referred to as the 'dialectic of the commodity' (Keen, 1993: 110). This is because all commodities (defined by Marx as anything that satisfies a human want) function as both 'objects of utility' and 'depositories of value' (Marx, 1996: 20); he argued that the use-values of commodities have different qualities, while their exchange-values (in relation to other commodities) have different quantities.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Community Development

Community is important in that it contributes to individual and social well being by establishing and maintaining channels of communication, organizing resources to meet local needs, and providing a

framework where the collective is more than the sum of its parts (Wilkinson, 1991). Community development can be seen as an action that is purposively directed towards altering local conditions in a positive way (Wilkinson, 1999 Luloff and Bridger, 2003). When specific projects are pursued with an emphasis on building social relationships and communication networks, community development has occurred. Community and community development are based on the assumption that they contribute to the social well being and the self actualization of community members. Community is enhanced when residents work together to address common issues. However, for development to be most effective and to maximize its impact within the locality, it must incorporate both social and economic needs. In understanding this process, the distinction between development *of* and development *in* community is important (Summers, 1986 and Luloff and Swanson, 1995).

Employment is one of the most readily available indicators to begin measuring the social impact of tourism, since job creation generally helps create the opportunities for better standards of living and related conditions of socio-economic progress. Tourism contributes significantly, both directly and indirectly, to the creation of employment. In 2006, the tourism economy (direct plus indirect contribution) provided jobs for about 140 million people in the selected sub-regions and countries of the Asian and Pacific region, representing an average of 8.9 per cent of total employment (ILO, 2003).

International is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary (2009), as extending across or transcending national boundaries. Exposure to various national cultures allows a person to become familiar with the products, norms, values, and assumptions of that culture; cultural exposure, defined here as experiences related to a region that aid in developing a familiarity with or understanding of the norms, values, and beliefs of that region, is likely to contribute to higher cultural intelligence (Gbenda, 2010). Tourism will, therefore, assist in removing existing stereotypes and misrepresentations of indigenous African cultures. In this regard, cultural tourism may well contribute to the promotion of international harmony and cross-cultural understanding (Earley, *et al.* 2006). In view of the aforesaid, the following hypotheses were formulated for analysis;

- HO₁: Employment creation through tourism development and sustainability is not dependent on commodification of local culture and tradition.
- HO₂: Community development through tourism is not dependent on commodification of local culture and tradition.

HO₃: International exposure through tourism development and sustainability is not dependent on commodification of local culture and tradition.

METHODOLOGY

Benue State boasts of various cultures that are essential for commodification for boosting tourism development in the State and this spread across 10 of the 23 Local Government Areas of the state. The sampling method used is the simple random sampling method. One (1) Second Class Chief, two (2) Scholars, three (3) District Heads, five (5) Tourists, three (3) Community Leaders and five (5) Title Chiefs were used as respondents from each of the ten (10) Local Government Areas selected for the study. This then gave a total of one hundred and ninety (190) respondents to make up our sample size for the study. Survey research design was used to obtain general overall information on local culture and tradition awareness in the Benue region. The main instrument for data generation and analysis is structured research questionnaire, in-depth Interview method and observation.

The critical components in this study had content validity because an extensive review of the literature was conducted in selecting the measurement items. Factor analysis indicates that the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measure for Local Culture and Tradition Parameters is 0.691 with Barlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) value to be 567.871 at a level of significance $p=0.000$. The components of Tourism Dev. & Sustainability Parameters have a KMO measure of 0.504 and BTS of 210.286 at a level of significance $p=0.000$. Our KMO result in this analysis is either equal to or surpasses the threshold value of 0.50 as recommended by Frow and Meaghan (2000: 323). Therefore, we are confident that our sample and data are adequate for this study. Our result has strong construct validity, because the various Local Culture and Tourism parameters were tested for correlation and it was found that there was a high degree of measures between the measures of the same construct, indicating that correlation exists between them. From table 1, five factors of Local Culture and Tourism with Eigenvalues greater than one (3.359) account for 67.174 percent of the total variance.

On the other hand, the instrument is very reliable as expressed in table 2; these parameters appear to be useful and contribute to the overall reliability of Local Culture and Tradition in Benue State. There is a reduction in their Cronbach's Alpha as their values plunge from 0.846 to: 0.719, 0.763, 0.698, 0.769 and 0.488 respectively. Thus, these five parameters are useful and will not be dropped from the research. The data for the study were collected, coded and analyzed using computer-based Statistical Package for

Social Sciences (SPSS version 18 for Windows). The statistical methods that were used in analyzing the relationship of the various products on customer satisfaction are: Percentages, Multiple Regression and t-statistics to test for significance at a 0.05 levels.

HYPOTHESES TESTING, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of one hundred and ninety (190) questionnaires were sent-out and one hundred and ninety (190) were retrieved; after careful scrutiny, twelve (12) were rejected because they were defaced or improperly attended to. A successful response rate of 81.1% was achieved as one hundred and fifty four (154) of the questionnaires were considered acceptable and analyzed.

TABLE 1: KMO AND BTS TEST OF SPHERICITY

Local Culture and Tradition Parameters	Initial	Extraction (Coefficients)	Eigenvalues	KMO	Determinant	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	Sign.
HM	1.000	0.882						
MD	1.000	0.845						
FS	1.000	0.825	3.359	0.691	0.023	567.871	10	0.000
WA	1.000	0.902	(67.174%)					
NA	1.000	0.611						
Tourism Dev. & Sustainability Parameters	Initial	Extraction (Coefficients)	Eigenvalues	KMO	Determinant	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	Sign.
COMDEV	1.000	0.961	1.887	0.504	0.249	210.286	3	0.000
EMPCRE	1.000	0.957	(62.892%)					
INTEXP	1.000	0.214						

Source: Research instrument

TABLE 2: CRONBACH'S ALPHA TEST OF RELIABILITY

Hotel Market Segments (HMS)	No of item	Corrected item – total correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted	Item Means	Item Variance	Cronbach's Alpha
Local Culture and Tradition Parameters						
HM		0.719	0.804			
MD		0.763	0.791			
FS	6	0.698	0.803	3.401	0.338	0.846
WA		0.769	0.795			
NA		0.488	0.883			
Tourism Dev. & Sustainability Parameters						
COMDEV		0.618	0.150			
EMPCRE	3	0.579	0.203	3.768	0.555	0.583
INTEXP		0.102	0.927			

Source: Research instrument

TABLE 3: THE EFFECT OF LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITION ON EMPLOYMENT CREATION

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model 1				t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.539	0.331		7.674	0.000
HM	0.064	0.231	0.044	0.279	0.781
MD	0.499	0.144	0.358	3.475*	0.001
FS	0.873	0.098	0.818	8.865*	0.000
WA	1.048	0.245	0.683	4.278*	0.000
NA	0.035	0.074	0.038	0.469	0.639

Dependent Variable: EMPCRE

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

F Calculated value = 27.626 at a level of significance of 0.000

R = 0.695

R² = 0.483

The result of model 1 in table 3 indicates that the regression coefficient of Music and Dance (MD), Festivals (FS) and Works of Art (WA) have significant t values of 3.475, 8.865 and 4.278 at a 5 percent level of confidence which is greater than the tabulated t value (1.98); this implies that FS contributes more to employment creation (EMPCRE) followed by WA and MD.

Hypothesis One (H₀)

The F calculated value is 27.626, which is greater than the F tabulated value (3.690) indicating that Employment Creation (EMPCRE) through tourism development and sustainability is dependent on commodification of local culture and tradition. The null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis (**H₁**) is accepted. The coefficient of multiple correlation (R) is 0.695; indicating a strong relationship between the inputs and output variables of Model 1. The coefficient of multiple determinations (R²) on the other hand is 0.483 and indicates that 48 percent of Employment Creation will be caused by a variation in the commodification of local culture and tradition. Thus, we conclude that commodification of local culture and tradition in Benue State, would, therefore influence employment creation. This finding was corroborated by ILO (2003) where it was revealed that in 2006, the tourism economy (direct plus indirect contribution) provided jobs for about 140 million people in the selected sub-regions and countries of the Asian and Pacific region, representing an average of 8.9 per cent of total employment. In the same vein, Janson (2003) posits that tourism expenditure support approximately 6.1% of the UK's total workforce. This implies that job creation is one of the cardinal objectives of tourism not only in Nigeria as revealed in our study but the world over. At this juncture, we shall consider the analysis for hypothesis 2, with the table below.

TABLE 4: THE EFFECT OF LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITION ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model 2				t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.435	0.276		8.817	0.000
HM	0.005	0.193	0.003	0.026	0.979
MD	0.604	0.120	0.442	5.0411*	0.000
FS	0.960	0.082	0.919	11.9191*	0.000
WA	1.276	0.204	0.849	6.241*	0.000
NA	0.025	0.062	0.028	0.401	0.689

Dependent Variable: COMDEV

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

F Calculated value = 49.252 at a level of significance of 0.000

R = 0.790

R² = 0.625

Table 4 revealed Model 2 which indicates the same mode of magnitude of occurrence, because Music and Dance (MD), Festivals (FS) and Works of Art (WA) once again have significant t values of 11.9191, 6.241 and 5.0411 at a 5 percent level of confidence which is greater than the tabulated t value (1.98). Thus, FS contributes more to community development (COMDEV) followed by WA and MD.

Hypothesis Two (Ho₂)

From table 4, the coefficient of multiple correlations (R) is 0.790; meaning that there is a strong relationship between the inputs and output variables of Model 2. The coefficient of multiple determinations (R²) on the other hand is 0.625 indicating that 63 percent of Community Development (COMDEV) will be caused by a variation in the commodification of local culture and tradition. The F calculated value of 49.252 is greater than the F tabulated value (3.690) which shows significance relationship between the output and input variables. The null hypothesis is rejected, as such, Community Development (COMDEV) through tourism development and sustainability is dependent on commodification of local culture and tradition. Tourism rather than being a reclamation of the past heritage and

tourism, function as a new form of cultural production (a value-added industry) that takes the past as its theme (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Thereby adding value to the communities through developmental strides, with new infrastructures, social amenities etc. As Murphy (1985) points out, 'it is the citizen who must live with the cumulative outcome of such developments and needs to have greater input into how the community is packaged and sold as a tourist product. Early work by Gunn (1972) advocated the involvement of local community groups in order to achieve development outcomes which would benefit both local communities and visitors alike. However, for most scholars concerned with community participation in tourism Murphy (1985) is the preferred point of intersection with the literature. Murphy's (1988) argument that the local inhabitants of tourist destinations form an integral part of the tourism 'product' and, as such, should be involved in the consultation and planning process, is now widely accepted in theory. It is therefore imperative for community involvement in tourism related works in order for the community to benefit from its outcome. This result has led us to further explore the effect of local culture and tradition on international exposure and this is shown in table 5 below.

TABLE 5: THE EFFECT OF LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITION ON INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model 3				t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.868	0.345		2.516	0.013
HM	0.644	0.241	0.364	2.672*	0.008
MD	1.287	0.150	0.768	8.589*	0.000
FS	0.149	0.103	0.116	1.451	0.149
WA	0.266	0.256	0.145	1.041	0.300
NA	0.782	0.078	0.706	10.070*	0.000

Dependent Variable: INTEXP

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

F Calculated value = 46.145 at a level of significance of 0.000

R = 0.781

R² = 0.609

Model 3 in table 5, exhibits a slightly different scenario as Natural Attractions (NA), Music and Dance (MD) and Historical Monuments (HM) indicate significant t values of 10.070, 8.589 and 2.762 at a 5 percent level of confidence which is greater than the tabulated t value (1.98). The implication is that NA contributes more to International Exposure (INTEXP) followed by MD and HM.

Hypothesis Three (Ho₃)

The F calculated value for model 3 in table 5 is 46.145, which is greater than the F tabulated value (3.690) indicating that International Exposure (INTEXP) through tourism development and sustainability is dependent on commodification of local culture and tradition. The null hypothesis is thus rejected. The coefficient of multiple correlation (R) is 0.781; indicating a strong relationship between the inputs and output variables of Model 3. The coefficient of multiple determinations (R²) on the other hand is 0.609 and indicates that 61 percent of International Exposure will be caused by a variation in the commodification of local culture and tradition. Tourism has contributed so much to foreign exchange thereby exposing the communities and Nations. Feighery (2002: 8) argued that tourism contributed to foreign income raised from US\$ 726 Million in 1990 to US\$1741 in 1996. With these huge contributions, one may conclude as indicated in our findings that international exposure is must to tourism development. It has been argued that tourism imagery plays a significant role in providing a "native self-image and a way of relating to outsiders" (O'Connor, 1993:69).

Testing the regression using F statistics, R and R² not only gives researchers some insight into the fit of the regression models, but it also helps in assessing the strength of individual predictor variables in estimating the dependent variable. These findings further support the alternate hypotheses that these regression coefficients or slopes are significantly different from zeros and have predictive powers in estimating tourism development and sustainability in Nigeria Benue State.

A correlation test was performed to gauge any association that may exist between the input and output variables. The classification of samples was systematically done by scoring each construct from one to five according to their responses. A response of "not-at-all" was assigned a 1 (no intensity) and "to a great degree" was assigned a 5 (high intensity) value. Thus, the regression results imply that all the research models have significant effect on tourism development and sustainability. In view of the aforementioned we hereby draw our conclusion and recommendations for future decision purposes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main focus of this paper is an attempt to examine the influence of commodification of local culture and tradition for tourism development and sustainability. Most importantly, communities and government policy makers should take advantage of the potentials in the our local culture and tradition by using demographics, psychographics and other niche marketing techniques to predict and model tourism development and sustainability. The multiple regression technique used in this study is one among many tools that throws more light into the effect of local culture and tradition to tourism development and sustainability. The result of model 1 in table 3 indicates that only the regression coefficient of Music and Dance (MD), Festivals (FS) and Works of Art (WA) have significant t values of 3.475, 8.865 and 4.278 at a 5 percent level of confidence are greater than the tabulated t value (1.98); this shows that MD contribute more to Employment Creation (EMPCRE) followed by FS.

Model 2 in table 4 also indicates that only the regression coefficient of Music and Dance (MD), Festivals (FS) and Works of Art (WA) once again have significant t values of 11.9191, 6.241 and 5.0411, because at a significant level of 5 percent, the t calculated values are greater than the t tabulated values of 1.98. The implication is that FS contributes more to Community Development (COMDEV) followed by WA and MD. Model 3 exhibits a slightly different scenario as Natural Attractions (NA), Music and Dance (MD) and Historical Monuments (HM) indicate significant t values of 10.070, 8.589 and 2.762 at a 5 percent level of confidence which is greater than the tabulated t value (1.98). The implication is that NA contributes more to International Exposure (INTEXP) followed by MD and HM.

These findings further support the alternate hypotheses that these regression coefficients or slopes are significantly different from zeros and have predictive powers in estimating the growth of the hospitality industry. A correlation test was performed to gauge any association that may exist between the input and output variables. The classification of samples was systematically done by scoring each construct from one to five according to their responses. A response of “not-at-all” was assigned a 1 (no intensity) and “to a great degree” was assigned a 5 (high intensity) value.

A full assessment of the socio-economic impacts of tourism requires that the linkages between tourism and socio-economic development need to be clearly identified. Having established the linkages, policymakers are then in a better position to consider specific interventions that can raise standards of living and reduce poverty. This survey examined the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, commodification of local culture and tradition for tourism development and sustainability in Benue State. The

study revealed that the respondents had positive aspirations towards tourism in the area. The study found that, the majority of the respondents feel that commodification of local culture for tourism has a positive employment creation (EMPCRE), community development (COMDEV) and international exposure (INTEXP) impact on the local community.

It is important to mention that economic dependency on tourism is the most significant determinant of the residents' attitudes toward the industry. Respondents' demographics such as residents' duration of dwelling, gender and educational status were found to influence the study. The most important variables were the residents' duration of dwelling in years. This implies that respondents who lived a long period of time in the study area knows the local culture and tradition very well and the impact, commodification will have on him/her and the entire community. The intensity of local culture and tradition impacts on tourism development and sustainability depends to a large extent from order of importance on: (1) Festivals (2) Works of Art (3) Music and Dance (4) Natural Attractions (5) Historical Monuments. Based on the findings of the study the following recommendation is made:

1. Festivals like the Idoma New Yam Festival, Katsina-Ala Fishing Festival, Igede Agba Yam Festival, Kwa-Ghir Festival and Aleku Ancestral Festival should be given priority by the government by exposing them to the international community through rebranding. This suggestion is pertinent because this study shows a low t value rating for festivals,
2. There is need to encourage the display and value addition of our historical monuments, through repackaging of monuments and emphasizing their teaching and documentation towards increase awareness for international relevance and exposure.
3. The youths need to be engaged in the creation of works of art so as to create employment; this can be facilitated through the use of government policy makers to create an enabling environment for these crafts to thrive,
4. Music and dance have already been recognized internationally, but still need to be rebranded in a special way that will improve the development of the entire community and build employment creation.
5. Natural attractions should be advertised through the media and monies spent for the development of such traditional sites so as to meet the benchmark for tourist site and woo in investors and tourist alike.
6. It is pertinent for government to initiate , promote, sponsor and organize various festival to the world to attract investors and tourist alike.

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